

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

With awe and wonder before you, O God, we dare to enlist all our efforts toward the realization of your realm. Where there is injustice, we would champion those oppressed and misunderstood. When some feel rejected, we reach out to accept them in Christ's name. may these offerings preach and teach and heal. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN *Here I Am, Lord* UMH (vs. 1 & 2)

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Jenny Lee

*POSTLUDE

Upper St. Croix Parish

ONE Parish THREE Churches:

Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls

January 30th, 2022

“4th Sunday After Epiphany”



8:30 AM at Central-Grantsburg with Online Zoom Service



The United Methodist Church

9:45 AM at Atlas

11:15 AM at St. Croix Falls

CONTACT INFORMATION

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www.upperstcroixparish.org

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
January 30th, 2022
“4th Sunday After Epiphany”

*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, people of God, to the one in whom we trust.

Praise God who delivers and rescues us.

God is our rock of refuge, our strong fortress.

God saves us amid wickedness and cruelty.

Hope in God, who has created you.

Open your hearts and minds to the one who knows you well.

God accepts us, even when people do not.

God affirms us, even when we fail.

Our God gives us tasks to do and strength to do them.

God’s Word of love is ours to proclaim.

We have come to embrace the mysteries of our faith.

We are here to worship the God who empowers us. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** *God of Love and God of Power*

UMH 578 (vs. 1 & 4)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

God of love, in whose name we have been consecrated for discipleship and service, encounter us in this hour, that we may grow in knowledge and actions. Disturb our certainties so we will be open to new insights. Upset our priorities to make room for faith, hope, and love. Expand our horizons to encompass ideas we have not entertained before. Open our hearts to people we have failed to welcome into our midst. Perfect among us that childlike trust that allows change to transform us in the presence of your love. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Luke 4:21-30

21 Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” 22 All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” 23 He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’” 24 And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown. 25 But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; 26 yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. 27 There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” 28 When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. 29 They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. 30 But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON *“Open hearts, Open Minds and Open Doors”*

Pastor Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Reassuring God, whose Word became flesh in Jesus, and whose healing touch empowered Christ the physician, look upon us with the compassion of a wise parent. Lead us to open our hearts and minds so we may equip ourselves to listen, to hear, to speak, to embody love that is patient and kind. May we bear, believe, hope, and endure, so that through us the world will hear good news, give up childish ways, and respond to the touch of your hand. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER/THE LORD’S PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

CHURCH MISSIONS



ATLAS...January

Mission committee chair: Peggy Frederickson

<p>INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:</p> <p>Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year round.</p> 	 <p>We will be collecting soup and monetary donations to support Super Bowl of Caring.</p>	<p>Help Support the Food Shelf in Luck</p> 
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GRANTSBURG...January

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

<p>BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!</p> <p>REMEMBER ... Every Sunday Is MAC 'N CHEESE SUNDAY! Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack Program"</p> 		<p>Collecting soup and coins to support Souper Bowl of Caring</p>
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ST. CROIX FALLS...January

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

 <p>Food Shelf</p> <p>(Communion Sunday)</p>	<p>Sailor Hat Offering:</p>  <p>Funds will go to the Salvation Army.</p>
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Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers All God's People
Pastor Jenny Lee

Today's Service

Central:
Pianist Toni Koons
Liturgist *Volunteer Needed*
Snow Removal Stan Chute
Acolyte(s) Willow Erickson
Fellowship *Volunteer Needed*
Counter *Volunteer Needed*
Sunday School Younger/Older
LuAnne Martell/Barb Loomis

Atlas:
Pianist Sharon Asp
Liturgist Sue Olson
Usher(s) Colleen Adams-Schween
Cleaning *Volunteer Needed*
Sunday school Younger/Older
Josie Grimes/Jamie Steffens

St. Croix Falls:
Pianist Sharon Asp
Liturgist Karen Sciacca
Usher(s) Jim Andrews
Money Counter Peter Gionis
Flowers Kathy Gionis
Fellowship Ad Council Members



BREAKTHROUGH PRAYERS FOR THIS WEEK:
"This kind can come out only by prayer" (Mark 9:29)
Please pray every morning at 8:30am, if you are able!

