

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

Gracious God, we give You thanks for all Your blessings that sustain our lives. As we bring our tithes and offerings, we offer not only these gifts but also our hearts. Use them for the work of Your kingdom, that Your love may be shared and Your name glorified. Teach us generosity and trust in Your provision. Bless those who give and those who cannot give today. May all we offer be pleasing in Your sight and used to serve Your church and world. In Jesus' name, Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN *Hymn of Promise* UMH 707 (vs. 1 & 2)

*BENEDICTION Rev. Jenny Lee

*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)

“Pentecost 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-summer break)

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
May 24th, 2026
“Pentecost 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

O God, how manifold are your works!

In wisdom you have made them all;

the earth is full of your creatures.

These look to you,

to give them their food in due season.

When you open your hand,

they are filled with good things.

When you send forth your Spirit, they are created

and you renew the face of the ground.

Let us sing to God as long as we live,

Sing praises to our God while we have being.

May our meditation be pleasing to God,

in whom we rejoice. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *O Spirit of the Living God*
UMH 539 (vs. 1 & 2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Gracious and mighty God, on this Pentecost Sunday we gather in awe of Your Holy Spirit poured out upon Your church. Fill us anew with Your presence like a rushing wind and a cleansing fire.

Open our hearts to Your truth, and unite us in love and faith.

Open our hearts to Your truth, and unite us in love and faith.

Remove fear and distraction, and make us attentive to Your voice.

Empower us to be Your witnesses in the world. May Your Spirit

guide our worship, renew our lives, and strengthen Your church today. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

John 14:15-21

(NRSV, p. 109 in the New Testament,
and p.915 in the Living Bible)

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON

“The Holy Spirit Jesus Promised”

Rev. Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Gracious God, we thank You for the promise of the Holy Spirit fulfilled at Pentecost. Open our hearts to be filled anew with Your presence. Cleanse us from all sin, fear, and distraction, and make us receptive to Your voice. Help us to love You with all our hearts and to love our neighbors as ourselves. May the fruit of the Spirit grow in us each day. Lead us in Your truth and strengthen us to live as Your faithful people. 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

MAY CHURCH MISSIONS



ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

<p>INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:</p> <p>Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.</p> 	<p>LOAVES & FISHES NEEDS OUR ONGOING SUPPORT</p> <p>Suggested</p>  <p>donation items: Spaghetti sauce, macaroni, peanut butter, pasta and rice. Please leave them in the basket at the front of the church!</p>	<p>Heifer International</p> <p>Heifer International's mission is to end hunger and poverty while caring for the Earth. For 80 years, Heifer has been working to empower impoverished families by providing them with the tools and resources they need to thrive. Your donation will help us provide small-scale farmers and communities worldwide with livestock, training, and related services to create sustainable solutions to poverty and hunger. ALL DONATIONS WILL BE MATCHED. Please see the May newsletter or Mission bulletin board for more details. Thank you!</p> 
---	---	--

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 supplies and or financial donations for CRA. Community Referral Agency (CRA) provides safe shelter, advocacy, and support to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and their children, helping them rebuild their lives. Current needs: Shelf stable milk, juice, coffee sugar, pickles, ketchup, hot dogs, Hamburger Helper or one box meals, size 6 & 7 diapers, Tampons, sanitary pads, bath towels, sweat pants L & XL, bleach, Lysol Wipes, Lysol spray, liquid laundry soap, deodorant (Men & Women's), dish soap, kitchen garbage bags, Mr. Erasers, postage stamps, 9-volt batteries.</p> 
---	---

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 support the St. Croix Falls Food Shelf.</p> 
--	---

Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers: All God's People
Rev. Jenny Lee

Central - Grantsburg

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

Atlas

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

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

Prayers:

Please Pray For: Russ and Deb (safe travels), Cheryl Olson (a church neighbor and her aunt who has passed away), Sharon Asp (daughter Shae), and LeAnne (granddaughter).

Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude: Thank you, Lord! Sally Alderfer (cancer free), Dave and Sharon Huff (back home from their winter residence), Kathy Gionis (school concert), and Karen and Jim Sciacca (joyful trip).

New Guests: Peter and Renae Wright (G)

"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: Pentecost Sunday! God bless you all!

Worship Service and A Week Schedule

5/24: 9:00 am	Central UMC - Grantsburg (with Live Zoom)
10:00 am	Atlas UMC (Sunday School-summer break)
11:15 am	St. Croix Falls UMC
5/25:	Memorial Day
5/28: 4:00-5:00 pm	Go Fish (G)
5/30: 10:00 am -noon	Family Fun Day (G)- End-of-Year Party
5/31: 10:30 am	Joint Service at St. Croix Falls UMC

THIS WEEK’S BIRTHDAY’S & ANNIVERSARIES

Link Loomis 5/28

Dave Huff 5/30



Next Sunday (May 31):



Joint Service at St. Croix Falls UMC at 10:30 AM

** Door prizes and lunch will be provided after the service!*

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Lynn Hanson, Kathy Gionis
Counter	Peter Gionis, Dave Huff, and Sue Olson
Bell Ringer	Jim Andrews
Flowers	Women of the church

Upcoming Events & News

2026 Vacation Bible School: Theme is “Pool Party”

Registration opens June 6th

VBS Dates: Five Wednesdays from July 15th to August 12th

Pool Party: August 16th

Donation and volunteer signup sheet is available at each church.

