

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

UMH 95

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

We dedicate ourselves and our offerings to the work of your church. For those who are sick, who are suffering, who are lost, who are grieving, we have words of hope and acts of caring. We stand with all who face discrimination, oppression, and confusion, seeking to work with them for justice and a meaningful existence. As you have accepted us, we reach out to include all your children in the family of mutuality, self-revelation, and growing in love. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*HYMN *Where He Leads Me* UMH 338 (vs. 1 & 4)

*BENEDICTION Pastor Jenny Lee

POSTLUDE

Upper St. Croix Parish

ONE Parish THREE Churches:
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
September 26th, 2021
"Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost"



The United Methodist Church

8:30 AM at Central-Grantsburg with Online Zoom Service
9:45 AM at Atlas
11:15 AM at St. Croix Falls

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Parish Office: 715-463- 2624 – centralumc2016@gmail.com
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www.upperstcroixparish.org

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
September 26th, 2021

“Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost”

*Please stand if you are able.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

“Peace be with you”

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

*CALL TO WORSHIP Responsive

Come one and all to meet God here.

Let all who are suffering find hope in this place.

We have come that God might raise us up.

Our only hope is in the Maker of heaven and earth.

Come, all who are weary and oppressed.

God offers relief and enlists our mutual helpfulness.

God hears our prayers and answers us.

God equips us to be helpful to one another.

Come together to sing songs of praise to God.

Give thanks for God’s wondrous deeds.

God’s glory abides in this place of worship.

God’s presence and help are real. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN *O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee*

UMH 430 (vs. 1 & 4)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

May all your people find favor with you this day, God of majesty and power. Turn our sorrow into gladness and our mourning into a holiday, a holy day, in which to praise you and find ways to help those less fortunate than ourselves. Lift us from our daily preoccupations that we may pray with earnest intent, both to thank you and to be alive and life-changing. May the service we extend find favor in your eyes, blessed God. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

*THE NEWTESTAMENT LESSON

Mark 9:38-50

38 John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.” 39 But Jesus said, “Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. 40 Whoever is not against us is for us. 41 For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

42 “If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. 43 If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. 45 And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. 47 And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, 48 where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

49 “For everyone will be salted with fire. 50 Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.”

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“Have Salt in Yourselves!”

Pastor Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison



Almighty God, expand our knowledge of your truth and our appreciation of diversity so we may find gratitude and preciousness in everyday life. Like salt that enhances the flavor of food, lead us to have salt in ourselves so that our lives may prosper in the joy and gladness we are discovering in our relationship with Jesus Christ. Teach us how to be at peace with one another and faithful to you. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHURCH MISSIONS

ATLAS ... September

<p>INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:</p> <p>Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year round.</p> 	<p>Collecting donations for the food shelf.</p> <p>Communion Sunday: Shelf-Stable Milk or 100% Juice</p> 	 <p>We will be collecting loose change during worship to support & Operation X-Mas Child Shoe-Boxes</p>
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GRANTSBURG... September

<p>BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!</p> <p>REMEMBER ... Every Sunday Is MAC 'N CHEESE SUNDAY!</p> <p>Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Backpack Program"</p> 	<p>Moolah For Milk</p> <p>Collecting loose change to support Moolah for Milk!</p> 
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ST. CROIX FALLS - September

**Sailor Hat Offering:
To School Backpack Program**

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers	All God's People <i>Pastor Jenny Lee</i>
Central:	
Pianist	Sharon Asp <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Liturgist	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Mowing	Willow Erickson
Acolyte(s)	Valetta Walton <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Fellowship	Close <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Counter	
Church Doors	
Sunday School	Younger/Older LuAnne Martell/Barb Loomis
Atlas:	
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Sue Olson
Usher(s)	Colleen Adams-Schween <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Cleaning	
Sunday School	Younger/Older Josie Grimes/ Jamie Steffen
St. Croix Falls:	
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Jim Andrews
Usher(s)	Karen Sciacca
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
Flowers	Kathy Gionis
Fellowship	Ad Council members



BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK:



Please pray for the Youth/Children's Director ONCE A DAY if you are able.

