

\*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

Generous God, we bring these gifts with grateful hearts, knowing that all we have comes from you. Use them to extend your love, to serve those in need, and to build your kingdom in our community and beyond. As we give, remind us that our lives, time, and talents are also offerings to you. Bless what we offer and empower us to live as people sent to serve and sent in love. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

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

\*CLOSING HYMN *In the Garden* UMH 314 (vs. 1 & 2)

\*COMMISSION AND BLESSING Responsive

Christ is risen!

**He is risen indeed!**

As the angel said to the women at the tomb,  
"Do not be afraid; go and tell the good news."

**We go, carrying the hope of resurrection into our homes,  
workplaces, and neighborhoods.**

Christ sends us to serve and to love.

**We will serve with humility, love with courage, and live  
as witnesses to God's grace.**

May God bless you and keep you,  
may Christ's light shine through us,

**May the Spirit guide your steps,**

**And may we be sent in love into the world. Amen!**

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

# Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

The 2026 Parish Ministry Theme:  
***"Sent to Serve, Sent in Love"*** (Micah 6:8)

**"Epiphany Sunday"**



**Grantsburg-Central**  
Since 1897



**Atlas**  
Since 1887



**St. Croix Falls**  
Since 1859

## SUNDAY SERVICES:

**9:00 AM at Grantsburg (with Zoom Service)**

*(9:10 AM, Children's Time)*

**10:00 AM at Atlas**

*(Sunday School-New Year Break)*

**11:15 AM at St. Croix Falls**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev. Jenny Lee: [jennlee1732@gmail.com](mailto:jennlee1732@gmail.com)

Youth Director Shayna Schmid: [snsnyder@gmail.com](mailto:snsnyder@gmail.com)

Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg: [centralumc2016@gmail.com](mailto:centralumc2016@gmail.com)

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

[www.upperstcroixparish.org](http://www.upperstcroixparish.org)

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

**Upper St. Croix Parish**  
**Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls**  
**January 4th, 2026**  
**“Epiphany Sunday”**

---

\*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 dwelling place of God is with humanity.

The human One comes among us in glory.

**We will be God’s people,  
acknowledging God’s presence with us.**

God is making all things new.

Praise God, all nations!

**Great is God’s steadfast love,  
and God’s faithfulness endures forever.**

Praise God in word and in deed.

Praise God in your attitudes and actions.

**We meet God in the hungry and thirsty,  
in the stranger and sufferer.**

God is at work in you,

and God is served through your efforts.

**We rejoice in the opportunity to reach out  
to sisters and brothers in need. Amen.**

**\*DEDICATING HYMN** *He Lives* UMH 310 (vs. 1 & 2)

**OPENING PRAYER** Unison

Risen Lord, on the first day of the week you met faithful women at the empty tomb and turned fear into hope. As we begin this new year, we come with open hearts, trusting your promise: “Do not be afraid.” Roll away the stones that weigh upon us, renew our faith, and open our eyes to your living presence. Send us from this place

to serve and to love, carrying the good news of resurrection. In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

**CHILDREN’S TIME (G)**

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

**Proclamation of God’s Word**

**\*THE GOSPEL LESSON**

**Matthew 28:1-7**

(NRSV, p.33-34 in the New Testament, and  
p.830-831 in the Living Bible)

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

*Thanks be to God. Amen!*

**SERMON**

*“Jesus Has Risen”*

**Kathy Gionis**

**(Lay Servant, St. Croix Falls)**

**We Respond to God’s Word**

**RESPONDING PRAYER** Unison

Risen Christ, we confess that the world often feels heavy and dark, and fear can still find its way into our hearts. Yet the empty tomb declares that hope is not lost. Because you have risen, despair does not have the final word. Renew our courage, strengthen our faith, and send us into the world as people of hope—serving with love, trusting your light to overcome the darkness. We pray in the name of the risen Christ. 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**

# JANUARY CHURCH MISSIONS



## ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

<p><b>INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:</b> Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.</p> 	<p><b>LOAVES &amp; FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT</b></p> <p>Suggested donation items: Spaghetti sauce, macaroni, peanut butter, pasta and rice. Please leave them in the basket at the front of the church!</p> 	<p>Atlas will be collecting funds for the Steck children who were involved in a car accident Dec 7 and lost both their parents. They will be moving in with family and the youngest child has extensive lifelong medical needs. Donations can be noted in the offering and we will coordinate with Deb Hammer to get the family the money.</p> 
--	--	--



## GRANTSBURG

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

<p><b>BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!</b></p> <p>REMEMBER ... Every Sunday Is MAC 'N CHEESE SUNDAY! Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack Program"</p> 	<p><b>Loving Support for the Steck Children.</b></p> <p>This January, our mission is to surround the Steck children with prayers, love and support in the wake of unimaginable loss.</p> <p>A devastating accident claimed the lives of both parents, Jeremiah and Erin. Their three beloved children, Eric (10), Lydia (8) and Levi (6), survived, though each suffered serious injuries. The road ahead will be long for this family. Your prayers and financial support are greatly appreciated.</p> 
--	---

## ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

<p><b>Food Shelf</b></p> <p><b>(Communion Sunday)</b></p> 	<p><b>Sailor Hat Offering:</b></p> <p>The Sailor Hat offering will go to support the Steck family during this difficult time.</p> 
--	---

Thank you for your support!

# TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

**Ministers All God's People**  
**Rev. Jenny Lee**

## Central -Grantsburg

Preach	Kathy Gionis
Pianist	Toni Koons
Scripture Reading	Toni Koons
Liturgist	Deb and Russ Hammer
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Volunteer Needed
Counter	Russ Hammer
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson

## Atlas

Preach	Sharon Asp
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Colleen Adams-Schween
Usher	Sue Olson
Cleaning	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Sunday School	Christmas break

## St. Croix Falls

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



## BIRTHDAY'S & ANNIVERSARIES

**There are no birthdays or anniversaries this week. If we missed your special day, please let us know by contacting Pastor Jenny or Colleen Norenberg, church Secretary, and provide us the date of your special day.**

**Have a blessed week!**

### 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: **Epiphany Sunday**  
May God bless you in the New Year!

### Worship Service and A Week Schedule

1/4:	9:00 am	Central UMC - Grantsburg (With Live Zoom)
	10:00 am	Atlas UMC (Break-Sunday School)
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls UMC
12/26-1/8:		Pastor Jenny's Vacation
1/7:	4:00-5:00 pm	GO Fish Kindergarten to 4th Grade (G)
1/9:	4:30-6:30 pm	Family Game Night (G)
1/10:	8:00 am	UM Men Meeting (G)
	10:00 am	Bob Determan's Visitation (First UMC Lindstrom, MN)
	11:00 am	Bob Determan's Celebration of Life Service-First UMC in Lindstrom, 30828 Irene Ave. Lindstrom, MN 55045

### Upcoming Events & News

1/11: Communion Sunday/ Law Enforcement Appreciation Sunday:  
Award of Advent Bible Study Certificates

12/26-1/8: Pastor Jenny's Vacation  
Pulpit Supply: 1/4: Kathy Gionis

### Next Sunday (January 11th):

#### Central -Grantsburg

Pianist	Toni Koons
Scripture Reading	Toni Koons
Liturgist	Russ & Deb Hammer
Acolyte(s)	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Fellowship	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Counter	Russ Hammer
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson

#### Atlas

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Usher	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Cleaning	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Sunday School	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>

#### St. Croix Falls

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

### Breakthrough Prayers: (from 12/28/25)

**Please Pray For:** Deb Hammer (pray and help the family who were involved in the car accident), Sandre Erickson (son, Mike's surgery was postponed), Sally Alderfer (healing of Kay Lamphere, her sister, and brother-in-law), and Pastor Jenny (safe travel).

**Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude:** Georgeanne Koons (her neighbor, Jacky in our church), and Pastor Jenny (Atlas Sunday School kids and teachers).

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



## **Matthew 28:1-7 New International Version**

**28: 1** After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb.

**2** There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it.

**3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. **4** The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men.

**5** The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. **6** He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. **7** Then go quickly and tell his disciples: He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you.

### **JESUS HAS RISEN**

Jesus was gone before the two Mary's came to look at the tomb, but the women didn't know that.

Where was Jesus? Now we have a problem.

When Mary Magdalene and the other Mary arrived at the tomb where Jesus had been laid, the stone covering the mouth of the tomb was still in place-----the opening was covered. The ground started moving and shaking and there was a violent earthquake and the women were frightened. What were the women doing there? Why did they come to look at the tomb at dawn? Did they have an expectation that they would see Jesus? If they did, that expectation was shattered when they saw that the stone was still in place, just as it was when Jesus' body was placed in the grave. Then there appeared an angel whose appearance was grand and terrifying, described as lightening in snow white clothes. He pushed the stone away from the opening and then sat down on the stone. The angel said to the women that he knew they were looking for Jesus. Where was Jesus?

Now it is nearly 2000 years later and there are more than enough troubles to be concerned about, stressed out, worried and fearful. In just our own country, there is a lack of civility which results in people being closed-minded to another's point of view and circumstances. This may be a political or religious viewpoint, a view about who we are entitled to love, a racial viewpoint, and sadly, a view as to who is entitled to live in this country. It even extends to different beliefs as to what the role of government and society is towards helping out and lifting up those whose circumstances are less fortunate in the form of homelessness, food insecurity, access to medical care, and safe schools and places of worship. There is a fear that we are losing our way. And that is a problem.

The angel told the two Marys that they shouldn't be afraid of what they were seeing, and to understand that Jesus was not in the tomb because he had risen, as he said he would. That is how faith is born. He urged them to go and tell the disciples that Jesus had risen and would meet them in Galilee. When the angel told the women not to be afraid, he was telling them there was nothing to fear. What was initially fear of experiencing an apparition appearing to them during an earthquake, was calmed by the angel urging them to move on with their lives and move on quickly and tell the disciples that Jesus had risen and was waiting for them. Jesus was living and they could move on without fear.

Christian love and compassion is a means of grace which can be attained by works of mercy, as preached by John Wesley. Works of mercy are directed toward loving one's neighbor as Jesus commanded. It can be comforting someone coping with the death of a loved one, visiting a sick friend, feeding those in need, giving to charity. By engaging in the care of others, it makes us better Christians and fosters empathy and respect. Christian love and compassion are also fostered by acts of justice which are the actions of real folks protesting on behalf of the persecution of oppressed minorities and immigrants. Acts of justice are beginning to be taken more seriously by those in charge of governing and addressing the needs of everyday working people.

Troubles in the country can generate fear of what the future holds; health issues, food insecurity, inflation, homelessness, safe schools and safe places of worship. Practicing means of grace through works of mercy and works of justice are ways of showing that Jesus' life makes it possible for us to move through fear and follow God, sharing God's love with others, much as the two Marys did when they moved forward through their fear.