May 31st: Joint Worship Service & Lunch at St. Croix Falls UMC

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

2026 Wisconsin Annual Conference: June 4- 7 at Madison Marriott West in Madison, WI (Parish Delegates: Sue Olson and Sharon Asp)

May 24, 2026
John 14:15-21

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



“The Holy Spirit Jesus Promised”

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: A priest is walking through the jungle when he comes upon a hungry lion. Just as the lion is about to attack, the priest crosses himself and says, “Lord, if You can hear me, please instill the Holy Spirit in this beast’s heart.” The lion stops as a bright light begins to glow around him. He looks to the sky, folds his paws in prayer, and says, “Thank you, Lord, for this meal I am about to eat.”

Let me ask you: is that God answering him in this funny story? Sometimes God’s answers are very clear to our prayers, such as when we pray for our loved ones who are sick. When someone is healed, we rejoice and give thanks. In those cases, it is very clear whether God has answered or not. But in other cases, we are often confused about whether God has answered our prayers, even though God may answer in a different way.

I have a friend whom I met in high school, which was a boarding school in the city. Actually, my grandfather and father did not allow me to go to high school because I was a girl. So I asked my middle school principal to help me. With his help, I was able to attend the boarding school on a full scholarship.

At that time, most students visited their parents’ homes on weekends, but I was not particularly eager to go home. So, I stayed at school. She was the one who invited me to her home most weekends. She was a sincere Christian. After we had meals, we usually played games at her church, but I never attended the worship services. After graduating from high school, I went to Seoul to attend university, and she did not go to college. We did not see each other for a long time.

After I became a Christian many years later, I remembered her and looked for her. She was still living in her hometown and had married a faithful Christian husband. I invited her to attend the installation service of our new church in Korea in 1996.

She came with her husband. Her husband told me, “I wanted to see who you are, because ever since I married my wife, she has never stopped praying for you—and she even asked me to pray for you. Even though I’ve never met you, I prayed for you too.” And she said, “Since I met you in high school, I prayed for you to become a Christian. I never expected you would become a pastor. God has answered my prayer. God is good all the time.”

She prayed for me for fifteen years. Finally, she saw that God had answered her prayer.

But what if I had never looked for her? What if she had never heard that I became a pastor? What if I had never known she had been praying for me all those years? She might never have known how God answered her prayer.

Prayer is a powerful tool that continues to build relationships even when we are physically separated. I believe you pray for your children and grandchildren even though they live far away from you, right? Through your prayers, I am sure you feel connected to them—and to God.

Today is the universal church’s birthday; we call it “Pentecost Sunday.” Pentecost means “the fiftieth day after Jesus was resurrected.” Some may say Pentecost is the day the Holy Spirit came upon the people—and that is true. According to Acts 2:1–2, “When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.”

We may imagine it like a tornado or whirlwind. But unlike a tornado, this was not destruction—it was the presence of God. It came as fire resting on each person, and they began to speak in different languages they had never learned. That was the first Pentecost.

I announced for a few weeks that we would wear red clothing on Pentecost Sunday. You see red banners and altar cloths today. You may wonder why we use red. It symbolizes the Holy Spirit, who comes like fire upon us.

Today I want to talk about the Holy Spirit Jesus promised and the importance of prayer. Do you remember last Sunday when I spoke about the Ascension of Jesus? After Jesus was lifted up to heaven, His disciples returned to Jerusalem. They gathered in the Upper Room, where they had shared the Last Supper, and they prayed continually.

Right before His ascension, Jesus commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4). They were afraid. Jewish leaders and Roman authorities were still a threat. So, the disciples gathered together in one place and locked the doors. Then suddenly a sound like a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire resting on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Others were astonished and even thought they were drunk.

Why did Jesus promise to send the Holy Spirit? Because He knew that after He was gone, the disciples would be overwhelmed by fear, grief, and confusion. Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to be with you forever” (John 14:15–16). “Advocate” is another name for the Holy Spirit. Some Bible versions use the word “Comforter,” while others say “Counselor.” Jesus knew they needed a Counselor, Comforter, and Advocate to guide them—not only in that moment, but forever. This promise was fulfilled at Pentecost, and it continues with us today. Jesus said, “I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). As Jesus promised, He sent us the Holy Spirit, and He is with us through the Holy Spirit. Do you feel the Holy Spirit with you?

You may ask, “How do I know if I have received the Holy Spirit?” We can recognize the Holy Spirit through its fruit. Galatians 5:22–23 says, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

Let us consider this: those who are often angry may be resisting the Holy Spirit, because anger leads us into sin. Those who are often drunk or addicted may be resisting the Holy Spirit. Those who lie are resisting the Spirit of truth. We are called not to live in those ways. If you want to receive the Holy Spirit, you must open your heart—removing addictions, drunkenness, worries, blame, and negative thoughts—so that you may be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Last week I started my garden. I wanted to plant seeds and seedlings I had been raising indoors. But my garden was full of weeds. I could not plant anything. So, I worked hard to pull out all the weeds. Then I finally planted radish, sesame, carrot, green bean, and cilantro seeds.

Likewise, if we do not clear our hearts, we cannot be filled with the Holy Spirit. How do we empty our hearts? First, repent of our sins and pray continually. Jesus and John the Baptist proclaimed, “Repent, for the kingdom of God is near.” Yes, we make our hearts clean by repenting of our sins and praying. The disciples received the Holy Spirit while they were praying together.

Second, keep Jesus’ commandments. Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments,” and He promised the Holy Spirit. What are His commandments? Love God with all your heart and mind, and love your neighbors as yourself.

Third, confess Jesus as your Lord and Savior. First Corinthians 12:3 says, “No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” If you believe Jesus is your Lord and confess Him with your mouth in faith, you are walking in the Spirit.

Let us exalt Jesus as our Lord and Savior, which is our privilege as Christians. Let the Holy Spirit lead us to love God and love our neighbors. Let the Holy Spirit revive our church and continue its ministry. Thanks be to God. Amen.