

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

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison**

Gracious and generous God, every good gift comes from You.
With thankful hearts, we offer these gifts as a sign of our love and
trust in You. Use them to bring hope where there is despair,
healing where there is brokenness, and Your love to those in need.
As You worked through Joseph to bless many people, work
through our lives and our giving to accomplish Your purposes. We
dedicate ourselves and these offerings to Your service. We pray in
Jesus' name, Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN**

God Will Take Care of You

UMH 130 (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)

11th 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

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
August 9th, 2026
11th 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**

Come, let us worship the God
who is with us in every season of life.

**Even when we cannot see His hand,
God is faithfully at work.**

When life falls apart and our hearts are troubled,
God does not abandon us.

**We place our trust in the One
who sees the beginning and the end.**

God turns sorrow into hope and brings light
into our darkest moments.

**We will praise the Lord,
whose love never fails.**

Come with your joys, your burdens,
your questions, and your faith.

**We come to worship the God
who is always working for our good.**

Let us worship the Lord with thankful hearts.

**We will trust in God’s unfailing love
and rejoice in God’s saving grace. Amen.**

***DEDICATING HYMN** *How Great Thou Art*
UMH 77 (vs. 1 & 2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Gracious and loving God, we come before You with grateful hearts,
bringing our joys, burdens, hopes, and fears. When life feels uncertain
and our paths seem unclear, remind us that You are always at work,
even when we cannot see it. Open our hearts to Your presence, our
minds to Your Word, and our lives to Your transforming grace. Fill
us with faith, hope, and love as we worship You today. In the name of
Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**

Genesis 37:1-4;12-28

(NRSV, p. 34 in the Old Testament, G & SCF Pew Bible,
and p.33-34 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 Is Still at Work When Life Falls Apart ”

Rev. Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Gracious God, we thank You for reminding us that You are still at
work, even when our lives seem to be falling apart. Help us to trust
Your unseen hand when we cannot understand Your ways. Heal the
wounds of broken relationships, remove bitterness from our hearts,
and give us the grace to forgive as You have forgiven us. Strengthen
our faith, renew our hope, and lead us to choose kindness and love
each day. We pray in Jesus’ name, Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

After each prayer request:
Pastor: Lord, in your mercy,
All: Hear our Prayer.

AUGUST 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

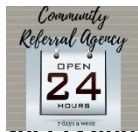


Suggested donation items: diced tomatoes, green beans, Chinese foods, saltine crackers, tuna without soy, spices, personal needs. Please leave them in the basket at the front of the church!

August Mission

Community Referral Agency
In August we will be collecting supplies for Community Referral Agency. They are especially in need of the following items:

- ✓ Stamps
- ✓ Bug spray
- ✓ Sun screen
- ✓ Pack N Play size sheets and mattress covers



Their general wish list will be posted on the mission board at church as well.

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".



August Mission: Pastor's Discretionary Fund

Our August Mission Focus is the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Throughout the month, we invite you to make a financial contribution to this special fund, which Pastor Jenny uses to assist individuals and families facing unexpected financial challenges. Your generous gifts provide help when it is needed most and allow our church to extend Christ's love and compassion to those in our community.



ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

Food Shelf

(Communion Sunday)



Sailor Hat Offering:

The Sailor Hat offering will support Pastor Jenny's discretionary funds.



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
Colleen Adams-Schween
Sue Olson
Volunteer Needed
Summer Break

St. Croix Falls

Pianist
Liturgist
Usher(s)
Counter
Bell Ringer
Flowers

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

Prayers: Please Pray For: Mary Lou Wright (grandson, Rene's mission trip and support for his church ministry), Barbara Loomis (surgery, 8/6), Sandra Erickson (healing for her son, Mike and her husband, Jeff), Kay Lamphere (surgery, 8/14), Lynn Hanson (daughter, Sara and son-in-law Mike, daughter Beckey, and grandchildren A.J and Isaiah), Sharon Asp (younger daughter Abby and her husband's mission trip), Jim Andrews (cousin Pat's surgery), and Kathy Gionis (her friend's safe trip back home).

