

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
November 16th, 2025
23rd 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
The sovereign God of all nations summons us;
all of us are offspring of the most high God.
As Children of Eternal One,
we seek realities that are yet unseen.
God calls us away from speculation to life’s realities;
people are suffering and dying for their faith.
Some are persecuted and betrayed;
some are delivered up and imprisoned.
For many, the foundations of life are shaken
and there is no justice or hope to be seen.
We come to hear from the divine council,
that we might rise up on the healing wings of God. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*
UMH 400 (vs. 1 & 2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison
Gracious and faithful God, we gather this morning in gratitude
and hope. Though the world around us changes and our buildings
grow old, Your love never fails, and Your presence never fades.
You are our firm foundation and our sure strength. Renew our
faith, inspire our worship, and remind us that Your Spirit is
building a living temple within us. May all we do today honor You
and proclaim Your enduring grace, through Jesus Christ our
Lord. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Luke 21:5-19

(NRSV, p. 85 in the New Testament, and p. 887-888 in the Living Bible)

This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON *“Faith That Endures When the World Shakes”*

Rev. Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison
Lord, when the world shakes, and when the things we’ve trusted seem
to crumble, remind us that You are our firm foundation.
Strengthen our faith, renew our hope, and fill us with courage to
endure. Rebuild Your church — not only in stone, but in Spirit.
Make us living witnesses of Your unshakable love. In Jesus’ name,
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
Faithful God, You are our rock and our redeemer. Even when the
world around us shifts, Your love stands firm. We bring these gifts
as signs of our trust in You and our hope for the future You are
building among us. Use our offerings to renew Your church,

NOVEMBER 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>We will be collecting Thanksgiving food items in November. Please leave them in the basket at the front of the church</p> 	 <p>We will continue collecting shoe boxes for Operation Christmas Child in November. Shoe Boxes are due by November 16th. Information is available at church. Thank you for your ongoing support!</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>We will be collecting financial and shoe box donations for Operation Christmas Child. Shoe boxes must be turned in no later than Nov. 16th.</p> <p>Mid November through December we will begin collecting financial donations for Interfaith Caregivers of Burnett Co. Christmas for Kids.</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>The Sailor Hat offering will go to support families in need with Thanksgiving gift cards.</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
Counter	Russ Hammer
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson

Atlas

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

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Lynn Hanson
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Andrews
Flowers	Women of the church



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Pastor Jenny Lee
11/17



PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) Live Zoom service will be at 9:00 am through the Grantsburg-Central Service.
- 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 (if requested) and email.
Please note that we send you the weekly USCP Weekly E-News 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: **23rd Sunday After Pentecost!**
May God bless you all!

Worship Service and A Week Schedule

11/16:	9:00 am	Central UMC - Grantsburg (With Live Zoom)
	10:00 am	Atlas UMC (10:15 am, Sunday School)
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls UMC
	12:15 pm	Ad Council Meeting (SCF)
11/18:	6:30 pm	Ad Council Meeting (G)
11/19:	9:00 am	Korean Caucus Board Meeting via Zoom
	2:30 pm	Ad Council Meeting (A)
	5:30-7:30 pm	Youth Group Gathering (G)
11/20:	8:30-11:00 am	Pastor Jenny volunteers at Grantsburg Food Shelf
	2:00 pm	Ministry Task Force Team Meeting (SCF)
11/22:	10:00 am-noon	Thanksgiving Fun Day for all Kids (G)
11/23:		Thanksgiving Sunday

Upcoming Events & News

- 11/23: Thanksgiving Sunday-bring Thanksgiving food to the food shelf and thank you cards for God!
- 11/30: The First Sunday of Advent
- 12/4, 12/11, 12/18 and 12/22:
Advent Bible Study
(*The Women of Christmas* by Liz Higgs)
Please sign-up by November 23rd.

Next Sunday (November 23rd):

Central - Grantsburg	Toni Koons
Pianist	Toni Koons
Scripture Reading	Willow Nyland
Acolyte(s)	Volunteer Needed
Fellowship	Russ Hammer
Counter	Sandra Erickson
Cleaning	

Atlas	
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Mariah Gaffey
Usher	Sue Olson
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Cheryl Olson

St. Croix Falls	
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Lynn Hanson
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Andrews
Flowers	Women of the church

Breakthrough Prayers:

Please Pray For: Julie Branstad (neighbor Gary Erickson's healing), Sandra Erickson (Son, Mike's healing), Charles Wright (brother's surgery), Kathy Gionis (grandson's healing), LeAnne Sylvester (daughter's surgery), Rene Soto (family's moving), Jim Andrews (brother, George's healing), Colleen Adams-Schween (Sheryl Simon and Bob Determan's healing and God's peace),

Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude: Judy Lien (Friend, Gary's successful transplant), Colleen Norenberg (God's answer for sister Vicki), Pastor Jenny (A new family-Rene Soto at SCF).

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



November 16th, 2025
Luke 21:5-19

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



“Faith That Endures When the World Shakes”

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: A Sunday school teacher began her lesson by asking, “Boys and girls, what do we know about God?” A hand shot up in the air.

“He is an artist!” said a kindergartener.

