

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

Generous and Faithful God, all that we have comes from Your loving hand. As we present these gifts and offerings, we give thanks for Your provision and care. Just as You heard Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness and provided for their needs, help us to trust in Your abundance. Use these gifts to bring hope to the weary, care to those in need, and witness to Your love in the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN** *God of Grace and God of Glory*
UMH 577 (vs. 1 & 2)

***BENEDICTION** **Rev. Jenny Lee**

***POSTLUDE** **Toni Koons**



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

4th Sunday After Pentecost Father's Day Sunday



Grantsburg-Central Since 1897



Atlas Since 1887



St. Croix Falls Since 1859

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

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
June 21st, 2026

4th Sunday After Pentecost/ Father's Day Sunday

**Please stand if you are able.*

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

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

“Happy Father's Day!”

(Waive your hands at one another)

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP Responsive**

As surely as the new day has dawned,
God comes to meet us and be known by us.

We will sing to God and trust God's steadfast love.

Our hearts rejoice in God's saving grace.

God gives life to the dead

And create new things from nothing.

We believe, against all hope,

That new life can be wrought in us.

Jesus invited people to fresh starts

With the words “follow me.”

We want to respond with our lives,

taking the risks of discipleship.

God will raise us up and equip us

For our life of service.

We rejoice in God's promises

and devote this hour to prayer and praise. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Faith of Our Fathers* **UMH 710**

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Gracious and Loving God, on this Father's Day, we thank You for Your faithful love that never abandons Your children. As You heard the cry of Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness, hear the cries of our hearts today. Comfort those who carry wounds, loneliness, or broken relationships, and remind us that we are

seen, known, and loved by You. Guide us to reflect Your compassion and grace in our families and community. We pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Proclamation of God's Word

***THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**

Genesis 21:8-21

(NRSV, p. 17 in the New Testament, SCF Pew Bible,
and p.16 in the Living Bible; Atlas Pew Bible)

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

Thanks be to God. Amen!

SERMON ***“God hears The Cry of Every Child”*** **Rev. Jenny Lee**

We Respond to God's Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Loving Father, You hear every cry that others miss. You know every wound we carry. Heal the hurts left by broken relationships. Give us courage to forgive, grace to seek reconciliation where possible, and peace to trust in Your unfailing love. Remind us that we are Your beloved children, heard, seen, and cherished. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

BLESSINGS TO OUR FATHERS

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

JUNE CHURCH MISSIONS

ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Ashleigh Olson

INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:

Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.



June Mission: Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry

In June we will be collecting laundry detergent, spaghetti and macaroni for the food pantry in Luck. Donations can be left in the basket by the mission board at church.



Thank you for your continued generosity in supporting our many missions!



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".



June Mission: Supporting Vacation Bible School (VBS)

Our June mission will be to provide support to our VBS program. You can help by shopping for items requested or giving financial donations. There is a list of needed items at each church for you to reference.

ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh



Food Shelf

(Communion Sunday)



Sailor Hat Offering:

The Sailor Hat offering will go support the Polk County Drug Court.

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers: All God's People
Rev. Jenny Lee

Central - Grantsburg

Pianist
Scripture Reading
Acolyte(s)
Fellowship
Counter
Mowing
Cleaning

Toni Koons
Toni Koons
Willow Nyland
Volunteer Needed
Russ Hammer
Russ Hammer
Sandra Erickson

Atlas

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher
Cleaning
Sunday School

Sharon Asp
Colleen Adams-Schween
Sue Olson
Volunteer Needed
Summer Break

St. Croix Falls

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher(s)
Counter
Bell Ringer
Flowers

Sharon Asp
Jim Andrews
Lynn Hanson
Peter Gionis
Jim Sciacca
Women of the church

Prayers: *Please Pray For:* Sandy Heinz (lost driver's license and a speedy recovery), Sandra Erickson (healing for her son Mike and husband Jeff), Sally Alderfer (Linda Hokanson), and Pastor Jenny (God's peace for the world).



Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude — Thank You, Lord, For: Barbara Loomis (getting better), Paulie Kratchmer (thanks to Russ and Deb Hammer for leading the service on June 14), Sally Alderfer (son and daughter-in-law), and Sharon Asp (safe return of her son-in-law).

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

Thank you for your support!

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **There is a Zoom Live Service at 9:00 am this Sunday.**
- 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: 4th Sunday After Pentecost and Father's Day Sunday! God bless you all!

Worship Service and A Week Schedule

6/21:	9:00 am	Grantsburg-Central UMC
	10:00 am	Atlas UMC
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls UMC
	12:15 pm	Ad Council Meeting (SCF)
6/22:	2:00 pm	Dawn Bergstrom's Graveside Service at Union Cemetery
	3:00 pm	Visit and Fellowship at Atlas UMC
6/23:	6:30 pm	SPRC Meeting via Zoom
6/25:	10:30 am -1:00pm	Pastor Jenny Volunteers at Loaves and Fishes in Luck
	5:00 pm	VBS Staff Meeting (G)

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAY'S

Mary McNally
6/27



Next Sunday (June 28):

Central-Grantsburg

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

Atlas

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

St. Croix Falls

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Jim Andrews
Usher(s)	Lynn Hanson
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
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 sheets are available at each church.

VBS Volunteers Training Days: 6/18, 6/28, 7/3, and 7/12 (5 to 7 pm) at Central- Grantsburg UMC.

