

**RESPONDING PRAYER Unison**

Gracious and loving Father, we thank You for calling us into Your family through Jesus Christ. Help us to trust in Your presence in our joys and in our sufferings. Strengthen our faith, so we may boldly follow Your will, serve joyfully, and love one another as You have loved us. Meet us in our gardens of grief, call us by name, and remind us that we are Your beloved children. Amen.

**LOVE OF CHURCH AWARD**

Charles Wright (G)  
Susan Olson (A)  
Peter Gionis (SCF)

**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**

Gracious God, we bring our gifts with grateful hearts, recognizing that all we have comes from You. Bless these offerings and use them to share Your love, care for the needy, and advance Your kingdom here on earth. May our lives, like these gifts, be a reflection of Christ's sacrifice, generosity, and grace. Help us to give joyfully, faithfully, and with hearts fully devoted to You. Amen.

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

**\*CLOSING HYMN**

*In the Garden*

**UMH 314 (vs. 1 & 2)**

**\*BENEDICTION**

Rev. Jenny Lee

**\*POSTLUDE**

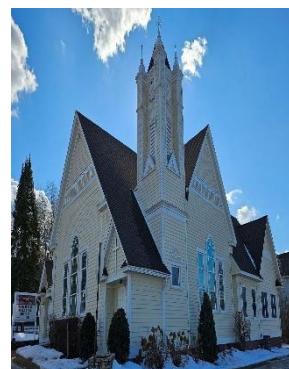
Toni Koons (G)/ Sharon Asp (A & SCF)

Worship resource "Fresh Winds of the Spirit" by Lavon Bayler

 **Upper St. Croix Parish  
United Methodist Church**

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

**"Church Appreciation Month"  
"Easter 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**

*(10:15 AM, Sunday School)*

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

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

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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**  
**April 5th, 2026**  
**“Church Appreciation Month”**  
**“Easter Sunday”**

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\*Please stand if you are able.

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

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PASSING OF THE GREETINGS**

*“Happy Easter!” (Waive your hands at one another)*

**We Celebrate New Life in Christ**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**    **Responsive**

The day is God’s own creation!

**We will rejoice and be glad in it!**

Jesus Christ has broken the bonds of death!

**We are witnesses to amazing good news!**

Turn from your weeping and mourning

Put aside the ways of death.

**We are being raised with Christ  
to a new quality of life.**

The surprises of the resurrection  
continue into our own day.

**The risen Christ meets us here,  
bringing us new life and hope. Amen!**

**\*DEDICATING HYMN**    *Christ the Lord Is Risen Today*

**UMH 302 (vs. 1 & 2)**

**OPENING PRAYER**    **Unison**

**Risen Christ, we gather this Easter Sunday with hearts full of joy and gratitude. We celebrate Your victory over death and the hope of new life. As we come to this table of Holy Communion, remind us of Your sacrifice and love, and unite us as one family in You. Fill us with Your Spirit, strengthen our faith, and send us forth to share Your peace, love, and resurrection hope with the world. Amen.**

**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 your 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**

**UMH 13-14 (or See insert)**

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**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 20:1-18**

*(NRSV, p. 114-115 in the New Testament, and p. 921 in the Living Bible)*

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

**Thanks be to God. Amen!**

**Music of Ministry (G)**

**Julie Branstad**

**SERMON**    **“My God and Your God, My Father and Your Father”**

**Rev. Jenny Lee**

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.**

## 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**



Suggested donation items: Spaghetti sauce, macaroni, peanut butter, pasta and rice. Please leave them in the basket at the front of the church!



Atlas' April Mission will be April Showers

We will shower the church with supplies!

- Suggested items:
- Styrofoam coffee cups
- Plastic drink cups
- Small luncheon paper plates
- Gallon plastic bags with twist ties
- Furnace filters 20x16
- Tall kitchen garbage bags
- Paper towels

### 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 are collecting supplies for the church in April. Please check the Mission Board at church for a list of needed supplies.

### ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

**Food Shelf**



**(Communion Sunday)**



**Sailor Hat Offering:**

The Sailor Hat offering will go support UMCOR & Harbor House.