Praise the Lord with Joy and Gratitude — Thank You, Lord, for: Paulie Krachmer (grandson's wedding), Sharon Asp (enjoying music concert in Spooner), and Karen Sciacca (safe trip back home and staying with mother-in-law).



Thank you for your support!

"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: 11th Sunday After Pentecost. God bless you all!

Worship Service and A Week Schedule

8/9 (Sun):	9:00 am	Grantsburg-Central UMC (with zoom)
	10:00 am	Atlas UMC
	11:15 am	St. Croix Falls UMC
	2:00 pm	Pastor Jenny leads worship at Continuing Care Center
8/10 (Mon):	6:30-8:00 pm	District New Ministry Strategy Committee Meeting via Zoom
8/12 (Wed):	10:00am-Noon	New Ministry Strategy Board Meeting via Zoom
	1:00 pm	UMW Meeting (G)
8/14 (Fri):	10:00 am	Korean Caucus Board Meeting via Zoom
	1:30 pm	Ad Council Meeting (A)
8/16 (Sun):	12:15 pm	Ad Council Meeting (SCF)

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAY'S & ANNIVERSARIES

Eli Zeller
8/9

Charles Wright
8/15



Next Sunday (August 16th):

Central-Grantsburg

Pianist	Toni Koons
Reading Scripture	Toni Koons
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	Volunteer Needed
Counter	Volunteer Needed
Mowing	Volunteer Needed
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	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Lynn Hanson
Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Andrews
Flowers	Women of the church



Upcoming Events & News

2026 Summer Special Program for Children (Semi-VBS)

Due to low VBS registration we now have a special summer program for children instead of VBS: Remaining dates: Aug. 5, 7, 16, 23 and 28. (contact: Shayna Schmid).

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

Summer Joint Worship at Atlas: Joint Service will be at 10:30 am on August 30 at Polk County Park next to Atlas UMC.



“God Is Still at Work When Life Falls Apart”

I want to start with something funny that I found an internet site: There were a taxi driver and a minister. They died on the same day and stood before God to be judged. First, God asked the taxi driver, “Where did you work?” The taxi driver answered, “I worked in New York City.”

God looked at the record and said, “Okay, go to heaven by the golden road.”

The minister heard God’s judgment for the taxi driver and expected to receive even greater praise. After all, he had devoted his life to serving God. But God did not ask him any questions. Instead, God simply looked at his record and said, “Go to hell.”

The minister was shocked and said, “Lord, I think there must be some mistake. I was a minister. I worked hard for your people. How could You send the taxi driver to heaven and send me to hell?” God answered, “Well, I judge by the results. The taxi driver made people pray while he was driving, but you made people fall asleep while you were preaching.”

Last Sunday, I talked about how we are not only given a new name—Children of God—but are also called to live as God's children. I know it is not easy to practice the love of God and the love of our neighbors every moment of every day. That is why we need to pray continually for God's help. Sometimes the very people we love and care for—even our own family members—may hurt us, even when we have done nothing wrong. In fact, we may have loved them deeply and cared for them faithfully. When that happens, how heartbreaking it is! Today’s Scripture deals with family conflict, jealousy, favoritism, suffering, and God's hidden providence. Through this story, we will see how God is still at work even in the midst of family conflict and broken relationships. So, today’s sermon is titled, “God Is Still at Work When Life Falls Apart.”

Jacob (Israel) had finally settled with his family in the Promised Land. He had been reconciled with his brother Esau. In fact, Esau had let go of Jacob’s deception years earlier and warmly welcomed Jacob and his family home. Today's Scripture tells the story of Jacob’s sons.

Have you ever looked back over your life and realized that one difficult day changed everything? Perhaps it was the day you lost your job. The day you heard a frightening diagnosis. The day someone you trusted let you down. The day you buried someone you loved.

When we are living through those moments, they feel like the end of the story. But years later, we sometimes discover that they were only the beginning of another chapter.

I remember feeling as though my whole world had come to an end when my mother passed away. But my mother's final wish became a turning point in my life. That moment led me on a journey that brought me here today.