1) For those who are scheduled for surgery and in illness.

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=SDZleFNubmEvaDBlcytTRzVxMFIIZz09>
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: 4th Sunday After Epiphany! May the Spirit of God accompany you in everyday life!

*We have new 2022 signup sheets for volunteers. Please find a spot where you can be a part of the church. We are the church, which is growing in faith together.

Sunday Worship Service:

8:30 am Grantsburg

9:45 am Atlas

11:15 am St. Croix Falls

1/28: 11 am, Celebration of Life service for Fay Andrews (SCF UMC)

2/2: 6:30 pm, Youth Gathering (G)

2/3: 9 am, North West District Clergy Meeting via Zoom

2/4-2/5: Provisional Elder Winter Retreat at St. Anthony Retreat Center

This Week's Birthdays and Anniversaries:



Joseph Murtaugh 2/2

Next Sunday (February 6th) Volunteers:

Ministers

All God's People

Pastor Jenny Lee

Central:

Pianist

Toni Koons

Liturgist

LuAnne Martell

Snow Removal

Stan Chute

Acolyte(s)

Willow Erickson

Fellowship

Volunteer Needed

Counter

Volunteer Needed

Sunday School

Younger/Older

LuAnne Martell/ Barb Loomis

Atlas:

Pianist

Sharon Asp

Liturgist

Volunteer Needed

Usher(s)

Volunteer Needed

Cleaning

Volunteer Needed

Sunday School

Younger/Older

St. Croix Falls:

Pianist

Sharon Asp

Liturgist

Kathy Gionis

Usher(s)

Karen Sciacca

Money Counter

Peter Gionis

Flowers

Kathy Gionis

Fellowship

Ad Council Member (3rd Sunday)



FEBRUARY IS THE MONTH OF STEWARDSHIP

- 2/9 **UMW MEETING (G) & CONFIRMATION CLASS**
2/12 **UMM MEETING (G)**
2/12 **BISHOP'S CONVOCATION OF LAITY LEADERSHIP**





January 30th, 2022
Luke 4:21-30

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

“Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors”

I want to start with something funny. I heard about this story through an internet site. An elderly lady walked into the local church. The friendly usher greeted her at the door and helped her up the flight of steps. And he asked her politely, “Where would you like to sit?” She answered, “The front row, please.” He said, “You really don’t want to do that because the pastor is really boring.” The lady asked him, “Do you happen to know who I am?” He said, “No.” She replied indignantly, “I’m the pastor’s mother.” He asked her, “Do you know who I am?” She said, “No.” He answered, “good.”

Today, I want to talk about “open hearts, open minds, and open doors.” You may have heard that recently related to how the non-denominational churches are prospering more than denominational churches. When I hear that, I wonder why people like non-denominational churches and why people prefer to attend megachurches. They might want to get benefits somehow, but might not want to be responsible for the work of the church. Like the story, perhaps they don’t want anyone to know who they are. However, I hope you know that Christians are those who are building a good relationship with God and with their neighbors. As you may know, Jesus’ great commandments are “love God and love neighbors.” If what we want is for nobody to know who we are, how can we build up a good relationship with our neighbors? If we’re going to build a good relationship with God and our neighbors, we should open our hearts, minds, and doors first. As you may remember, our parish’s mission statement is: “Let us make the disciples of Jesus Christ through all generations with open hearts, open minds, and open doors for the transformation of the world.” Yes, it is essential to open our hearts, minds, and doors to God and our neighbors to be good Christians. Otherwise, we cannot say, “we are Christians.”

