

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
July 13th, 2025
“5th Sunday After Pentecost”

*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**

Wherever we go we are in the presence of God;
we come together to celebrate what is always true.

God has searched us and known us;

God discerns our thoughts from afar.

We cannot go away from the Spirit of God;
there is no way we can flee from God’s presence.

Before a word is on our tongues,

God knows what we are going to say.

No darkness can hide us or cover our activity,
for God penetrates the night and shines through it.

God lays a hand of blessing on us;

how wonderful is our Creator! Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Jesu, Jesu* **UMH 432 (vs. 1 & 2)**

OPENING PRAYER **Unison**

God of prophets, do not leave us alone, but visit us once more to
intervene on our behalf. Part the waters that separate us from you
so we may walk through unafraid. Grant us courage in this hour
to examine ourselves before you and to open our lives to your
direction. Lead us, we pray, from darkness to light. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME (G) **UMH 191 (vs. 1)**

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Luke 10:25-37

(NRSV, p. 71-72 in the New Testament, and p. 874 in the Living Bible)

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON

“Go and Do Likewise”

Rev. Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER **Unison**

Merciful God, thank You for seeing us when we were broken, for
rescuing us through Your Son, and for calling us to live in Your
mercy. Help us not to walk past those in need. Give us eyes to see,
hearts to feel, and hands to serve. May we go and do likewise—just as
You did for us. In Jesus’ name, 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

**INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND
OFFERINGS**

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** **Unison**

May our offerings witness your presence among the poor, the
oppressed, and all seekers after truth. Bless us through our giving, as
we have been enriched by your generosity. We give thanks for our
inheritance and the chance to pass it on to others. Amen.

JULY CHURCH MISSIONS

ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

<p>INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM: Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.</p> 	<p>LOAVES & FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT</p> <p>Requested items: eggs, milk, mayonnaise, coffee, tea, peanut butter, crackers, cookies. Personal Products for men & women.</p>	<p>For July we will be collecting school supplies for children in need in our own community.</p>  <p>We will also be collecting peanut butter and jelly for the food shelf in July. Please leave your donations in the basket in the front of the church. Thank you!</p> 
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GRANTSBURG

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

<p>BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!</p> <p>REMEMBER ... Every Sunday Is MAC 'N CHEESE SUNDAY! Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack Program"</p> 	<p>This month will be collecting financial donations and school supplies for children in the Grantsburg community. The donations will be dropped off in August at Faith Lutheran Church where they will be distributed. Thank you for your support!</p> 
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ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

<p>Food Shelf</p> <p>(Communion Sunday)</p> 	<p>Sailor Hat Offering:</p> <p><i>The Sailor Hat offering will go to support VBS in our Parish.</i></p> 
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Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers All God's People
Rev. Jenny Lee

Central -Grantsburg

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

Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Mariah Gaffey
Usher	Sue Olson
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Summer Break

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Kathy Gionis
Usher(s)	Karen Sciacca
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Women of the church
Fellowship	Admin Members



THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS

Brodie Kunze 7/15
Walden Erickson 7/14



PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **There is Zoom Service only at 9:00 AM.**
- 2) Our Sunday Sermons are on the website at upperstcroixparish.org under Sermons!
- 3) We will also send you a weekly bulletin and written sermon through post mail and email.
- 4) Please note that we send you every week **USCP Weekly ENews with Photos & Sunday Worship Materials through email.** If you have any questions regarding the mailing weekly materials, please contact our parish secretary, Colleen Norenberg.

This Week's Calendar:

Today: 5th Sunday After Pentecost. May God bless you!

Worship Service Schedule

7/6:	9:00 am	Central-Grantsburg UMC (with Zoom)
	10:00 am	Atlas UMC
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls UMC
7/13:	5:30 pm-8:00 pm	VBS Volunteer Training Day 1
7/14-7/15		Provisional Elder Summer Workshop at Pine Lake Camp
7/15:	6:30 am	Ad Council Meeting (G)
7/16	10:00 pm	Korean Caucus Board Meeting via Zoom
	5:30-7:00 pm	Kids Gathering 5 and Up
7/17	10:30 am-1:00 pm	Pastor Jenny volunteers at Loaves and Fishes in Luck
7/18	1:30 pm	Ad Council Meeting (A)
7/20	12:15 pm	Ad Council Meeting (SCF)
	1:00-3:00 pm	Family Swim Day at Grantsburg Community Pool
	3:30-5:30 pm	VBS Volunteer Training Day 2

Breakthrough Prayers:

Please pray for: Sheryl Simons (recovery), Dave and Sharon Huff (safe trip), Sue Olson (grandson Rifle's and daughter Sanci's healing), Karen Sciacca (her son, Drew-looking for new house), Sally Aldorfer (her husband Ron's healing), Dave Huff (loss of brother-in-law, Gary), Paulie Kratchmer (her granddaughter, Brooke and her mission team), Toni Koons (her friend, Michelle's surgery, 7/14 and coworker, Brad-healing), Barbara Loomis (recovery), Adalyn Snyder (recovery), and Sharon Asp (her friend, Alison on hospice), and those who are affected by the flooding disaster in Texas.

Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude: Thankful for our freedom!