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) An Online Zoom Service is scheduled for this Sunday at 8:30 am. The link will be posted on our parish website and Facebook page.
Click the LINK to Join Zoom Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84147808460?pwd=SDZlZFNubmEvaDBlcytTRzVxMFllZz09>
Meeting ID: 841 4780 8460 Passcode: 568271
Phone: +1 312 626 6799,
Meeting ID: 841 4780 8460, Passcode: 568271
- 2) Our Sunday Sermons are on the website at upperstcroixparish.org under Sermons!
- 3) You can hear “the service by Phone,” whenever you are able by calling 1-715-298-0854.
- 4) You may watch a recorded video of the service on our parish Facebook page.
<https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

This Week’s Calendar:

Today: “Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost” God bless you!
World Communion Sunday Worship Service: 8:30 am at Grantsburg;
9:45 am at Atlas, and 11:15 am at St. Croix Falls.
October 1: 10:30am, Administrative Council Meeting (A) and 6 pm,
SPRC Meeting at the Parsonage



10/9 AT 8AM, UMM MEETING (G)

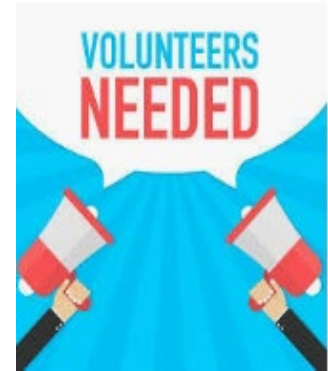
10/10 “TOWN HALL MEETING” (G) DURING THE SUNDAY SERVICE

10/17 “LAITY SUNDAY”

10/25 CHARGE CONFERENCE

Next Sunday (October 3rd) Volunteers:

Ministers	All God’s People <i>Pastor Jenny Lee</i>
Central:	
Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Mowing	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Acolyte(s)	Willow Erickson
Fellowship	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Counter	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Church Doors	Close <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Sunday School	Younger/Older LuAnne Martell/ Barb Loomis
Atlas:	
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Usher(s)	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Cleaning	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Sunday School	Younger/Older <i>Volunteer Needed</i>
St. Croix Falls:	
Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Kathy Gionis
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
Flowers	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Fellowship	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>



This Weeks Birthdays and Anniversaries

Louise Reisewitz	9/26
Terry Giles	9/26
Doris Olson	9/27
Kristie Olson	9/28
LeAnn Sylvester	9/29
Van Brock	10/2



September 26th, 2021
Mark 9: 38-50

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



“Have Salt in Yourselves!”

Today, I want to talk about “Have salt in yourselves.” I know it sounds strange. But, I would say, we Christians should have salt in ourselves. In other words, a good Christian is a person who has salt in him/herself. It is a metaphor for a Christian’s mind. Literally, everyone has salt at home. We can find salt easily on the dining tables in any restaurant and any house. We usually add salt to the food even though it has already been cooked when we have meals. Some foods have no taste without salt. Salt is very useful for everyone to make flavor in our everyday lives. Like salt, we Christians should be helpful to everyone.

If we talk about “faith of salt,” you may imagine Christians who are striving against the corruption of society radically because one of salt’s roles is to prevent the corruption of food. But, if we listen to Jesus carefully, we notice that Jesus focuses on the relationship with one another rather than a radical movement to prevent a corrupting society. In the conclusion of today’s scripture, Jesus says, “Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.” As salt makes food taste good, we Christians can be peacemakers at home, in communities, countries, and the world, building up good relationships with one another. In order to understand why Jesus mentioned “salt” and what “having salt in ourselves” means, let’s look at the beginning of the passage.

