

PRAYER SONG

This is our prayer. This is our prayer, O God!

UMH 487

NO. 2026-23
June 7th, 2026

THE LORD'S PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

UMH 95

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

Gracious God, we thank You for Your abundant gifts and faithful provision in our lives. As we bring our offerings today we acknowledge that all we have comes from You. Bless these gifts and those who give them that they may be used to serve Your kingdom bring hope to the hurting and share the love of Christ with the world. Teach us generosity and trust. May lives be an offering of gratitude and joy. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN**

Be Thou My Vision

UMH 451

***COMMISSION & BLESSING Responsive**

Build wisely on the solid rock of faith,
that wind and rain cannot destroy it.

**Our trust is in God, beyond our knowing,
but revealed in the law and the prophets.**

God promises to be with you, to bless you,
and make you a blessing to others.

**We will keep God's word in our hearts
And share it with all who learn from us.**

Bear fruit befitting your commitment;
live in love, joy, and peace.

**God grant us patience, kindness, goodness,
faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.**

The blessing of the Sovereign One, your God
be upon you and remain with you. **Amen!**

***POSTLUDE**

Toni Koons

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)

2nd Sunday After Pentecost



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

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www.upperstcroixparish.org

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

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.

Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers: All God's People
Rev. Jenny Lee

Central - Grantsburg

Preach	Barbara Loomis
Pianist	Toni Koons
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Mary Lou and Charles Wright
Counter	Dave Huff
Mowing	Dave Huff
Cleaning	Sandra Erickson

Atlas

Preach	Kathy Gionis
Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	Mariah Gaffey
Usher	Colleen Adams-Schween
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Sunday School	Summer Break

St. Croix Falls

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

Prayers:

Please Pray For: Lynn Hanson (grandson, Isaiah), Sharon Asp (son-in-law's trip to China), Sandy Heinz (lost Driver's ID), Cheryl Olson (cousins' healing), Pastor Jenny (God's peace for the world).



Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude-Thank you, Lord For: Barbara Loomis (diagnosis of no infection), Betty Doolittle (good to worship together with the parish), Karen Sciacca (good to see grandson's growing in good health).

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

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: 2nd Sunday After Pentecost! God bless you all!

Worship Service and A Week Schedule

6/7:	9:00 am	Grantsburg-Central UMC
	10:00 am	Atlas UMC
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls UMC
6/4-6/7:		Wisconsin Annual Conference in Madison
6/10:	1:00 pm	UMW Meeting (G)
	5:00 pm	VBS Staff Meeting (G)
6/12:	10:00 am	Korean Caucus Board Meeting via Zoom
	1:30 pm	Ad Council Meeting (A)
6/13:	9:00 am	UMM Meeting (G)
	1:00 pm	Summer Music with Lunch at Trade Lake Swedish Mission Church (Lunch at 1:00 pm- Music starts at 2:00 pm)
6/14:		Communion Sunday

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAY'S & ANNIVERSARIES

Charlie Olson 6/7

Rod Dahl 6/9

Cindy Michaels 6/12

Jamie & Mike Steffen 6/16



Next Sunday (June 14):

Central - Grantsburg

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

Atlas

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

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
Communion	Karen and Jim Sciacca



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.

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)

Congratulations: Sue Olson is the recipient of the #BeUMC Award and Sharon, is the recipient of the Perry Saito Award from the Conference.

Called and Restored: Three Stories

The Gospel lesson today from Chapter 9 of the Book of Matthew brings together three remarkable stories. Jesus calls a tax collector named Matthew to follow him. Jesus responds to the plea of a desperate father whose daughter has died. And on the way, Jesus heals a woman who has suffered for twelve years.

Initially these look like three separate events and my curiosity was raised about what these stories meant and why they are together. Matthew places them together in verses 9-26 to illustrate a single truth about Jesus. In each story, Jesus reaches out to people whom others probably would overlook, avoid, or consider beyond help. A tax collector. A chronically ill woman. A dead child.

In each story Jesus brings out and shows mercy, healing and new life.