“Really? How do you know?” the teacher asked.

“You know the Lord’s Prayer — *Our Father, who does art in heaven...*”

I don’t know why we still use such ancient words! As you may know, “art” is the old English form of the verb *to be*. In other words, it means, “Our Father, who is in heaven.”

Still, that little boy’s thought about God is quite profound. It makes sense to me, especially when I look at the beautiful flowers in spring, the lush greenery of summer, the colorful leaves of fall, and the pure white snow of winter. These are all God’s works of art. Looking at the beauty of nature, we know that God truly is a great artist.

What else do you know about God? We may think we know a lot, but when we’re asked to describe God, we often pause and wonder what we really know — and how to put it into words. The same is true of *faith*. We believe in Jesus as our Savior and Lord, yet we often find ourselves wondering how to explain our faith to others.

Today, we will talk about *our faith — even when the world shakes*. I loved Deb and Russ Hammer’s presentation last Sunday at Grantsburg-Central UMC about the stewardship narrative budget and the furnace fundraising campaign. We have hope because we have faith. As the saying goes, *if you are resting in the shade, it’s because someone once planted a tree* (Warren Buffett). What a beautiful testimony of faith that is!

In today’s scripture, let’s see how Jesus leads us to a faith that endures when the world shakes. There’s something awe-inspiring about beautiful buildings. When the disciples looked at the temple in Jerusalem — its massive stones and glittering gifts — they couldn’t help but marvel: “Look, Teacher! What large stones and what beautiful buildings!”

I can imagine Jesus looking at them tenderly before saying something shocking: “Not one stone will be left on another; all will be thrown down.” What a strange and unsettling word. The Temple was the center of their faith, the pride of their people, the symbol of God’s presence. And yet, Jesus was saying — it wouldn’t last forever.

I think we can understand the disciples’ shock. Our churches — here in our parish — have stood for more than a hundred years. They’ve witnessed baptisms, weddings, funerals, and countless prayers. The walls have heard hymns sung in strong voices — and sometimes in small, trembling ones too.

But we also know that times have changed. Our membership isn’t what it once was. The buildings need repair. We sometimes worry about the future — about what will become of these sacred spaces. And in those moments, Jesus’ words echo in our hearts: “All these things you see — they will not last forever.”

That might sound discouraging — but Jesus didn’t speak those words to bring despair. He said them to shift our

focus — from stones to Spirit, from buildings to belief, from temples made by hands to the living temple of our hearts.

When the world shakes — whether it's our church, our health, our finances, or even our nation — Jesus reminds us of what truly endures. The disciples thought the temple was their foundation, but Jesus wanted them to see that He Himself was the true foundation. And that foundation cannot be shaken.

Our church may have aging walls and smaller numbers, but our faith has grown stronger, deeper, and more real. I love how Deb Hammer said, "Our church is small, but mighty." Because faith isn't built on numbers, or programs, or even buildings — faith is built on Jesus Christ, the solid rock. As the hymn says, "*Come, Thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace.*" Yes, the grace of God is still with us. Jesus is our cornerstone of faith.

We know, we may not be able to keep everything the same — but we can renew what matters most. We can renovate hearts, repair hope, and rebuild our vision — because our foundation is sure.

Jesus tells the disciples, "By your endurance, you will gain your souls." Endurance doesn't mean just holding on tightly and waiting for the storm to pass. Endurance means staying faithful — praying, loving, giving, serving — even when it's hard. Every act of love, every meal served, every prayer whispered, every child taught — these are the stones God uses to build a living temple.

So even as our buildings show their age, our faith shows its life. Even as the world changes, the Spirit renews us from within. And even when the future feels uncertain, our hope remains sure — because Christ is with us.

I believe God still has plans for our church. As we replace the roof and furnace, and renovate the restroom, we must also renovate our faith — with hope, joy, and prayer. Yes, the buildings may need renovation, but more importantly, the Spirit is already doing renovation within us. God is shaping us into a people who don't depend on large crowds or grand temples, but on grace, gratitude, and generosity.

The early church started in small groups — in homes, around tables, with hearts on fire. And from that humble beginning, the Gospel changed the world. If God could do that then — God can do it again. Right here. Through us. Through our faith that endures.

So, when we see the world shake — when we see things changing, shrinking, or breaking — remember this: The Kingdom of God is not in decline. It's alive in every act of love, every prayer, every heart that trusts in Jesus. Our faith does not crumble because our foundation does not move. Jesus Christ — our Rock and our Redeemer — still holds us fast.

Some of us tend to keep a positive mindset, and some a negative one. But I want to remind you of this: The saying, "*Your life will be led according to how you think,*" has its roots in the Bible — specifically in Proverbs 23:7, which says, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." (KJV)

This verse reminds us that our thoughts shape who we are and how we live. Later, the writer James Allen expanded on this idea in his well-known book *As a Man Thinketh* (1903), expressing that "a person is the product of his thoughts." In modern terms, we often hear it said, "*You become what you think about.*" The message is timeless: the direction of our life follows the direction of our heart and mind.

So please, find your hope in Jesus Christ — not in people or material things. Keep your faith that endures when the world shakes.

Thanks be to God. Amen.