

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

NO. 2025-17
April 27th, 2025

*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

May the world be filled with the teaching of Jesus, O God, as we seek through these gifts to obey you and extend your love. Grant that we may improve rather than destroy the good earth you have given us to possess. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN

He Lives

UMH 310 (vs. 1 & 3)

*BENEDICTION Responsive

You are children of God; live your heritage,
Take refuge in God; serve with fear and trembling.

**We are witness to all God has done in Christ,
and we intend to obey God rather than human beings.**

As God sent Jesus into world,
so now Jesus sends you to witness and forgive.

**The Spirit is opening our eyes to the truth
and teaching us to be faithful, believing people.**

Grace to you and peace from the One who is
and who was and who is to come.

God is the Alpha and the Omega, the Almighty One.

We trust God in the future as we have in the past. Amen!

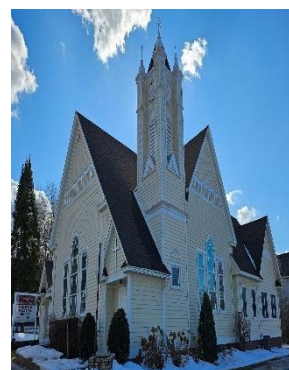
*POSTLUDE

Toni Koons (G)/Sharon Asp (A & SCF)

Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

The 2025 Parish Ministry Theme:
“Do Good and Share with Others” (Hebrews 13:16)

**Church Love Month
2nd Sunday of Easter**



Grantsburg-Central
Since 1897



Atlas
Since 1887



St. Croix Falls
Since 1859

SUNDAY SERVICES:

9:00 AM at Grantsburg

(9:10 AM, Children's Time)

10:00 AM at Atlas (10:15 AM, Sunday School)

11:15 AM at St. Croix Falls

CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Jenny Lee: jennlee1732@gmail.com

Youth Director Shayna Schmid: snsnyder@gmail.com

Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg: centralumc2016@gmail.com

Parish Office: 715-463-2624 St. Croix Falls Office: 715-483-9494

www.upperstcroixparish.org

<https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
April 27th, 2025
Church Love Month
2nd Sunday of Easter

*Please stand if you are able.

***PRELUDE** Toni Koons (G)/Sharon Asp (A & SCF)

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

“Peace be with You!”

(Waive your hands at one another)

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Responsive

This is the day the Lord has made;
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

We rejoice in this day, for God is sovereign over all.

His plan will stand, and His joy is our strength.

The Lord is my strength and my song;
He has become my salvation.

God saves us and builds us on Christ, the firm foundation.

This is the Lord’s doing—it is marvelous in our eyes!

Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!

Happy are all who take refuge in Him.

We trust in the steadfast love of the Lord.

Hosanna! Save us, O Lord—we praise Your holy name!

Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Christ Is Risen* UMH 310 (vs. 1 & 3)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Risen Lord, we gather in the light of Your resurrection, still echoing the joy of Easter morning. As You appeared among the disciples bringing peace, appear now in our midst and fill our hearts with hope. Breathe on us Your Holy Spirit, that we may believe without seeing and trust without fear. Renew our faith, strengthen our witness, and open our eyes to Your presence among us. Let this time of worship be

a celebration of life, grace, and victory over death. We offer ourselves to You with thanksgiving and praise. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON** Psalms 118:14-29 (G)
(NRSV, p. 565-566 in the OT)

***THE GOSPEL LESSON** John 20:19-31 (A & SCF)
(NRSV, p. 115 in the NT, and p.922 in the Living Bible)

This is the word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON *“Rejoice and Be Glad ”* Barbara Loomis (G)

“Empathy” Kathy Gionis (A & SCF)

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Risen Christ, You are our strength and our salvation—our Cornerstone and our peace. Like Thomas, we long to see and believe, yet You meet us with mercy even in our doubt. Your wounds speak life, and Your breath brings us the Spirit of courage and faith. This is the day You have made, and we rejoice in it! Open our eyes to Your presence, and send us out with boldness to declare, “My Lord and my God!” May our lives proclaim Your steadfast love that endures forever. In the name of the Risen One, we pray. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

After each prayer request:

Pastor: Lord, in your mercy,

All: Hear our Prayer.

PRAYER SONG

UMH 487

This is our prayer. This is our prayer, O God!

THE LORD’S PRAYER

APRIL CHURCH MISSIONS

ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:

Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.



LOAVES & FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT

Requested items:
eggs, milk,
mayonnaise, coffee,
tea, peanut butter,
crackers, cookies.
Personal
Products for men &
women.

We will be collecting
supplies for the
church in April.
Thank you for your
support!



Suggested/Needed Items:
-Styrofoam coffee cups 8 1/2oz (no large ones)
-Plastic drink cups 9oz
-Small luncheon paper plates
-Gallon plastic bags with twist ties
-Furnace filters 20x16 (lasting 3 months or longer)

GRANTSBURG

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!