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	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Counter	Russ Hammer
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson
Communion	Barbara Loomis

### Atlas

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

### 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 Sciacca

### Prayers:

**Please Pray For:** Sharon Asp (son-in-law), Karen Sciacca (Wendy is on hospice), Sue Olson (son Troy's therapy and recovery), Jim Andrews (brother Joe's recovery), Lynn Hanson (Grandson, A.J.), Lee Frederickson (great-grandson Paul's healing and recovery), Betty Doolittle (Rev. Richard Alger passed away, 2/18), Peter Gionis (brother Jay), Deb Hammer (our Country).

**Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude:** Thank you, Lord! Deb Hammer (good time with Mikala and her friends and parents), Sue Olson (son Troy coming back home).

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



**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: Church Appreciation Month/Easter Sunday  
Happy Easter!

**Worship Service and A Week Schedule**

4/5:	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
	2:00 pm	Pastor Jenny leads worship at Continuing Care Center
4/7:	6:30 pm	SPRC Meeting via Zoom
4/8:	1:00 pm	UMW Meeting (G)
	4:30-6:30 pm	Youth Gathering (G)
4/9:	9:00 am	Northwest Clergy Meeting via Zoom
	10:30 am-1:00 pm	Pastor Jenny volunteers at Loaves and Fishes in Luck
4/10:	1:00 pm	Korean Caucus Board Meeting via Zoom
4/11:	9:00 am	UM Men’s Meeting (G)

**THIS WEEK’S BIRTHDAY’S**

Willow Nyland 4/6  
Lee Frederickson 4/8  
Howard Berenschot 4/10



**Next Sunday (April 12th):**

**Central -Grantsburg**

Pianist	Toni Koons
Scripture Reading	Toni Koons
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Counter	<b>Volunteer Needed</b>
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson



**Volunteer's  
Needed!**

**Atlas**

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

**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

**Upcoming Events & News**

**Congratulations to St. Croix Falls and Central-Grantsburg UMC for receiving an Award Grant from the Challenge Stewardship!**

**Bible Reading Challenge:** Please pick the Bible Reading Planner card!

**Congratulations on completing the Lenten Bible Study:** Jim Andrews, Sharon Asp, Lynn Hanson and Sara and Mike Koser. *(They will be recognized on 4/12)*

**Pastor Jenny’s Vacation: 4/19- 5/2**



### **“My God and Your God, My Father and Your Father”**

I want to start with something funny. I heard a story about three Catholic ladies who were boasting about their sons: One said, “My son is a priest. When he walks into a room, people say, ‘Father.’” The second said, “My son is a bishop. When he enters, people say, ‘Your Grace.’” The third said, “My son is a broadcaster, six feet three, incredibly good-looking, and always dressed to impress. When he walks into a room, all the ladies say, ‘Oh my God!’”

We all have something we like to boast about. Maybe it’s your children, your education, your home, or your accomplishments. But the Apostle Paul says in Galatians 6:14, “*May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*” If we boast in anything, let it be in the Lord. I proudly boast that I can call God “my God and my Father” because of Jesus Christ—who came into the world, died on the cross, rose again, and will come again—for you and for me. Apart from this truth, I don’t think we have anything else worth boasting about.

Today, I want to talk about how wonderful it is that we share the same God and the same Father in Jesus Christ. Jesus called God “my Father and my God”—and for this, the Jewish leaders regarded him as having sinned against God, likely accusing him of blasphemy. They didn’t understand what we now know: “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). This is the truth we believe.

Because of Jesus, we can also call God *my God* and *my Father*. Later, the Apostle Paul picks up this language in Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6, saying that through the Holy Spirit, we too can cry out, “*Abba, Father*”—meaning that we are not just followers or servants, but beloved children of God. Therefore, we can boast in this truth: God—my Father and your Father, my God and your God—is the Creator of all things, the very Author of life and death.

