

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

Thank you, God, for the consolation you offer, the hunger you satisfy, and the healing you produce in those who respond to your love. You have touched our lives in ways that make us rich. Now use what we have shared to provide fulfillment in other lives, among our neighbors, near and far. Enlist our best efforts in the extension of your realm, that our offering of ourselves may bear fruit daily. Amen!

*We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another*

\*CLOSING HYMN *Marching to Zion* UMH 733 (vs. 1 & 2)

\*BENEDICTION

Pastor Jenny Lee

\*POSTLUDE

Worship Resources "Gathered by Love" by Lavon Bayler.

# Upper St. Croix Parish

**ONE Parish THREE Churches:**

**Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls  
February 13th, 2022**

**"6th Sunday After Epiphany/ Stewardship Month"**



**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 with Online Zoom Service*

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Pastor Jenny Lee:** [jennlee1732@gmail.com](mailto:jennlee1732@gmail.com)

**Youth Director Shayna Schmid:** [snsnyder@gmail.com](mailto:snsnyder@gmail.com)

**Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg:** [centralumc2016@gmail.com](mailto:centralumc2016@gmail.com)

**Parish Office:** 715-463- 2624 **St. Croix Falls Office:** 715-483-9494

[www.upperstcroixparish.org](http://www.upperstcroixparish.org)

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

## Proclamation of God's Word

### Upper St. Croix Parish

Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls

February 13th, 2022

**"6th Sunday After Epiphany/ Stewardship Month"**

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\*Please stand if you are able.

#### \*PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

*"Peace be with you"*

### We Celebrate New Life in Christ

#### \*MISSION STATEMENT    Responsive

Let us shout our mission statement together.

**Let us make the disciples of Jesus Christ all generations with open hearts, open minds, and open doors for the transformation of the world. Amen.**

#### \*OPENING HYMN    *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

**UMH 400 (vs. 1 & 3)**

#### OPENING PRAYER    Unison

*(John Wesley's Covenant Prayer-in contemporary language)*

I am no longer my own, but yours.

Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you,

praised for you or criticized for you.

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and fully surrender all things to your hope and service.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Creator, Redeemer, and

Sustainer, you are mine, and I am yours.

So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth,

let it be made also in heaven. Amen.

#### CHILDREN'S TIME

**UMH 191 (vs. 1)**

#### \*THE GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 16:1-13

**16** Then Jesus said to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. <sup>2</sup> So he summoned him and said to him, 'What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management, because you cannot be my manager any longer.' <sup>3</sup> Then the manager said to himself, 'What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. <sup>4</sup> I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.' <sup>5</sup> So, summoning his master's debtors one by one, he asked the first, 'How much do you owe my master?' <sup>6</sup> He answered, 'A hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said to him, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' <sup>7</sup> Then he asked another, 'And how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said to him, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.' <sup>8</sup> And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly; for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. <sup>9</sup> And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

<sup>10</sup> "Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. <sup>11</sup> If then you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? <sup>12</sup> And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? <sup>13</sup> No slave can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

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

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON    *"Make Friends by Means of Dishonest Wealth!"*

**Pastor Jenny Lee**

### We Respond to God's Word

RESPONDING PRAYER    Unison

**Powerful God, whose love poured out in Jesus Christ invests us with strength the world cannot offer, cleanse us from self-centered mindset like greedy and troubled attitudes. Guide us to find the righteous ways to manage your properties so that we would be the faithful stewards of you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

# FEBRUARY CHURCH MISSIONS

## ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Peggy Frederickson

<p><b>INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:</b></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><b>Help Support the Food Shelf in Luck</b></p> 
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## GRANTSBURG

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

<p><b>BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!</b></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 cash donation to support Grantsburg Food Shelf</p>
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## ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

 <p><b>Food Shelf</b> (Communion Sunday)</p>	<p><b>Sailor Hat Offering:</b> Supporting the UMCOR Human Relations Mission</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 Nyland  
 Fellowship *Volunteer Needed*  
 Counter *Volunteer Needed*  
 Sunday School Younger/Older  
 LuAnne Martell/Barb Loomis



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

**St. Croix Falls:**  
 Pianist Sharon Asp  
 Liturgist Kathy Gionis  
 Usher(s) Karen Sciacca  
 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 8:30, if you are able!

"For those who have COVID 19, their family and care-givers"

## PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **An Online Zoom Service is scheduled for this Sunday at 8:30 am and 11:15am.** 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](http://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: 6th Sunday After Epiphany! May you experience the presence of God in everyday life!

*\*We have 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:

2/13: 8:30 am Grantsburg with Zoom

9:45 am Atlas

11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom

2/14: Happy Valentine’s Day

2/15: Ad Council meetings: 1:30pm (A) & 6:30pm (G)

2/16: 4:00pm, Go Fish for Kids (G)

6:30pm, Youth Gathering (G)

2/17: 9am, North West Clergy Meeting via Zoom

4pm, Ad Council Meeting (SCF)

### This Week’s Birthdays and Anniversaries:

Grace Harmon 2/15

Janet Dahl 2/16

Peyton Smallwood 2/17

Betty Wilson Feb. 18

Debra Kunze Feb. 19



### Next Sunday (February 20th) Volunteers:

Ministers All God’s People  
*Pastor Jenny Lee*

**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 *Volunteer Needed*  
Usher(s) *Volunteer Needed*  
Cleaning *Volunteer Needed*  
Sunday School Younger/Older  
*Volunteer Needed*

### St. Croix Falls:

Pianist Sharon Asp  
Liturgist Kathy Gionis  
Usher(s) Karen Sciacca  
Money Counter Peter Gionis  
Flowers Kathy Gionis  
Fellowship Ad Council Members (3rd Sunday)