Christians are those who live in good relational lives with all creation, all kinds of people, and defiantly with God. For doing so, we should open our hearts and minds to God first, and communicate with God through the means of grace, such as prayer, reading the Bible, praising songs, Bible study, worship, communion, fellowship, meditation, reaching out, and sharing and caring mission work. Furthermore, we should open hearts, minds, and doors to everyone to proclaim the good news so that many people know the good news through us. If we don’t open hearts, minds, and doors, we may be isolated from God and the people. Isolation is one of the characteristics of modern society. So, isolation leads many people to suffer from loneliness, depression, and addiction. Well, you may say, ‘we know everyone in town even though we don’t open hearts, minds, and doors. Somehow, we know too much about one another, and it causes us to hurt one another.’ It might be true. However, we should think about why knowing each other causes us to hurt each other. Opening hearts, minds, and doors is a little different from knowing others. We may find it in today’s Scripture.

Today’s Scripture continues from last Sunday’s Scripture. On the Sabbath day, Jesus went to the synagogue and read the scroll [Scripture] as was his custom. The Scripture he read is from the Prophet Isaiah. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” (Luke 4:18-19). After he read the Scripture, he said, “Today, this scripture has

been fulfilled in your hearing.” And he preached to them about how it would be fulfilled today. As I mentioned last Sunday, the passage is the core of the Gospel, the good news, which Isaiah proclaimed before Jesus was born. Jesus said that the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled by Jesus himself through his sermon. Verse 22 says, “all spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth.” Some well-accepted his gracious words, but some doubted him, saying, “Is not this Joseph’s son?”

As you may know, the Galilee of Nazareth was a small town, similar to towns like Grantsburg, Atlas, and St. Croix Falls, or even smaller. You may imagine the old town when we didn’t have any transportation. They knew well about one another. As much as they knew one another in town, many gossips went around the town. The gossip led them to have a prejudice against Jesus, such as him being poor, the carpenter’s son, uneducated, the son of Mary, and so on. The prejudice blocked them from receiving the good news. They not only rejected the good news but were also angry with Jesus. It is as if when I heard the good news that I may walk again if I read the Bible, I was upset with the pastor and the pastor’s wife. Furthermore, as if I had thrown the Bible away toward them, the people of Galilee got up, drove out Jesus, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff (Luke 4:28-29).

Through my experiences, I knew that if people reject the good news and are upset about it, it’s because they think of it as a curse, not the good news. We wonder why they think of the good news as a curse. The Gospel of John explains to us, “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned, but those who do not believe are condemned already because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God” (John 3:17-18). Because they didn’t believe in Jesus, they think that Jesus condemns them.

Remember that the good news work for those who believe in Jesus and accept him as the savior and the Lord. The two examples here are given by Jesus. One is a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon, and the other is Naaman the Syrian. They both were gentiles who didn’t know about God yet. But, as soon as they heard about the good news, they accepted and believed in God. Finally, they had experienced God’s miraculous work, the power of the good news. In the case of a widow in Zarephath (1 Kings 17:8-16), she was poor and didn’t have enough food for her Son. She planned to die after eating the last bread with her Son. But the Prophet Elijah visited her and asked her to feed him with the last of the bread. If we see the Prophet, or a pastor, who did something like this, we may call him, ‘a terrible thief.’ However, she gave him the last of the bread. After that, she was blessed with abundant bread and oil, and she never suffered again for food. The other example is about Naaman, who had leprosy (2 Kings 5:1-19). He heard from a girl from Israel about that the God of Israel and how he may heal him and went to Israel to see the Prophet of Israel, Elisha. Elisha said to him, ‘if you wash your body seven times in the Jordan River, you shall be healed.’ He suspected the first time, but he obeyed Elisha and got healed.

The Good news is open to everyone, but it works for only those who believe and accept Jesus Christ. The way we believe and accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior is by opening our hearts and minds to God. Furthermore, the way we open our hearts, minds, and doors to others is that we love others without any prejudice as if God loves us first when we are yet sinners. So, let us open hearts, minds, and doors to God and to our neighbors so that the good news works for us and through us. Thanks be to God. Amen!