

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

Gracious and generous God, we offer our gifts to You with grateful hearts. Everything we have comes from Your loving hands, and we pray that these offerings may be used to share Your love, serve those in need, and strengthen Your ministry in this community and beyond. Bless our gifts and bless our lives, that we may become faithful stewards of Your grace. May our giving reflect our trust, gratitude, and love for You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN**

Freely, Freely

UMH 389

***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)

7th 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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Youth Director Shayna Schmid: snsnyder@gmail.com

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www.upperstcroixparish.org

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

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
July 12th, 2026

7th Sunday After Pentecost

**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**

Hear the word of Jesus Christ:

“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy-laden,
and I will give you rest.”

**We seek the rest Christ offers,
for we are often busy and anxious.**

Christ invites us, “Take my yoke upon you,
and learn from me.”

There is so much we want to learn about living.

We want our lives to count for something.

Jesus assures us: “I am gentle and lowly in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls.”

**In a harsh world we long for kindness we can trust
and rest that is truly refreshing.**

Again, Christ promises: “My yoke is easy,
and my burden is light.”

**In Jesus Christ we find true freedom
and the joy of living according to the Spirit. Amen.**

***DEDICATING HYMN** *Jesu, Jesu* **UMH 432 (vs. 1 & 2)**

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Gracious and loving God, we come before You with thankful hearts, recognizing Your presence among us. As we gather in worship today, open our eyes to see Your blessings, open our ears to hear Your voice, and open our hearts to receive Your grace.

Guide our thoughts, words, and actions through the power of Your Holy Spirit. May our worship honor You and strengthen us to live faithfully in our daily lives. We pray in Jesus’ name, Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**

Genesis 25:19-34

(NRSV, p. 21-22 in the New Testament, SCF Pew Bible,
and p.21 in the Living Bible; Atlas Pew Bible)

*This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God. Amen!*

SERMON ***“Small Things become Big Things”*** **Rev. Jenny Lee**

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Gracious God, thank You for speaking to us through Your Word today. Forgive us for the times we have valued temporary desires over Your lasting blessings. Teach us to recognize the sacredness of everyday choices and to seek Your will in all that we do. Help us treasure our faith, worship, service, and relationships as gifts from You. May our small acts of faithfulness become a testimony of Your love. Guide us to walk in Your wisdom and grace. 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

JULY 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

We will be collecting Peanut Butter & Jelly for the Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry in Luck. Please leave your donations in the basket in the front of the church. Thank you!



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

In July we will be collecting school supplies for those in need in our own community.



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".



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

In July we will be collecting financial donations and School Supplies for children in the Grantsburg community.



ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

Food Shelf

(Communion Sunday)



Sailor Hat Offering:

The Sailor Hat offering will support the 2026 VBS Program.



Thank you for your support!

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
Dave Huff
Dave Huff
Sandra Erickson

Atlas

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher
Cleaning
Sunday School

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

St. Croix Falls

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher(s)
Counter
Bell Ringer
Flowers

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

Prayers: Please Pray For: Rev. Lynn Tricker (friend, Mill Krackson's healing), Sandra Erickson (healing for her son Mike, her husband Jeff, and her grandson Dauntay), Kay Lamphere (healing), Cheryl Olson (for a family who lost a boy by disaster), Lynn Hanson (daughter Sara), and Pastor Jenny (VBS).

Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude — Thank You, Lord, For:

Kayleen Branstad (250th Anniversary of the US's independence), Sharon Asp (family reunion), Sally Alderfer (husband Ron's 91th birthday 7/6), Kathy Gionis (daughter, Rachel's birthday), Lynn Hanson (grandson, A.J.'s birthday), and Jim Andrews (sharing blueberries).

Guest: Rev. Lynn Tricker (G)

"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.
- 4) 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: 7th Sunday After Pentecost. God bless you all!

Worship Service and A Week Schedule

7/12:	9:00 am	Grantsburg-Central UMC
	10:00 am	Atlas UMC
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls UMC
7/12:	5:00 -7:00 pm	VBS Volunteer Training (G)
7/13-7/16:		North Central Jurisdictional Conference in Chicago
7/15:	4:30 -7:30 pm	VBS Day 1
7/17:	1:30 pm	Ad Council Meeting (A)
7/19:	12:15 pm	Ad Council Meeting (SCF)

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAY'S & ANNIVERSARIES

Jamie Steffen 7/12

Walden Erickson 7/14

Brodie Kunze 7/15



Next Sunday (July 19th):

Central-Grantsburg

Pianist
Reading Scripture
Acolyte(s)
Fellowship
Counter
Mowing
Cleaning

Toni Koons
Toni Koons
Willow Nyland
Volunteer Needed
Dave Huff
Dave Huff
Sandra Erickson

Atlas

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher
Cleaning
Sunday School

Sharon Asp
Mariah Gaffey
Sue Olson
Volunteer Needed
Summer Break

St. Croix Falls

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher(s)
Counter
Bell Ringer
Flowers

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



Upcoming Events & News

2026 Vacation Bible School: Theme is "Pool Party"

VBS Dates: Five Wednesdays from July 15th to August 12th
Pool Party: August 16th

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

July 12, 2026

Genesis 25:19-34

Pastor Rev. Jenny Lee, Ph.D.

Upper St. Croix Parish UMC



“Small Things Become Big Things”

I want to start with something funny I found on an internet site: Mrs. Smith was fumbling through her purse for her offering when a large television remote fell out and clattered into the aisle. The curious usher bent down to pick it up for her and whispered, “Do you always carry your TV remote to church?”

“No,” she replied, “but my husband refused to come with me this morning, and I figured this was the most evil thing I could legally do to him.”

Is this story familiar to you? Actually, it feels very familiar to me because my mother once did something similar. She used to hide the TV remote from my father so that he might come to church.

