### We Respond to God's Word

### RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Gracious God, thank you for the love that never separates us—the love we hear in Jesus' voice and see in the tender care of those who mother us. You know us, protect us, and hold us close, even when we stray. On this day, we honor the gift of mothers and all who nurture with your love. Comfort those who grieve, strengthen those who care, and remind us we are always yours. May we live as people held in your hand, secure in grace, and bold in love. In Christ, our Shepherd and Savior, 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!

## INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS \*DOXOLOGY UMH 95

### \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

Loving God, whose promises to us find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, grant us to walk in the way of peace, giving thanks for every blessing you send. Accept the work of our hands and all the gifts we dedicate to your service. Amen!

### We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

\*CLOSING HYMN Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

UMH 400 (vs. 1 & 2)

\*BENEDICTION Rev. Jenny Lee

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

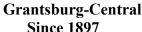
### Worship resource "Refreshing Rains of the Living Word" by Lavon Bayler

# Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

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

### 4th Sunday of Easter/Mother's Day







Atlas Since 1887



St. Croix Falls Since 1859

### **SUNDAY SERVICES:**

9:00 AM at Grantsburg with Online Zoom Service (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, Ph. D.: jennlee1732@gmail.com

Youth Director Shayna Schmid: <a href="mailto:snssnyder@gmail.com">snssnyder@gmail.com</a>

Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg: <u>centralumc2016@gmail.com</u> 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 May 11, 2025

4th Sunday of Easter/ Mother's Day

\*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

Unnumbered multitudes gather in many places to praise the God whom Jesus revealed.

We are among the crowds responding in faith, hungering and thirsting for bread and living water.

In our tribulation and in our triumphs we are drawn to the throne of grace.

Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God.

The promises God made to our ancestors are meant also for us and for today's world.

We have come to hear this good news and to prepare ourselves to share it with others. Amen.

\*DEDICATING HYMN

Jesus Is All the World to Me

UMH 469 (vs. 1 & 2)

### **OPENING PRAYER** Unison

O shepherd of all who put their trust in you, restore our souls in this time of worship, for we are tired and needy. Lead us by still waters, on paths of righteousness. Comfort us in death's dark valley and take away our fears. Feed us and anoint us with your goodness and mercy in this time together, so that when we part we shall not doubt your continuing presence. Amen!

### **BLESSING OUR MOTHERS**

All Mothers, please come to up front.

### Sacrament of Holy Communion

### INVITATION FOR COMMUNION

Rev. Jenny Lee

**CONFESSION AND PARDON** Unison

Merciful God,

We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.

We have failed to be an obedient church.

We have not done your will,

we have broken your law,

we have rebelled against you love,

we have not loved our neighbors,

and we have not heard the cry of the needy.

Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(prayers in Silence)

Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, We are forgiven! **Amen.** 

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING THE LORD'S PRAYER

UMH 13-14 (or See insert)

SHARING THE HOLY COMMUNION

### **COMMUNION SONG**

**TFWS 2260** 

### **COMMUNION PRAYER** Unison

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Proclamation of God's Word

### \*THE GOSPEL LESSON

John 10:22-30

(NRSV p. 104 in the NT, or p. 910 in the Living Bible)

This is the word of God for us today!

Thanks be to God. Amen!

### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "take, eat; this is my body which given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again. (Together) Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,

all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

### **MAY CHURCH MISSIONS**

### ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

### INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:

Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones yearround.



## LOAVES & FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT

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



For May we will be collecting items for Community Referral Agency (CRA) in Milltown that

provides shelter and services for survivors of domestic violence and assault.

Items should be new or in good to very good condition.
Please see the newsletter or bulletin board at church for a list of suggested items.

Thank you!

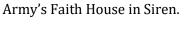
### GRANTSBURG

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"

In May we will be collecting financial donations and supplies for the Salvation





They are looking for specific supplies: Socks, dish soap, laundry soap, toilet paper, paper towels and Kleenex.

### ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

### Food Shelf



(Communion Sunday)

### Sailor Hat Offering:



The Sailor Hat offering will go to support the St. Croix Falls Food Shelf!

