

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

Generous God, all that we have comes from Your gracious hand. As we bring these gifts before You, we offer not only our resources but our very lives. Use what we give to reveal Christ's presence in the world, to bring hope to the weary, and love to those in need. Multiply these offerings, that Your kingdom may be known among all people. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN** *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*
UMH 133 (vs. 1 & 3)

***COMMISSION AND BLESSING Responsive**

The Sovereign Christ go with you, as you depart to witness to your faith and hope in God.

Our hearts burned within us as we recognized the presence of Christ in our worship.

Love one another earnestly, from the heart; enjoy opportunities to give what others need.

May our deeds be consistent with our profession of Jesus Christ as our Sovereign and Guide.

Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, that you may be saved from this crooked generation.

God gives us confidence to face life anew, with greater sensitivity and awareness. 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)

**Church Appreciation Month
“3rd Sunday of Easter”**



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

Rev. Jenny Lee: jennlee1732@gmail.com

Youth Director Shayna Schmid: snsnyder@gmail.com

Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg: centralumc2016@gmail.com

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
April 19th, 2026
“Church Appreciation Month”
“3rd Sunday of Easter”

*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

Let the people assemble;

God calls each one of us by name.

**The promises of God are to us and our children,
and to sisters and brothers near and far.**

We gather as a community of faith,
united in mutual concern and caring.

**Here we break bread, learn, and pray together,
and join in outreach to a needy world.**

May our eyes and ears be open

to the special message this hour holds for us.

**We will listen for God’s living and abiding Word
and strive to be obedient to the truth. Amen.**

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Open My Eyes, That I May See*

UMH 454

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Risen Lord, as we walk the road of life, we often fail to recognize Your presence beside us. Open our eyes, as You did for the disciples on the Emmaus road, that we may see You in Scripture, in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread. Warm our hearts with Your truth, and turn our doubt into faith. Stay with us, Lord, and lead us into the joy of Your resurrection. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Luke 24:13-35

(NRSV, p. 90 in the New Testament,
and p. 893 in the Living Bible)

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON

Barbara Loomis (Lay Speaker)

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Risen Christ, we confess that we, too, often fail to recognize You in our daily journey. Our hearts grow weary, our vision dim, and our hope uncertain. Yet You walk beside us, speaking truth and breaking bread. Open our eyes to see You, and kindle our hearts with faith. Send us out as witnesses of Your resurrection, to share Your love and grace with the world. Stay with us, Lord, now and always. Amen. We pray 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

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	Volunteer Needed
Counter	Russ Hammer
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson



Atlas

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

Prayers:



Please Pray For: Deb Hammer (Peace over the world), Kayleen Branstad (Giacomo's father Steve's health), Barbara Loomis (strength), Sandra Erickson (Husband Jeff and son Mike), Sally Aldorfer (continuing care), Karen Sciacca (Wendy passed away), Peter and Kathy Gionis (safe trip), Cheryl Olson (friend LuAnn lost loved one), Lynn Hanson (grandson A J and great-granddaughter Eliana), Betty Doolittle (three cousins passed away), Sharon Asp (friend Jen), Jim Andrews (brothers Joe and Jared).

Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude: Thank you, Lord!

Cheryl Olson (Darlyne Jorgensen's thank you card to Sunday School), Sharon Asp (new grandchildren).

"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/ Second Sunday of Easter
Happy Easter!

Worship Service and A Week Schedule

4/19:	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)
4/21:	6:30 pm	Ad Council Meeting (G)
4/22:	4:30-6:30 pm	Youth Group Gathering (G)

THIS WEEK’S BIRTHDAY’S & ANNIVERSARIES

Suzi Dammann	4/19
Sean Ludnia	4/20
Doug Kunze	4/21
Julie Branstad	4/24
Jim & Barbara Loomis	4/25



Next Sunday (April 26th):

Central -Grantsburg

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

Atlas

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

4/19: SPECIAL OFFERING: We encourage you to give a special offering for a safety doorbell for the pastor’s parsonage and office. (Hardware: \$168.71; annual plan: \$105.48.)

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

Pastor Jenny’s Vacation: 4/19- 5/2

Pulpit Supplies: April 19-Barbara Loomis (all the three churches)
April 26-Sharon Asp (G), Kathy Gionis (A & SCF)

Thank you for your ministry!