Joseph, Israel’s beloved son, also faced what must have felt like the end of the world. He was betrayed by his own brothers, thrown into a pit, and sold as a slave. Yet even in that painful moment, God was already working ahead of him, preparing a way to save many lives. If we only read Genesis 37, we might think it is one of the saddest stories in the Bible. But we know something Joseph did not know. God had not stopped working.

Joseph is seventeen years old. He helps his older brothers care for the family's flocks. Like many young people, he dreams about the future. Life seems full of possibilities. Jacob loves Joseph more than his other sons and gives him a beautiful robe (a brightly colored coat)—a visible sign of his special affection. Joseph also shares his dreams without realizing how they sound to his brothers. Whether from youthful excitement or immaturity, his words only deepen their resentment. Already there are cracks in the family. His brothers grow more jealous each day. One family. One father. Twelve brothers. Yet beneath the surface, anger is quietly growing.

Isn't that often how life works? Everything appears normal on the outside. We come to church smiling and greeting one another, saying, "Peace be with you." Yet we often do not know who is carrying a wounded heart unless they choose to share it. When families gather for holidays, behind many smiles are wounds that no one else can see.

Then comes one ordinary day. Jacob (Israel) simply says to Joseph, "Go and see if your brothers are well." It sounds like an ordinary errand. Joseph has no idea that this journey will change his life forever. Sometimes life changes with a single phone call. One doctor's appointment. One conversation. One unexpected event. One ordinary morning becomes the day everything changes.

Joseph walks many miles looking for his brothers. Imagine him scanning the hills, calling out, "Hello! Where are you?" He is looking forward to seeing them. Finally, he spots them in the distance. But before he can reach them, they see him. And instead of saying, "Hi, Joseph! We're over here!" they say, "Here comes this dreamer." Their hearts are filled with jealousy and hatred. They no longer want him around. So, they strip off Joseph's beautiful robe—the robe that symbolized his father's special love—and throw him into an empty pit.

Imagine Joseph sitting there: confused, terrified, calling out for help, and wondering, 'What did I do to deserve this?' Then comes another heartbreaking moment. The brothers sell Joseph to a passing caravan for twenty pieces of silver, and Joseph becomes a slave.

Sometimes life falls apart because of the choices we make. Sometimes it falls apart because of the choices others make. Joseph did nothing to deserve what happened to him. Many of us know that feeling. Perhaps someone betrayed your trust. Perhaps someone broke a promise. Perhaps life simply was not fair. Genesis does not pretend that these things never happen. It tells the truth. Sometimes good people suffer without anything wrong.

But here is something remarkable. Did you notice what is missing from this chapter?

God never speaks. There are no angels. No miracles. No burning bush. No voice from heaven.

God seems silent. But silent does not mean absent. This is one of the beautiful truths of Scripture: sometimes God is working most powerfully behind the scenes. While Joseph sits in the pit, God is already preparing Egypt. While Joseph is chained to the traders, God is preparing Pharaoh. While Joseph thinks his life is ending, God is beginning something much greater.

Joseph cannot see it. Neither can Jacob. Neither can his brothers. Only God sees the whole picture.

How often do we pray, "Lord, where are You?" Perhaps the better question is, "Lord, what are You preparing that I cannot yet see?" Faith does not mean understanding everything.

Faith means trusting the One who does.

Many years later, Joseph finally understood that God had been with him all along, quietly working even through the darkest moments of his life. Standing before the very brothers who had betrayed him, Joseph spoke these remarkable words: "**You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good.**" (Genesis 50:20) Joseph did not deny the evil that had been done to him. He did not pretend it didn't hurt. Instead, he testified that God's purpose was greater than human evil.

That is our hope as well. Our faith does not rest in what we can see, but in the God who sees the beginning and the end. So, if your life feels like it is falling apart today, remember this:

Your story is not over. The God who was at work in Joseph's life is still at work in yours.

And because God has been so gracious to us, we are called to reflect that grace to others.

As the Apostle Paul reminds us: "**Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.**" (1 Thessalonians 5:15). May we trust God's unseen work, wait patiently for His timing, and choose kindness even when life is unfair.

Thanks be to God. Amen.