### Thank you for your support!

### TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

### Ministers All God's People / Rev. Jenny Lee

### **Central - Grantsburg**

Toni Koons Pianist Liturgist Toni Koons Acolyte(s) Willow Nyland **Fellowship** Volunteer Needed Volunteer Needed Counter Cleaning Sandra Erickson Sunday School Volunteer Needed Communion **Barbara Loomis** 



#### Atlas

Pianist Sharon Asp

Liturgist Colleen Adams-Schween

Usher Jamie Steffen Cleaning Volunteer Needed

Sunday School Cheryl Olson

Communion Colleen Adams-Schween

#### St. Croix Falls

Pianist Sharon Asp Liturgist Karen Sciacca Usher(s) Jim Andrews Counter **Peter Gionis Bell Ringer** Kathy Gionis **Flowers** Kathy Gionis **Fellowship Admin Members** Kathy & Peter Gionis Communion:

### THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS

Nathan Murtaugh
Claire Mathson
Peter Gionis
Shayna Schmid
Mary Lou Wright
5/11
5/12
5/15
5/16



### **PLEASE NOTE:**

1) An Online Zoom Service is scheduled for this Sunday only at 9:00 am.
The link will be posted on our parish website and Facebook page.

Click the LINK to Join Zoom Meeting

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84147808460?pwd=SDZIeFNubmEvaD

BlcytTRzVxMFIIZz09 Phone: +1 312 626 6799,

Meeting ID: 841 4780 8460, Passcode: 568271

Our Sunday Sermons are on the website at upperstcroixparish.org under Sermons!

 Sunday's video may be uploaded on late Sundays! https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC

4) We will also send you a weekly bulletin and written sermon through post mail and email. If you have any questions regarding the mailing weekly materials, please contact our parish secretary, Colleen Norenberg.

### This Week's Calendar:

Today: 4th Sunday of Easter/Mother's Day/Communion Sunday. Peace Be with You!

### **Worship Service Schedule**

5/11:	9:00 am 10:00 am 11:15 am	Grantsburg with Zoom (9:10 am, Children's Time) Atlas (10:15 am, Sunday School) St. Croix Falls
5/12:	10:30-1:30 pm	Harmony Choir Rehearsal at Rice Lake UMC
5/14:	5:00-6:00 pm	GO Fish K-up Kids Gathering (G)
	6:15 pm	Ad Council Meeting (G)
5/15:	10:00-2:00 pm	New Ministry Strategy Board Meeting in Madison
	2:00 pm	Birthday Party at Continuing Care Center (UMW)
	5:00 pm	Rotary Club Anniversary Dinner
5/17:	9:00 am-1:00 pm	North West Learning Day

### **Breakthrough Prayers:**

**Please pray for:** 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).



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

### **Next Sunday (May 18th):**

### **Central - Grantsburg**

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

### Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Mariah Gaffey
Usher	Cheryl Olson
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed

Sunday School Summer Break

### St. Croix Falls

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





### **Upcoming Events & News**

5/12: 12:15 pm Ad Council Meeting (SCF)

5/20: 10:00 am June Newsletter & Calendar Info Due

5/26: Memorial Day

5/30: 5:30-7:30 pm Family Game Night (G)

### Pastor Jenny Lee, Ph.D. Upper St. Croix Parish UMC



### "The Love that Never Separate Us"

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: One day, a little girl is sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly notices that her mother has several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast to her brunette hair. She looks at her mother and inquisitively asks, "Why are some of your hairs white, Mum?" Her mother replied, "Well, every time you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white." The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then asked, "Mumma, how come all grandma's hairs are white?"

Today is Mother's Day. We carry memories of our mothers—some sad and some joyful. Even as we grow older, we still miss them. The bond between a mother and child, when grounded in love, can never truly be taken away. Sometimes our memories of them stir feelings of regret; other times, they fill us with gratitude. What kind of memories come to your heart on Mother's Day?

During my vacation, I visited my American mother's grave. She was so good to me. She was the first person to invite me to a homemade American dinner when I came to the U.S. After she learned that my biological mother had passed away, she became like a mother to me. I used to make tissue flowers for my biological mother on Mother's Day—and now, I made them for her. Though both of them are now in heaven, I was able to visit my American mother's grave and bring her flowers. She and I were connected by God's grace and love. I met her while serving as an intern pastor at her church. Through her, her daughter became like a sister to me. Family isn't only defined by blood—it is made through love. A family rooted in love is never truly separated.