Jesus says: Follow me

In the first story, Matthew 9:9 starts out with Jesus passing a sheltered counting desk or tax booth where he sees a man named Matthew who was working there. This counting desk was strategically placed near the route out of the area of Galilee where fishermen would transport their catch. Tax collectors were despised because they were often believed to cheat the people whose taxes they were collecting. They were considered to be no better than swindlers and murderers. They were often viewed as collaborators with Rome. Matthew was probably a customs official and he would have been included amongst these men of ill repute.

But Jesus saw Matthew and said simply, "Follow me". And remarkably, Matthew got up and left his desk and followed him. There is a different example with an opposite result in the Book of Mark, chapter 10, the story about the rich man who had always followed God's commandments, and when he asked Jesus about gaining eternal life, Jesus told him to sell all his possessions and give the money to the poor. "Come, follow me," he told the man. The man was shocked and went away grieving, as he owned many possessions. He rejected the command of Jesus to follow after him.

There is something both simple and powerful at the same time about the moment Matthew left his job to follow after Jesus. Jesus did not require Matthew to clean up his life before accepting him. He didn't require Matthew to make a confession of the cheating he had engaged in while collecting taxes. Matthew was not required to prove his worthiness. First he was called. Transformation would come later. Grace came first.

This is an example of Christ meeting us where we are, not where we think we ought to be. Being called to discipleship is not a reward for being righteous, but rather a beginning of becoming righteous.

This reminds me of an incident in family court many years ago. My client, a young mother, was engaged in a custody dispute with her soon to be ex-husband. She had engaged in some questionable behaviors during the time the parties were going through their divorce. Somehow her religious life was brought up. The Judge asked her, "Are you a good Christian?" I cringed. I didn't know what she was going to say. She looked at the Judge and said simply, "I'm working on it". I thought it was a pretty good response. Isn't that what we all are doing?

Jesus says, "I Desire Mercy"

The next scene takes place at a dinner table surrounded by tax collectors and sinners. The religious leaders are scandalized and they ask the disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" To the leaders, holiness meant separation.

Then Jesus quotes the prophet Hosea: "'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.'" Jesus continued saying, "I have come to call not the righteous, but the sinners". This comes from the Old Testament book of Hosea 6:6 and highlights an ancient principle that compassion, love, and inward transformation matter far more to God than rigid adherence to religious rules and rituals. Jesus wasn't rejecting worship or religious practice, but rather Jesus used this phrase to teach that human needs take precedence over man-made traditions. Rituals without compassion miss the mark of loving your neighbor. Showing grace, forgiveness, and justice to others is the highest expression of devotion.

A Desperate Father

In the second story, while Jesus was speaking, a leader of the synagogue came and knelt before him saying that his daughter had just died, but nevertheless he was asking Jesus to lay his hands on her, believing that the girl's life would be restored. Jesus and his disciples got up and followed the man.

Before Jesus reaches the leader's house, another story interrupts the journey. There was a woman in the crowd who had suffered for years from hemorrhages. She told herself that if she could only touch Jesus' cloak, she would be cured. Likely, this woman had been living in social isolation and physical suffering for years, hoping for change and living with disappointment. When she reached out her hand, Jesus stopped and turned and saw her. Jesus saw her faith, her courage, and her suffering, and he said, "Take heart, daughter, your faith has made you well." By using the word daughter, Jesus was welcoming her into God's

family. She wasn't treated like a problem to be solved. By reaching out her hand, she was met with grace and love.

The Girl Raised

In the third story, Jesus then arrived at the leader's house and mourners had already gathered, believing they knew that this was the end of the girl's life. But, Jesus said, "The girl is not dead, but sleeping." The crowd laughed at him and he sent them away. The crowd didn't understand that hope and possibility are in God's control. When Jesus entered the room and took the girl by the hand, she got up.

These stories show us a Savior who calls the unlikely to follow him, welcomes those that are excluded, heals the suffering and raises the dead. Jesus desires that we will show mercy to others by extending grace to those who haven't known it, extending forgiveness even when undeserved, and pursuing justice by alleviating human suffering. As the young mother expressed her faith when asked if she was a good Christian, we're not perfect, but we're working on it. Contained in these three stories are the examples for us to follow that Jesus shows us and as told to us by Matthew. Amen.