REMEMBER ...
Every Sunday
Is MAC 'N CHEESE
SUNDAY!
Supporting the Salvation
Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack
Program"



APRIL SHOWERS We will be collecting supplies for the church in April.

Supply Needs: Please
check the Mission Board and the April
newsletter for a detailed list of items
needed. Thank you for your ongoing
support of our monthly missions.



ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

Food Shelf

(Communion
Sunday)



Sailor Hat Offering:

The Sailor Hat offering will go
to support the local
community with
SCF Police
vouchers for
homeless lodging.



Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers All God's People / Rev. Jenny Lee

Central -Grantsburg

Pianist	Toni Koons
Preach	Barbara Loomis
Scripture Reading	Toni Koons
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Volunteer Needed
Counter	Volunteer Needed
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson
Sunday School	Volunteer Needed

Heartfelt
THANKS
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Preach	Kathy Gionis
Liturgist	Sue Olson
Usher	Cheryl Olson
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Colleen Adams-Schween

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Preach	Kathy Gionis
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Lynn Hanson
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Kathy Gionis
Fellowship	Admin Members

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS

Rekha Roelfs	5/1
LuAnne Martell	5/3



PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **Online Zoom service is not available on April 27 and May 4th.**
- 2) Our Sunday Sermons are on the website at upperstcroixparish.org under Sermons!
- 3) **Sunday's videos are not available April 27 and May 4th.**
- 4) We will also send you a weekly bulletin and written sermon through post mail and email with the weekly E-News. If you have any questions regarding the mailing weekly materials, please contact our parish secretary, Colleen Norenberg.

This Week's Calendar:

Today: 2nd Sunday of Easter. Peace Be with You!

Worship Service Schedule

4/27:	9:00 am	Grantsburg with Zoom (9:10 am, Children's Time)
	10:00 am	Atlas (10:15 am, Sunday School)
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls
4/22-5/5:		Pastor Jenny on Vacation
4/30:	5:00 -6:00 pm	Go Fish for K-Up (G)
5/2-5/4		Youth Retreat at Wood Lake Camp

Breakthrough Prayers: Please pray for: Marina Peacock (health), Kenny Olson (strength), Jacqueline (Granddaughter of Wendell & Maxine), Ron Aldorfer (healing & strength), Lynn Hanson (healing), Sanci and Rifle Harshman (daughter and grandson of Sue Olson), Jim Loomis (healing), Ted (Jeff's Dad), Sue (a friend of Kathy Gionis), those struggling with illness and/or addiction, especially children, undocumented immigrants, for the U.S.A, for Myanmar (earthquake) and the world (God's peace).



Praise the Lord in gratitude and joy: John Little (New member -Central-Grantsburg), Shea Wojtowicz (healing), Rifle Harshman (God works), New born baby-Giada (a daughter of Megan and Giacomo Baglio)

"This kind can come out only by prayer." (Mark 9:29)

Next Sunday (May 4th):

Central -Grantsburg

Pianist	Toni Koons
Preach	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Toni Koons
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Volunteer Needed
Counter	Volunteer Needed
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson
Sunday School	Volunteer Needed



Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Preach	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Sue Olson
Usher	Colleen Adams-Schween
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Josie Grimes

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Preach	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Jim Andrews
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Kathy Gionis
Flowers	Lynn Hanson
Fellowship	Admin Members

Upcoming Events & News

***April: Church Love Month**



4/22-5/5: Pastor Jenny's Vacation

4/27: Pulpit Supplies: Barbara Loomis (G); Kathy Gionis (A & SCF)

5/4: Pulpit Supplies: Sharon Asp (All three churches)

5/5-5/6: Provisional Elder Workshop at Pine Lake Camp

5/11: Communion/Mother's Day

Barbara Loomis 4/27/25

Rejoice and Be Glad

Psalms 118:14-29

Traditionally the second Sunday of Easter usually has the story of Doubting Thomas. I didn't feel like speaking about Doubting Thomas this Sunday and the other scripture choices I had was one in Revelation and Psalms. Revelation is intimidating to me. So Psalms it is. Psalm 118 is almost one of the greatest psalms in the Bible. What makes it exceptional? Well, it talks about God's steadfast love and goodness, mercy and power. It tells about our Lord's salvation. It calls us to worship. The psalms from 113 to 118 were part of what they called the Egyptian Hallel (HALLEL). Psalm 113 is a short psalm of praise without reference to any historical context. It is best known for the phrase "From the rising of the sun to its setting, the name of the Lord is to be praised." These Psalms were recited during the Passover festival commemorating Israelites deliverance from Egypt. Psalm 114 poetically relates to the Hebrews deliverance from Egypt. They were also used for other Jewish festivals, such as the feast of the tabernacle which was a seven day feast commemorating the years of wandering in the wilderness by the Israelites. Appropriately Psalm 115 contrast those who trust in the Lord and those who trust in idols. Psalm 116 is written from the perspective of an individual who has been delivered from a dire situation "I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleads for mercy." Psalm 117 is both the shortest psalm and the shortest chapter in the Bible, with only two verses, although psalms are not technically chapters they are songs and poems. This is the whole song "Praise the Lord, all nations! extol him, all peoples! For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!" Now we are to Psalm 118, it is often used on Palm Sunday, in our Christian faith because verse 27 which Celebrates laying the branches in the pathway to the altar.