What kinds of presents do you expect from your children? Some might say, "I just want them to be healthy. That's enough." My younger sister once said, "I think money is the best present. When I gave money to my in-laws, they looked happy." I asked her again, "But what about you? What do you want from your children?" She answered, "I wish they would come and visit me as often as possible."

I believe the best gift children can give their parents is their presence. You may feel joy simply seeing them face to face. One of my friends, who has grandchildren, once said, "When they haven't visited me for a long time, I miss them deeply and long for their visit. But once they've been here for a while, I find myself wishing they would go home soon!"

There's a saying: "When your grandchild comes to visit, you're happy. When they leave, you're even happier." Do you agree?

The relationship between parents and children is unique and enduring, whether the relationship is good or difficult—because it is built on love. Love is a deeper connection than DNA or blood. Some kinds of love are seasonal. Some grow distant. But there is a kind of love—divine and enduring—that never lets us go. Jesus speaks of this kind of love, and many of us have glimpsed it, however imperfectly, in the arms of our mothers—or the ones who mother us.

Today's scripture reminds us of another unbreakable relationship: the bond between God and those who believe in Jesus Christ. The love of Jesus connects us. Like a loving mother, God holds us close—not just in affection, but in deep, covenantal love. We are connected to God through the blood and love of Jesus Christ; in the same way a child is connected to their mother.

In today's scripture, it is the season of the Feast of Dedication, which is also called Hanukkah. Jewish Hanukkah is celebrated for eight days beginning on the 25th of Kislev (which usually falls in December) to commemorate the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem. While the people celebrated the festival at the Temple, they were thinking about the Messiah and wondering when he would come. They asked Jesus to clarify whether He was the Messiah because they were confused by His miraculous works and suspicious after hearing His teachings. They questioned Him not out of faith but out of skepticism—and even hostility. Their real intention was not to believe in Him but to accuse and eventually stone Him (John 10:31).

Jesus knew their purpose and responded, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me, but you do not believe because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand."

Jesus begins with something deeply relational: "I know them." Not "I tolerate them," or "I keep track of them." He knows us—our voices, our wounds, our stories. Isn't that the kind of knowing we all long for? Many of us have felt this in the way a mother knows her child's cry in a crowd, or remembers their favorite bedtime story. In the way she can see past a child's silence and still know something's wrong. This is not distant, impersonal love. This is love with skin on it. And Jesus says, "I know you." In all your complexities. In your best and in your worst.

And still, "I call you mine."

Mothers are not perfect—none of us are—but many reflect that fierce desire to protect, to shelter, to hold close. Some of you know this from experience. Some of you have become this kind of love for others—whether as birth mothers, stepmothers, foster parents, grandmothers, or spiritual mothers. Jesus echoes this kind of holy protection: "They shall never perish." Not because life is without hardship, but because we are never beyond the reach of grace. No matter how far the sheep wander, the Shepherd does not abandon them.

In Romans 8:38–39 (NRSV) the Apostle Paul say, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Yes, there is nothing that can separate us from the love of God.

And today, we celebrate the echoes of that divine promise in human hearts.

Perhaps the most comforting line of all is this: "No one can snatch them out of my hand."

That includes the wolves of this world. That includes our own doubts and mistakes. That includes time, distance, even death. Nothing—nothing—can undo the love that God has for us.

Think of a mother holding her child through storms, fevers, teenage rebellion, late-night worries, and long-distance prayers. That fierce grip—the one that says, "I'm not letting go"—that's what Jesus offers to every single one of us. Even when we can't hold on to Him, He is still holding on to us.

On this Mother's Day, some of us are celebrating joyfully. Some are remembering mothers who are no longer with us. Some are grieving what never was, or what was lost too soon.

Some are in the hard middle—loving and struggling all at once. Wherever you are today, hear this: There is a Love that never separates us. It is rooted in Christ, and it is reflected—however imperfectly—in the hearts of those who have mothered us well.

You are known. You are protected. You are held. And you are never alone.

Thanks be to God. Amen.