Bible Reading Challenge: Please pick up the Bible Reading Planner card! We encourage you to read the Bible using the reading card.



God Hears the Cry of Every Child

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: A little girl asked her mother, “How did the human race appear?” Mother answered, “God made Adam and Eve, and they had children, and that is how all mankind was made ...” Two days later, the girl asked her dad the same question. Dad answered, “Many years ago there were monkeys from which the human race evolved.”

The confused girl returned to her mother and said, “Mom, how is it possible that you told me the human race was created by God, and Dad said they developed from monkeys?” Her mother smiled and said, “Dear, it’s very simple. I told you about my side of the family, and your father told you about his!”

Happy Father’s Day! Yes, we say “Happy Father’s Day,” but for many, it is not an easy day. For some, it is a joyful reminder of a loving father. For others, it brings memories of a father who is no longer here. And for some, it awakens painful memories of absence, broken promises, or deep wounds.

I can also share personally that I experienced a broken relationship with my father for many years. He struggled deeply—weak as a son, unable as a husband, and often absent emotionally as a father due to alcoholism. As a child, I rarely saw him sober. I felt shame and confusion, especially when his behavior affected how others saw our family.

But later, I came to understand his own pain. He lost his mother at the age of six and was taught that boys should never cry. Raised under strict Confucian expectations, he carried unhealed wounds that shaped his life and, in turn, our family’s suffering.

When I was in seminary, my father came to faith in Christ. That moment became a turning point for our family—from brokenness to healing, from sorrow to joy, from distance to reconciliation. He removed the ancestral altar and declared, “We will worship God alone, no more ancestor’s worship.” From that time on, his life changed. He stopped drinking, began early morning prayer with my mother, and grew into a man of faith, even sharing his testimony in church with courage.

That’s remind me that Joshua 24:14: “Now fear the Lord and serve him with all faithfulness... but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.” Looking back, I often wonder what would have happened if he had never come to faith. But now I believe that even in our brokenness, God was at work.

Genesis 21 reminds us that even the family of Abraham—the father of faith—was not a perfect family. There were jealousy, rejection, and heartbreak.

According to today’s scripture, Abraham struggled as well. Waiting for God’s promise, he and Sarah took matters into their own hands, and Ishmael was born through Hagar. This decision later led to painful conflict between Sarah and Hagar, and between Isaac and Ishmael.

When Sarah saw Ishmael interacting with Isaac, she demanded, “Cast out this slave woman with her son.” Abraham was deeply distressed, for Ishmael was also his son. Yet God said to him, “Do not be distressed... I will also make a nation of him” (Genesis 21:12).

So Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael into the wilderness with bread and water. What did Hagar and Ishmael think of Abraham? What did Ishmael think of his father? He might have thought of him as weak and indecisive. Imagine Ishmael's feelings: "Why am I being rejected?" "Why doesn't my father protect me?" "Am I no longer loved?"

However, Abraham believed in God's promise—that God would protect them and guide them in the wilderness. Yes, that is a father. Sometimes we do not understand a father's decisions for his children. There is a time to send out, and there is a time to lift up. If a father believes in God, he knows there is a time to lift up his child.

Again, Abraham sent Hagar and Ishmael out with bread and a skin of water into the wilderness. When the water in the skin was gone, Hagar said, "Do not let me look on the death of the child." And she lifted up her voice and wept. She knew it was a time to pray for her son. And God heard her and said, "Come, lift up the boy and hold him fast."

The Scripture tells us something powerful: "God heard the boy crying." (Genesis 21:17)

Notice—God heard him. Not Abraham. Not Sarah. God heard. The name Ishmael itself means "God hears." This is the heart of the gospel: God hears the cry of the forgotten, the wounded, and the unseen.

Not every relationship is restored in this life. Some wounds remain. Some losses cannot be undone. Yet God is able to heal what human hands cannot fix. Healing often begins not with others, but with God—when we first remember that we are loved.

If you have a heartbroken child or family member, lift up your voice to God and lift them up from their dark place. There is nothing too hard for God.

The same God who heard Ishmael hears us today. One of the deepest wounds in life is a broken relationship between parent and child. Not every relationship can be fully restored. Some fathers pass away before reconciliation happens. Some wounds remain too deep. Some situations remain unsafe.

Yet God can heal hearts even when circumstances cannot be changed. Reconciliation often begins not with another person, but with God. Before we can forgive, we must know we are loved. Before we can release bitterness, we must know we are secure in God's care. When God reminds us that we are His beloved children, the chains of anger and resentment begin to loosen.

The gospel tells us that God is not merely like a father. God is the perfect Father. Where earthly fathers fail, God remains faithful. Where earthly fathers leave, God stays. Where earthly fathers wound, God heals.

Psalms 27:10 says, "Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me." The greatest healing comes when we discover that our identity is not determined by what our earthly father did or did not do. Our identity is determined by God's love. Perhaps today God is hearing the cry of a child—not necessarily a child in years, but a child in spirit. Someone who still carries old wounds, still longs for acceptance, still wonders if they are truly loved.

The good news of Genesis 21 is this: God hears every cry. And because God hears us, God can heal us. And because God heals us, God can help us forgive. And because God helps us forgive, God can lead us toward reconciliation and peace.

It is a time to lift up your weakness to God. It is a time to lift up your heartbroken child and family member to God. God hears you and protects them. God is the Healer. God is the Protector. God is the Savior. God never turns a deaf ear to our prayers.

Thanks be to God. Amen.