### FEBRUARY IS THE MONTH OF STEWARDSHIP

**2/13 PASTOR JENNY PREACHES AT GRACE KOREAN FELLOWSHIP IN SUPERIOR**

**2/20: YOUTH GROUP HANGING OUT-TUBING AT DRESSER (QUESTIONS CONTACT YOUTH DIRECTOR SHAYNA SCHMID)**



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

February 13th, 2022  
Luke 16:1-13

## **“Make Friends by Means of Dishonest Wealth!” (Stewardship Sermon # 2)**

As you may remember, I talked about the meaning of “steward/stewardship” last Sunday. The steward of God is the manager of God’s property. Stewardship is based on our confession that God is the owner of all creation, including ourselves, family, people, and creation. Furthermore, as our abilities, opportunities (time), talents, skills, ideas, and gifts are from God, we are the steward for all gifts and skills as well. No one can avoid being a steward of God whether one recognizes it or not.

And, I hope you remember the parable story about “talent.” The parable story of talent gave us the lesson that the more we use our abilities/talents, the more we increase our abilities/talents; the less we use our abilities, the less we increase our abilities. We may even lose our abilities, if we never use them. This includes money because money is also God’s property. Therefore, I added that the more we use money, the more we gain money. I know some of you don’t agree with that. I said, however, “It depends on how we use our money.” If God is pleased with us, we may gain more money. Today, I want to talk about “How to use money as the steward of God.” In other words, it is about “when God would be pleased with us regarding spending money.” Today’s scripture gives us obvious wisdom regarding “spending money.”

As I said last Sunday, the steward has the authority to manage his master’s property. However, sooner or later the master would count how his stewards worked on his property. According to their work, they would get rewards or judged. Therefore, the stewards have the authority to manage all the master’s property and responsibilities on how to manage them at that same time.

Let’s review today’s scripture. The master heard his steward was squandering his property, called him, and said, “I heard about you. Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.” The steward is about to lose his job and thinks of his situation, ‘what can I do? If I lose my job, how can I get the other job? What do I do? If I get a job to be a farmer, I don’t have enough strength to dig. But I don’t want to be a beggar on the street because it is too shameful. What am I going to be?’

Suddenly, he got an idea that he would use his master’s property for the people in debt to the master before he lost his job. He thought if he did so, the people might welcome him into their homes even after losing the job. So, he called his master’s debtors one by one and discounted their debts. We can find how he used his master’s money in today’s scripture, verses 5 -7. He asked the first, ‘how much do you owe my master?’ He answered, ‘a hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ Then he asked another, ‘how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’

What do you think of his work? In verse 8, we find how the master reacted to his steward’s work. Verse 8 says, “His master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly.” It is strange. We wonder why the master commanded him instead of being upset with him. We have to know the background of

the story first. The Israelite culture had begun from a God-centered mindset. Their rules and laws are built based on The Book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament, from God through Moses. The Book of Deuteronomy is focused on “love of God” and “love of neighbors,” especially the laws of protection for the poor, the powerless, and the weak in society. Here is one of the examples: “You shall not charge interest on loans to another Israelite, interest on money, interest on provisions, interest on anything that is lent” (Deuteronomy 23:19). However, the political and religious leaders made the laws distorted for their greed. They added the interest to the actual portion they lent. For example, if they borrow \$100, add the interest of 20% to \$100, and the bill becomes \$120. So, the people’s debt for the olive oil or wheat was not actual all their debts, but also included their interest. In other words, the discount of the bills the dishonest manager made is supposed to represent the actual bill the people would payback, which means it’s according to God’s will. Therefore, the master commended his dishonest manager’s wisdom. The dishonest manager noticed what he did wrong and corrected it quickly.

However, even though we understood the background of the story, we have one more curious thing in the story. We still wonder why Jesus told people, “make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes” (vs.9). “The dishonest wealth” doesn’t mean the money itself, but it means “the worldly wealth.” Money itself is not dishonest, but the way people make money might be dishonest. Therefore, it is more important to use money than how to make money. Jesus meant, after all, the best way you use money is to make friends. In other words, money is a tool for use in our lives in the world, and the best way we can use them in the world, according to God’s will, is to love our neighbors in acts.

The reason Jesus brought this story to the people is that the Pharisees and the teachers of the laws were grumbling to Jesus, who was eating with tax collectors and sinners, and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them” (Luke 15:1-2). Jesus’ purpose to bring this story is to encourage people to repent and make friends with all people without any judgment or bias. The right way to use money is to share it with the poor, the powerless, and the weak in society. Remember when we treat the poor, the powerless, and the weak, we treat Jesus. Therefore, in helping the poor and the powerless and the weak we are making our way to our eternal home.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, says that God’s stewardship is “to give money to the poor.” He gives us threefold commands, namely, “to earn, save, and give all you can.” He said, “Gain all as you can. Save all money as you can. And give all you can.” Wesley’s purpose in earning and saving money is to give all to the poor. Christians do mission work through church while non-Christians do it individually. The church, which focuses on mission, never fails because God’s purpose is to reach out to the people and proclaim the good news to the poor. That’s why we encourage you to offer your gifts, offerings, and tithes. Let us do mission work through the church, the body of Christ. Some ask me how much we should give in our offerings like tithes, 10 % of our income, or more? I would say, “give through your offering as much as you can.” Tithes of 10 % are the minimum guideline for our offerings. However, if you need emergency funds for your family, you may not have as much to give, and if you have enough, more than 10 %, you may give more. As Wesley says, “gain all as you can, save all as you can, and give all as you can.”

Let us be the righteous steward of the money! Thanks be to God. Amen!