“When Jesus Walks With Us”

When Pastor Jenny was preparing the bulletins before she left on vacation, she wanted a title for my message that is like the worst thing for me to do. I'm not good at coming up with titles so I gave her the obvious "The walk to Emmaus." As I wrote the message, I realized I should've titled it "When Jesus walks with Us" Even the hymn that I picked "Open my eyes that I may see", ties into "When Jesus walks with Us" I don't have an Internet story to share with you, but I do have the story of the walk to Emmaus to share with you.

There's something deeply human about the story of the road to Emmaus.

Earlier in the scripture we did not hear verses 10-11, it shares of Mary and the other women telling the 11 Apostles and the others that were present, what they had seen. The tomb was empty.

Now the others have often been referred to as disciples, but were only "the others". I do not say that they were not disciples, but disciples in the dictionary refers to followers and students.

Two disciples are walking away from Jerusalem. One is named Cleopas, the other was not named. The other could very easily be a woman disciple. Often women are not named in the Bible.

Cleopas and the other disciple:
Were walking away from Jerusalem.
They were walking away from Pain.
They were walking away from Confusion.
They were walking away from Hope.
Not toward Hope— but away from it.

Everything they had believed in, everything they had hoped for, seemed to have collapsed. Everything fell apart. Jesus was going to free them. Jesus was going to save them. He was the one they trusted. He had been crucified. Their expectations were shattered. Their future felt uncertain. This was the morning of the empty tomb. They too were students of Jesus, but emotionally torn apart.

And so, they did what many of us do when life disappoints us: they walked away. All their Hopes had been killed on the cross.

While they were walking, they were talking. They were trying to make sense of it all. They were likely replaying the events that led up to knowing Jesus, the arrest of Jesus, and the crucifixion. All they were sure of that morning was that His body was gone. Stolen, but how? What went wrong??

And then —Jesus comes near' He walks beside them.

But they do not recognize Him!

Jesus is walking beside them, listening to them, even speaking to them— and still, they don't see Jesus for who He is.

Isn't that often true in our lives? We say we know Him, but would we truly know Him!
 There are moments when we feel alone... but we are not alone.
 There are moments when we feel abandoned... But we are not abandoned.
 There are moments when we think God is absent... But He is closer than we realize.

The disciples say, "We had hoped..."
 Not "We hope."

That is the language of disappointment, the language of grief. The language of dreams that didn't turn out the way we expected.

Maybe you said those words before. I had hoped this relationship would last. I had hoped this job would work out. I had hoped things would be different and yet right in the middle of their disappointment. Jesus is walking with them not judging them, not correcting them, but listening. Jesus meets them in their confusion. He leads them into clarity. Then, he begins to speak.

He opens the scripture to the two disciples. The scriptures they likely knew by heart. I found 11 scriptures that might have been used to open their ears, from Genesis to Micah. There are likely more. It was approximately 8 miles from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Plenty of time to share. He helps them see what looks like defeat was actually part of God's plan. That suffering was not the end of the story. That resurrection had already unfolded.

And something begins to happen with Cleopas and the other disciple.

Later they say "Were not our hearts burning within us while He talked with us on the road, while He was opening the scriptures to us?" (24:32)

Their hearts were stirred before even their eyes were open.

And then comes the turning point: they invite him to stay.

"Stay with us" they say.

Jesus took a place of honor at the table. With the break in the breaking of the bread, their eyes were open-and they recognized Him. They recognized Jesus.

And just like that, He vanished.
 But everything changed.

The same road that led them away from Jerusalem now became the road they would run back on. The same disciples who were discouraged are now filled with urgency and joy. They go back to tell the others. We have seen the Lord

Here's the message for us today:

Jesus still walks with us— especially on the roads we never expect to travel.
He walks with us in grief. He walks with us in confusion. He walks with us during disappointment.

Even when we don't recognize Him.

And often, we don't recognize Him right away

We don't always see Him in the conversation.

We don't always see Him in the struggle.

We don't always see Him in the waiting.

But, He is there.

And sometimes, recognition comes later— through reflection, in scriptures, in your community, and the breaking of bread.

So the question should become: will we invite Him in to stay?

Because Jesus doesn't force himself into our lives— He responds to invitation.

“Stay with us.”

That simple invitation changes everything.

And when we do recognize Him— when our eyes are opened— We are never meant to keep walking in the same direction.

Like the disciples, we are called to turn around.

To go back.

To share the good news.

To tell others: He is alive— and He walks with me, He walks with you!

So if you find yourself on a road of confusion or disappointment, take heart.

You are not walking alone. The risen Christ is beside you.

Speaking. Listening. Guiding.

And perhaps, even now, he is stirring something within your heart.

Amen.