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

Next Sunday (July 20th):

Central -Grantsburg

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

Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Sue Olson
Usher	Colleen Adams-Schween
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Summer Break

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Kathy Gionis
Usher(s)	Karen Sciacca
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Women of the church
Fellowship	Admin Members



Upcoming Events & News

- 7/20: Family Swim Day at Grantsburg Community Pool
- 7/28-31: 2025 Vacation Bible School (Registration is open now)
- 7/23: The Last Volunteer Training Day (6:00-8:30 pm)

Thank you very much for your dedication!

July 13th, 2025

Luke 10:25-37

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



“Go and Do Likewise”

I want to start with something funny that I found on the internet site: At Sunday School, a teacher was teaching the children Bible lessons. “If I sold my house and car, had a big garage sale, and gave all my money to the church, would I get into heaven?” A teacher asked the children in her Sunday School class. “No!” the children all answered. “If I cleaned the church daily, mowed the yard, and kept everything neat and tidy. Would I get into heaven?” Again, the answer was, “No!” “Well,” she continued, “then how can I get to heaven?” A five-year-old boy shouted out, “You gotta be dead!”

This lighthearted moment reminds us of a profound truth. We believe the Gospel message of John 3:16 is powerful good news about eternal life: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

Some of us memorize this verse because of its deep meaning. But I wonder—how do *you* understand it? Some might focus on, “Salvation is only through Jesus Christ.” Others on, “God loves us so much.” Still others on, “We Christians are given the gift of eternal life.” Which is correct? The answer is: yes to all.

But did you also catch that this message of salvation is open to **everyone**? I read this verse as saying, “God loves everyone so much. God wants everyone to believe in His only Son, Jesus Christ, and wants everyone to be saved.” Even though we read the same verse, we sometimes understand it differently—and that leads us to different beliefs. That’s why it matters how we read and understand the Bible.

In today’s scripture, there is a lawyer. In biblical terms, this lawyer isn’t an attorney as we know today, but a teacher of Jewish Law. In the Bible, they’re often described as Pharisees, scribes, or rabbis—professional religious scholars who knew the Scriptures deeply, especially the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament).

This law teacher stood up to test Jesus in front of a crowd and asked, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He called Jesus “Teacher,” but his tone was challenging, as if to say, “If you really are a teacher like us, you should be able to answer this.” They knew Jesus wasn’t formally educated—just a carpenter from Nazareth—but they also saw the crowds that followed Him and called Him “Rabbi.” So, they wanted to embarrass Him in public.

Jesus, knowing his intent, responded with a question: “What is written in the Law? What do you read there?” The teacher gave a perfect answer, as expected: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind; and your neighbor as yourself.”

This is what Jesus elsewhere calls the Great Commandment—drawn from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, often referred to as “The Shema,” the foundational command for God’s people.

Jesus then said, “You have answered correctly. Do this, and you will live.” In other words: If you know the right thing to do—go and do it. But the teacher, wanting to justify himself, asked, “And who is my neighbor?” At first glance, it may sound like a silly question, but it’s actually quite significant.

So, let me ask you: Who is your neighbor? When you hear, “Love God and love your neighbors,” who comes to mind?

In Jesus’ time, many Jews believed their neighbors were limited to “righteous” people—fellow Jews who were not sinners, not Gentiles, not Samaritans, not women, not children, not the sick, and certainly not the poor. They looked after “their own” and believed they were obeying the law. Knowing this mindset, Jesus responded not with a direct answer but with a parable—the story of the Good Samaritan.

A man was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho and was attacked by robbers. They stripped him, beat him, and left him half-dead. A priest came by, saw the man—and crossed to the other side. A Levite, another religious leader, did the same. But a Samaritan—a person despised and rejected by Jews—saw the man, was moved with compassion, and stopped. He bandaged his wounds, poured oil and wine on them, placed the man on his animal, brought him to an inn, and cared for him. He even paid for his continued care and promised to return.

This Samaritan, considered impure and unworthy by the standards of the day, showed what true love looks like: a love that sees, stops, and serves.

Jesus then asked the teacher, “Which of these three was a neighbor to the wounded man?” In asking that, Jesus turned the question around: Instead of asking, “Who is my neighbor?” the better question is, “To whom can I be a neighbor?” Our neighbor isn’t just the person who lives next door. Our neighbor is anyone in need—anyone God places in our path.

To “love your neighbor as yourself” means to treat those in need with the same care and urgency you’d give yourself—because we are all made in God’s image.

There’s something else we can’t ignore. Why didn’t the priest or Levite help?

We don’t know their reasons, but we can imagine. According to Jewish law, touching a bleeding or dying person made someone ritually unclean, which meant they couldn’t serve in the temple. Maybe they were on their way to worship. Maybe they thought, “If I stop, I won’t be fit to serve.” Titles, traditions, and theological concerns sometimes get in the way of compassion.

But God’s law—the law Jesus fulfills and teaches—is clear: Love comes first.

Now, imagine you’re on your way to church. You’re leading worship, preparing coffee fellowship, or giving the sermon. But you come across someone in real need. What do you do?

Do you stop and help? Or walk by on the other side? Jesus is telling us—love must come first. Rules and roles are not excuses to ignore human need.

So, Jesus asks, “What is written in the Law? What do you read there?”

And I ask you today: What do you read in the Bible? I read, “Love everyone as God loves us.” God sent His only Son not when we were perfect—but while we were still sinners. Jesus died on the cross before we even knew Him.

So go and do likewise. Go and love your neighbor—as God has already loved you.

Thanks be to God. Amen.