Every morning, I thank God for the gift of a new day, a new beginning. In a way, we practice death and resurrection every day. Don’t you think? We sleep at night—like a little death—and rise again in the morning. Throughout our lives, we face moments that feel like death: when we lose someone we love; when we hear terrible news from a doctor; when we witness suffering in our world; and when life feels out of our control. But even in those moments, do not forget: There is God—my God and your God, my Father and your Father.

There was a woman once, controlled by seven evil spirits. She was an outcast—ignored, shamed, hopeless. But then, she met Jesus, and He healed her. He became her last hope. And then... He died. Her name was Mary Magdalene. Early in the morning, while it was still dark, she came to the tomb. Grief has a way of casting shadows over everything. The world outside was dark, but Mary’s heart was darker still. Her Teacher, her Healer, her Lord—was gone. Even the other disciples had gone home after finding the tomb empty. But Mary stayed alone. She stood outside the tomb, weeping. She couldn’t give up on finding Jesus. Then she turned and saw a man she thought was the gardener. But when He spoke her name—“*Mary*”—everything changed.

What a moment. The risen Jesus met her in a garden and simply said her name. It was intimate. Tender. Personal. This was my God and your God. This is Jesus—who steps into our gardens of grief and confusion

and calls us by name. And then He says something beautiful to Mary: *“Go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”*

Did you catch that? My Father and your Father. This is the first time in John’s Gospel that Jesus speaks like this. Before the resurrection, He would say “the Father” or “my Father.” But now—because of Easter—He includes us. Because of the cross and the empty tomb, we are brought into the family of God. We are no longer outsiders or servants. We are sons and daughters of God.

Yes, as I mentioned last Sunday, we are one family called to do the will of God in Jesus Christ. Jesus also said, *“Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, sister, and mother (Mark 3:33-35).* If you are suffering today—don’t give up. There is my God and your God, my Father and your Father, who may be working even now.

I want to share a bit of my own story. I had a difficult childhood. I grew up in a patriarchal Confucian family. I witnessed my mother suffer deeply. When she gave birth to me, a baby girl, my grandfather didn’t allow the room to be heated, even in the cold of winter. We endured that bitter cold. As I grew up, I was forbidden to sing or paint. When I reached high school age, they told me I couldn’t go—because I was a girl. There was tension, arguing, and brokenness in our home. My parents eventually left my grandparents’ house so their children could have a better life. We were poor—living in one small room, all seven of us. My father, once raised in wealth, struggled with poverty and became an alcoholic. We lived in shame—for our poverty, and for our father’s drinking. People in town called us “the drinker’s children.” Meanwhile, my mother developed a stomach illness.

One day, a neighbor invited my mother to a prayer house on a mountaintop to seek healing and reconciliation. She fasted and prayed there for three days. During that time, she remembered that she had once been baptized as a child by an American missionary. She repented and promised to lead our family to God. She was healed, and we began attending church.

But this upset my grandfather, and my father struggled even more—caught between his parents and his wife. The more we tried to bring him to church, the more he drank. But we kept praying. Every morning, we lifted him up to God. His drinking began to lessen.

And finally, on Easter morning in 1993, my father was baptized. It was as if our whole family was born again. We wept with gratitude and joy. My father even convinced my grandfather to remove the Confucian temple and change our family’s traditional customs, which involved worshiping our ancestors. Not long after, even my grandparents became Christians.

So, I tell you: hope is not far away. As long as you do not give up, God hears your prayers. He can transform what seems unchangeable.

What does Easter mean to you? It means you have hope. You are not alone. You are not abandoned. You have a Father and God. A perfect Father. A faithful Father. A Father who runs to meet you—like in the story of the prodigal son. A Father who knows your name—just as Jesus knew Mary’s. Maybe this Easter morning, you’ve come to church with darkness still hanging over your life—grief, uncertainty, regret. But Jesus meets you in the garden. He calls you by name and says: “He will be there—who is My Father and your Father, My God and your God.”

So today, we rejoice—not just because the tomb is empty, but because our hearts are full of joy and hope. Don’t give up! To give up hope would mean that Jesus’ death was in vain. Remember: Jesus died for you and rose for you. Christ is risen! Because there is my Father and your Father, my God and your God, may He be with us always! Thanks be to God. Amen.