

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS
PASTORAL PRAYERS/THE LORD'S PRAYER
PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS
*DOXOLOGY UMH 95

PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison
By giving away some of the wealth we cherish so much, we keep ourselves focused on who you are, gracious God, and on what you expect of us. As the body of Christ, we seek to be a healing force in our world. May the offerings we present be used in ways that encourage healthful behaviors among us in the church, within our community, and as far as our influence can reach. Receive us and our gift, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN *Open My Eyes, That I May See*
UMH 454 (vs. 1 & 3)

*BENEDICTION Pastor Jenny Lee

POSTLUDE

Upper St. Croix Parish

ONE Parish THREE Churches:
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
January 31st, 2021
"Fourth Sunday After Epiphany"



The United Methodist Church

10 am Online Zoom Service

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Parish Office: 715-463- 2624 – centralumc2016@gmail.com
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
January 31st, 2021
“Fourth Sunday after Epiphany”

This bulletin is for a Zoom Service and home service.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

“Peace be with You!”

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Responsive

Join the company of the upright
in praise and thanksgiving to God.

**With our whole hearts we come,
marveling at the powerful works of our Creator.**

God is gracious and merciful to us,
entering into the covenant with all who respond.

**In humility and amazement we answer,
for the authority of Christ compels us.**

God calls us to a prophetic witness
and judges the truth of our words and deeds.

**Out of our need for renewal and clearer vision,
we are here to remember and learn. Amen.**

***OPENING HYMN** *Heal Us, Emmanuel, Hear Our Prayer*
UMH 266 (vs. 1, 2 & 3)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

O God, whose precepts are established on the earth, be with us here to teach and interpret. We know you as the only true God, but we do not know enough of you to represent you faithfully. We have been freed from sin to serve you, but we are not free enough of self-centeredness to feel with others and know their needs. We would be silent now, that we may be purged of all that separates us from your truth. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Mark 1:21-28

21 They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. 22 They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. 23 Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, 24 and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” 25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” 26 And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. 27 They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” 28 At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

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

Thanks be to God.

HYMN OF PREPARATION - *Special Music*

SERMON *“Cut it off with the Authority of Christ!”*

Pastor Jenny Lee

(If you are not able to join us for Zoom Live Service, one of your family members may read the written sermon, or view the video clip on Facebook, or listen to the Sermon by Phone.)

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

All-powerful God, whose revelation in Jesus Christ communicated authority and wisdom and strength among people who lived long ago, let your word today address the unclean spirit in our midst, that your church may more fully represent Christ in today’s world, reaching out in love to all who need food, inspiration, direction, care, and healing. Let us, our family and our nation heal with the authority of Christ. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Announcements (Insert) January 31st, 2021

1. Today is the "Fourth Sunday after Epiphany." May God's presence and grace be with you!
2. We will have a New Membership and renew Membership Class during the Lent season (the week of 2/14 - before Easter, for 7 Weeks). If you are interested or have any questions, please let pastor Jenny know by January 31.(see the brochure for more information).
3. The orientation of the Lenten Bible study will be held right after Sunday service at 11 am on February 7 via Zoom.
4. Next Sunday, February 7th is Communion Sunday. Please prepare communion elements for the service. You may pick them up from the church or prepare them by yourself. (See Office hours #5)
5. Pastor Jenny's office hours: Grantsburg- 9 to 5 pm Tuesdays and Wednesdays, St. Croix Falls- 11 to 4 pm Thursdays.
6. "Both/Online and in Person worship Webinar" will be held at 10 am to noon via Zoom. If you are interested, let Pastor Jenny know so she will forward the invite to you.
7. SPRC Annual Training of The North West District will be held from 6pm -9pm on February 4th (Thursday) via Zoom.
8. Children's messages will be uploaded on our parish Facebook at 4 pm every Monday. Please encourage your kids to view the messages.
9. An Online Zoom Service is scheduled for this Sunday (January 31st) at 10 am, and here is the Zoom service LINK. This link will be posted on our parish website and Facebook also. The link will be changed every Sunday.

Topic: Sunday Zoom Live Service, 1-31-2021

Time: 10:00 AM Central Time (US and Canada)

Click the link to Join Sunday Zoom Service.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89602703639?pwd=MHpHT21JNEsvcHovbFZLMFZzdGdWdz09>

Meeting ID: 896 0270 3639 Passcode: 504306

- If you are attending the Zoom service for the first time, you may be asked to download the Zoom app. It is free, you will need it.
- If you want to join from your smart phone with video, click the link.

- If you want to dial the number without video, you may dial along with meeting ID and passcode.