Even if verses one through four of Psalm 118 were not part of the Lectionary, they speak volumes, "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever. Let Israel say: His love endures forever. Let the House of Aaron say: His love endures forever. Let those who fear the Lord say: His love endures forever"

I grew up with church services always opening early on with a responsive reading of a psalm or a responsive singing of a psalm. I miss that, but it still lingers in my heart because it's part of me. When our high school youth decided to be called The Calm Psalms, it touched that cord in my heart once again. I didn't influence them. They came up with it on their own. I did point out that not everything in the psalms are calm, but there are answers to many things in the psalms for our day-to-day life, our needs, our comfort, and communication with God.

" Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever. "

Just as the Lord's prayer gives us an outline for prayer in many ways, Psalm 118 gives us an outline for living. It starts by centering us on God and God's attributes like being eternal, being good and loving. His love that always endures forever. What does forever mean to you? A child might say a long, long time. A teen might interpret forever as being trapped. 40-year-old's perspective of forever can be a combination of anticipation and a heightened sense of the present.

Whereas, over 60 or 70 means finding some wisdom we hope, and looking toward happiness, and meeting Jesus face to face.

I do believe that God really loves us, the ones that He created. We should take time to appreciate his awesomeness. The more we try to see and appreciate God's brilliance and the beauty of his creation the more we can learn to know Him.

Who actually wrote Psalm 118? Psalm 118 does not name an author in its title, but there are those that believe it was King David. He is credited for many of the Psalms. King David was often referred to as the sweet Psalmist of Israel. If King David had written Psalm 118 that would've been around 1000 years before Jesus. It would definitely make the Psalm prophetic. What better than a Psalm written by the king of Israel, a great king, who was the smallest son of Jesse when he was chosen by God to become the King. He was out tending the sheep when Samuel came to anoint David. If we truly listen to the words of Psalm 118, it becomes unclear who wrote it and when it was written. There are those that believe Psalm 118 was written around the time of 500 BC. That's when the book of Ezra talks about the rebuilding of the second temple. The first temple was destroyed Around 586 BC by the Babylonians. The rubble from the temple was collected by people to rebuild the city, not the temple. When the exiles returned, they started to build the temple around 516 BC, but all that was left was the rejected stones. This is described in verses 22 and 23 of our scripture today. So did David write the Psalm or did somebody else write the Psalm? Was David gifted with a very prophetic vision of what was to come? This Psalm is also interpreted as the triumph song of Christ, the ideal servant, the perfect priest, He was the leader of the people. You have to wonder what the words of this Psalm meant to Him as He sang them on that night in the upper room with his disciples. He knew what was to come. He knew the crowds that cheered that day, just as quickly would join the mocking and taunting crowd. He knew they would turn their backs on him as he continued toward the cross. Jesus was the one who came to save, but not in the way expected. A conquering king would've been better or more understandable but that is not what happened. It's not so different today, because Jesus is someone we most often call upon when we have emergencies. Are our words of faith and commitment to Jesus are always evident or do they melt away

according to the circumstances that we face? Do we turn to our Lord Jesus Christ to bail us out when we have problems or is he part of our day-to-day life?

Did you ever think about how much Jesus gave for us? He came as a man to suffer as we might suffer and more than most ever will suffer. He experienced the excruciating pain of the nails and while he hung on the cross, he said “Father forgive them they know not what they do.” We can be forgiven for every wrong thing we have ever done or will do by just turning to Jesus and believing

I ask you to join in a responsive litany that I have phrase from Psalm 118 verses 24 through 29

This is the day that the Lord has made.

Rejoice and be glad in it!

This is the day that the Lord has made.

Lord, Please save us!

This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us celebrate the presence of the Lord in our midst!

This is the day that the Lord has made.

The Lord is God! He has shined a light on us!

This is the day that the Lord has made.

You are my God— I will give thanks to you!

You are my God— I will lift you up on high!

This is the day that the Lord has made.

***Give thanks to the Lord because he is good,
because his faithful love lasts forever.***

Let us rejoice and be glad. Amen