Today’s scripture begins with the disciple John’s report. He said, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us” (Mark 9:38). The disciples tried to stop an outsider from casting out demons in the name of Jesus. Why did the disciples try to stop someone casting out the demon in the name of Jesus? We may guess the reasons. One of the reasons we can assume is here. Perhaps the disciples thought that they were on top of things. It is like the privileged consciousness that only they are Jesus’ disciples who have authority. The disciples were outsiders from Jewish leaders and scribes. They had forgotten that before Jesus extended the invitation to them, they had been outsiders. They had no standing within the community. Some of them were despised. They had no power. But, Jesus recognized their need and their potential. He called them and accepted them. He gave them a sense of meaning and purpose. He enabled them to have a significant part in the building of his kingdom. Jesus was also treated as an outsider by Jewish leaders. When Jesus healed the sick, they asked him by what kind of authority he healed the sick and they tried to stop him. We might sometimes be outsiders from another perspective. We all might be the weak, the last, and the powerless at any point. It is the reason we should love everyone with open minds, as did Jesus.

The other reason we can guess as to why the disciples tried to stop the outsider who succeeded in casting out the demon is this. Perhaps, the disciples had felt threatened by the success of others, especially outsiders. It is not a coincidence that the disciples were trying to forbid the man from doing what they had failed to do, cast out the demon. In the Gospel of Mark 9:17-18, a man brought his son, who was possessed by a demon, to heal him. But they couldn’t heal him. Instead, the disciples discussed why they couldn’t heal him beside him, who was sick. Jesus asked them what they were arguing about. The man explained to Jesus, “Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.” Jesus listened to his father’s suffering. Jesus was with him and his father, and then he healed him. The disciples asked Jesus, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” Jesus said to them, “This kind can come out only by prayer!” According to this case, the disciples failed to cast out the demon in public, but the outsider succeeded. The outsider, perhaps, prayed to cast out the demon in the name of Jesus. However, the outsider’s ability to accomplish what they could not called their power and authority into question for the disciples.

In light of such possibilities, Jesus’ response is more interesting: “Do not stop him.” Perhaps, the

disciples expected Jesus' response to be, "You did a good job." But, Jesus lets his disciples know that their handling of this situation is off-base. Jesus says to them, "No one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me." Jesus says this to draw a contrast between the outsider and the scribes, who had accused Jesus of being demon-possessed. Jesus says, "Whoever is not against us is for us." Jesus uses this proverb to challenge his disciples not to be a closed society but cultivate a spirit of tolerance and acceptance with open minds. Jesus was not interested in forbidding or excluding. Jesus came to bring good news to the poor and relief to the oppressed. Jesus came to encourage the hopeless and befriend the friendless. Jesus came to lift bowed heads and to break the chain of sin and disease. Jesus came to proclaim the wideness of God's love.

Jesus came not to build walls but to break down barriers. Jesus came to establish a kingdom in which every member would be affirmed and cared for. The disciples missed this totally in their efforts to keep an outsider from living out his faith in the power of God in Christ. The disciples lost sight of the demon-possessed one who needed deliverance and who did not care whether it came from an authorized source, as long as it came. The disciples failed to realize that no one who cast out demons in the name of Jesus posed a threat to their livelihood and well-being.

This scripture challenges us to examine our responses to the good efforts of those who do not fall within the sphere of our influence by choice or necessity. As Christians, we are called to be open and receptive to good news wherever we find it. We are charged with supporting and affirming the gospel, whether or not we authorized, organized, or sponsored the vehicle by which it is spread.

The Apostle Paul could be an exemplar for us. When he was imprisoned, the other people preached Christ out with selfish ambition, supposing they could stir up trouble for Paul. However, Paul says, "But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice" (Philippians 1:18-19). We who gather and preach Christ out in the name of Christ are a family in Christ even if they belong to different denominations. The point is that we are Christians, having salt in us to make good at peace with one another. If we don't use the salt, we will be useless.

Many of us have an experience of Christ's presence in our lives. And that experience must not be used as the basis for hindering others or for shutting them out. If we act in an exclusionary way, we miss the point and run the risk of forfeiting the kingdom that we want so much to establish. The beginning of having salt is to care for the last, the least, and the powerless. Thank those around you, and have salt in yourself and make good at fostering peace at home, in the community, and in the world. Thanks be to God. Amen!