+1 312 626 6799

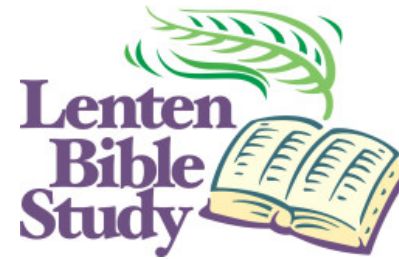
Meeting ID: 896 0270 3639 Passcode: 504306

Any questions regarding technological issues of the service, contact pastor Jenny.

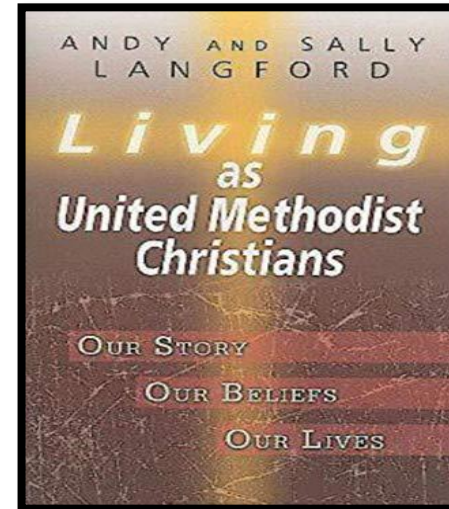
10. You can also participate via **Toll Free Call (smart phone or landline)** every Sunday at 10:00 am by calling (1-888) 222-0475 and enter participant code 2938435.
11. You can hear "**the service (the scripture lesson, song, sermon and prayer-about 30 minutes) by phone**" whenever you are able as you call 1-715-298-0854. We will upload a new one every Sunday afternoon.
12. We have the link from our parish website to our parish Facebook on our homepage.
13. We need volunteers to be the liturgist every Zoom Sunday. If you are willing to be a liturgist, let Pastor Jenny know which Sunday you are available, and we welcome a special song with your family members.
14. If you miss a Zoom Live Sunday service, you may view a video clip on Facebook or use materials (mailed, emailed or on the Parish website) for a home service. You may want to send your giving (offerings) to your church. If you have any questions regarding services or offerings, please email the church office at: centralumc2016@gmail.com
You may send your giving (offering) to the church (**Please write your check payable to your individual church's name.**)
Atlas UMC: PO Box 254, Luck, WI 54853
Grantsburg-Central UMC: PO Box 128, Grantsburg, WI 54840
St. Croix Falls UMC: PO Box 458, St. Croix Falls, WI 54024
15. This Week's Birthdays and Anniversaries:
*If we miss your birthday, please let us know by email or phone call: centralumc2016@gmail.com/ 715-463-2624.

Joseph Murtaugh 2/2





2021 NEW & RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP



All are welcome to join our Lenten Bible Study where we will be learning about Methodist Christians and building and renewing our faith in God.

- Books cost \$11 each
- Registration deadline is January 31st
- Classes start the 2nd week of February for 7 weeks.
- Classes held via Zoom Video Conference (1-2 times in person)-Dates and times to be determined.
- Questions or to register contact Pastor Jenny Lee at 773-793-7307 or via email at jennlee1732@gmail.com



January 31st, 2021
Mark 1:21-28

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

“Cut it off with the Authority of Christ!”

I want to start with a funny story. I heard about this group of school children. They were in the cafeteria line at the Catholic elementary school. At the beginning of the line, there was a big bowl of apples. A nun had written a note, says, “pick only one as God is watching.” At the end of the line, there was a big bowl of chocolate chip cookies. One of the children wrote a note and said, “Take all you want while God is watching the apples.”

I want to talk to you today about “cut it off with the authority of Christ.” We may not realize how we are distressed with hearing people around us, those with many sufferings, infirmities, anxieties, worries, addictions, family illness, world-disasters, violence, injustice, and even small gossips. All negative things come to our mind, and they are growing in us. Finally, we can become depressed with all the negative things. If we hear bad things every day, it is like feeding our soul and mind with bad soul food. If you say to your spouse or your family members every time, “you are so bad.” They will become the worst person. Please don’t feed them and yourself with bad soul food! Instead, cut it off with the authority of Christ.

My grandfather was a strict father to my father, who is the first son to my grandfather. In a patriarchal family, the firstborn son has a lot of benefits, and at the same time, has strict responsibilities. My father was distressed by my grandfather’s expectations. He received higher education, but he had lower self-esteem and alcohol addiction. He wasn’t be able to talk to anyone in a public place without drinking. My grandfather scolded my weak father every day. My grandfather’s expectations and strict discipline made my father alcoholic addiction. Even when my father visited my younger sister’s school, he used to drink to see her teacher. My younger sister got hurt by my father’s behavior and was ashamed in front of her friends. While drunk, my father used to go to the church also, where my mother attended, to seek my mother. All my family members struggled because of my father. Everyone in town knew that my father was an alcoholic and gossiped about my father. All situations led to my father getting worse and worse.