As my mother expected, my father—who struggled with alcohol at that time—would sometimes come to church looking for the remote and asking my mother where she had hidden it. My siblings felt embarrassed when he came to church in that condition, but my mother believed it was the only way she could bring him into the presence of God. My mother prayed faithfully and trusted that one day my father would come to church and become a faithful Christian. And he finally did.

I know it was not because of the TV remote. But through that small thing, my mother was trying to open a door for God to work in my father’s life.

What would you do if someone you loved refused to come to church? Sometimes God can use even the smallest things to begin a great transformation.

Today, I would like to talk about how **“Small Things Become Big Things.”** In other words, small things can shape our future and make a significant difference in our lives. When you hear this, what comes to your mind? Perhaps you think of a mustard seed. Jesus says, “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches” (Matthew 13:31–32).

Yes, our faith often begins with small things: a baptism, a confirmation, attending worship, offering a prayer, reading the scripture, serving the church, or helping our community. These small acts of faith may seem insignificant at first, but God can use them to grow something much greater in our lives and in the lives of others.

In today’s Scripture reading, we hear about Esau and Jacob, the twin sons of Isaac and Rebekah. Just as Abraham and Sarah experienced difficulties in having a child, Isaac and Rebekah also faced a long season of waiting. Did you notice that Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah, and for about twenty years, they remained childless?

Isaac prayed to the Lord, and God answered his prayer. Rebekah conceived as an answer to Isaac’s prayer (v. 21). Rebekah also knew that this child was a gift of God’s grace. So, when she experienced a struggle within her womb, she went to inquire of the Lord and prayed to God. The Lord said to her, “Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples born of you shall be divided; one shall be stronger than the other, the elder shall serve the younger.”

This is the beginning of the story of the twins, Esau and Jacob. Before they were born, the Lord already knew them and had a purpose for their lives. However, this should not be understood as a kind of fatalism, as if everything is simply predetermined and human choices do not matter. Rather, this passage reveals the greatness of Almighty God—God’s knowledge, God’s purpose, and God’s loving care for each of us even before we are born.

It is like God said to Jeremiah, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations” (Jeremiah 1:5). It is also like Jesus said, “Even the hairs of

your head are all counted” (Matthew 10:30). This reminds us of God’s deep love and grace—the God who knows us completely and faithfully cares for us throughout our lives.

Esau and Jacob are born and grew up in different shapes and personalities. Esau was red, and all his body was like a hairy mantle (V.26). He was a skillful hunter, a man of the field, but Jacob was a quiet man, living in a tent (v. 27). Jacob seemed to enjoy cooking instead of hunting (v.29). The Scripture says, “Isaac loved Esau because he was fond of the game, but Rebekah loved Jacob” (v.28). Even though they were together from the same mom and dad, they are very different. They perhaps live in their nature characters as an indoor versus outdoor person.

One thing we should not overlook is what happens in verses 29 through 34. As we know, Esau enjoyed hunting, while Jacob enjoyed cooking. Esau perhaps appreciated Jacob’s famous stew. After returning home from a hunting trip, he must have been hungry and exhausted. So, Esau asked Jacob for some of the stew. However, Jacob saw this as an opportunity to make a deal. He offered the stew in exchange for Esau’s birthright. Esau said, “I am about to die; what use is my birthright to me?” Finally, Esau swore an oath to Jacob and gave away his birthright.

This moment reveals that Esau did not truly value the blessing of his birthright. This small decision revealed something much deeper about his character. Of course, God had already spoken about the future of Jacob and Esau before they were born. However, Esau’s choice was still his own responsibility. What Esau exchanged for a single meal was not merely his birthright—it revealed the condition of his heart and the value he placed on God’s blessing.

Israelite society was patriarchal, and the birthright of the firstborn son was very significant. It represented not only a special blessing but also power, responsibility, and authority within the family. The Israelites regarded the firstborn son’s birthright as one of God’s greatest blessings.

Jacob understood the value of the birthright, but Esau did not care about it. The Letter to the Hebrews says, “Esau was an immoral and godless person, who sold his birthright for a single meal” (Hebrews 12:16). Esau’s small decision changed the direction of his destiny. While Jacob became the successor of Isaac and the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, Esau became the ancestor of the Edomites.

The birthright was not something Esau earned through his own effort; it was a gift and blessing given by God. Therefore, Esau’s problem was not simply that he gave away a possession. His deeper problem was that he failed to recognize and value God’s grace.

Think about ourselves as Christians. We are saved in Jesus Christ by the grace of God, not by our own works. As children of God, we have received spiritual blessings, rights, and privileges. However, these blessings always come with responsibilities. As Christians, while we have received God’s greatest gift of salvation, we are also called to love God and love our neighbors. Sometimes we forget that we are blessed by God not only for ourselves, but also so that God can bless others through us.

Even small things we do can become great things in God’s hands. The coins we collect through programs like Moolah for Milk or UNICEF, and Operation Christmas shoe boxes may seem small, but they can make a meaningful difference in the lives of many children.

Faith is not always expressed through great achievements or extraordinary moments. Sometimes faith is lived out through small acts of daily obedience—caring for our family members, encouraging our church members, serving those in need, and loving our neighbors in our community.

What we receive so naturally by the grace of God may actually be deeply significant for our lives and our future. Let us not overlook God’s gifts around us: the fresh air we breathe, the water we drink, the beauty of creation, and the people God places in our lives.

Like Esau, we can easily overlook something precious because it seems ordinary. But Jesus reminds us, “You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things” (Matthew 25:23).

May we learn to recognize God’s grace in the small things, remain faithful in our daily choices, and trust that God can use even our smallest acts of love and obedience to create something great for His kingdom.

Thanks be to God. Amen!