One day, when I was a sophomore at seminary, I saw my father crying alone. It was the first time that I saw my father cry. I felt heartbroken. I couldn’t do anything at that moment. Later on, I talked to my mother about how my father cried alone. My mother told me that my father got deeply wounded from his childhood. He lost his mother when he was 6. He couldn’t cry in front of his father because of the strict discipline that a man never cries. His father was a strong and strict head of household. My father’s soul and mind were fed with fear, incapacity, deep grief, and brokenness by his father and the situation around him.

My mother and I decided to cut all his negative things off and start blessing him. My family members intentionally said good words to my father every day, “you are a good father; you are handsome; we love you; you are beloved by God; we are proud of you because you are my father; God bless you.” He started looking at a mirror and looking at himself differently. We began having home-services whether my father was there or not and proclaimed we would stop all negative things flowing through our family members. Finally, he started attending the church without drinking, where he used to bother services by being drunk and received baptism. He stopped all Confucian worship at home.

Furthermore, after my grandfather passed away, he, as the head of household, led all family members and relatives to convert Christians and made me the religious leader of our home. He enjoyed daily prayers with my mother for the rest of his life. It is essential to cut all bad things off and be positive, supportive, sympathetic, compassionate, and merciful. And bless and encourage people around you. If they are happy, you may feel

happy also. Perhaps, we can't do it by ourselves. But if we do so with the authority of Christ, God makes things happen for us. We, Christians, have the authority to pray in Jesus' name. Jesus said, "This kind can come out only by prayer" (Mark9:29). He also said, "You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it" (John 14:14). We can cut all bad things off flowing through our family history with the authority of Christ. It is the power of prayer Jesus gave us.

In today's Scripture, Jesus went into the synagogue on the Sabbath and taught people. Synagogue was a Jewish temple to worship and study the Bible. People were astounded at his teaching because he had authority. At that time, there was a man with an unclean spirit. He cried out, interrupted, and tried to draw their attention. But, no one gave him attention. He cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God."

There was an unclean spirit at synagogue, who knew Jesus very well but bothered him, and his ministry. This man with the unclean spirit is, perhaps, an image of what the lives of that synagogue looked like. They knew about God very well, but their souls might not be clean. In looking at him, they might see themselves, and they were not surprised by him. However, they were surprised by the contrast of the one who has a clean spirit. Finally, the man cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?" Jesus said, "Be silent, and come out of him." and then the unclean spirit came out of him, crying with a loud voice. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? It is new teaching with authority!" Yes, Jesus' teaching was the good news that the wounded, the powerless, the sick, and the poor are not sin, but they can be healed, restored, and reconciled in the love of God.

We may not realize that we have a story in our lives, which suffers spiritually and emotionally. Perhaps, the man with an unclean spirit might represent everyone who has ever experienced the brokenness of life. He is the spokesperson for all who feel disconnected from themselves, others, or God. He might represent the human condition. He might want to hear from Jesus, "I have everything to do with you."

We are not very different. Each one of us also longs for that answer because we also know the separation and brokenness of our own lives. We have lived in isolation. We have been trapped in grief. We have carried the burden of guilt. The truth of those situations often reveals itself as if the man with unclean spirit said, "Have you come to destroy us? We may not want our life to be seen in its unmade-up condition. We may want to make up guilt, grief, fear, anger, and self-judgment not to be seen to others. However, if we feed those things to our soul, finally, our soul may destroy. Brokenness and being wounded are not guilt but need care with love. Among many people at the synagogue, only a man cried out to Jesus, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? I know who you are." Finally, he was healed by Jesus' authority.

As Christians, we have authority in the name of Jesus Christ. We need be careful to listen to others who cry out. And we may use the authority of Jesus Christ in order to release them from their suffering. The Gospel of Mark's witness on Christian's authority is very clear. At the beginning of the Gospel, Mark 1:1 says, "The beginning of the good news is Jesus Christ, Son of God." the Gospel of Mark, 16:17-18, says, "these signs will accompany those who believe: by using my name they will cast out the demon; They will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover." And the end of the Gospel of Mark, 16:20, says, the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the sign that accompanied it." Jesus, as he promised, is with his disciples and worked with them.

Today Jesus is working among us. It is time to cut the negative things and bad spirit in our family and around us off with Jesus Christ's authority. Do not let Jesus' authority limit. As I shared with you a funny story at the beginning, while Jesus is watching the apples, don't you think he can watch the chocolate chip cookies at that same time? Let us use the authority of Christ. Please pray for yourself and your family. "This kind can come out only by prayer" (Mark9:29).

Thanks be to God. Amen.