

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

Receive our joy, O God, along with our gifts. We reach out with this offering to do good in and through our church. May any who have harmed others be helped. Heal us of unjust anger, jealousy, and strife. Through our shared life in this community of faith, create in us the image of one who dwells in heaven. Let us share with the whole world the blessings we receive from your hand. Amen!

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

\*CLOSING HYMN *Only Trust Him* UMH 337 (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 20th, 2022**

**"7th 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)

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**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>

**Upper St. Croix Parish**  
**Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls**  
**February 20th, 2022**

**“7th 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 through all generations with open hearts, open minds, and open doors for the transformation of the world. Amen.**

**\*OPENING HYMN    *Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling***  
**UMH 348 (vs. 1 & 4)**

**OPENING PRAYER    Unison**

**Loving God, you bring light to our days and hope to our hearts. We draw near to you as survivors of another week, grateful for your care. You have provided for us, preserved our lives, and invited us once more to this time of prayer. Now we would be still before you, leaving behind our distress and anger, entrusting our weaknesses to your empowering spirit. Rise us up to embrace your way of love. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.**

**CHILDREN’S TIME    UMH 191 (vs. 1)**

**Proclamation of God’s Word**

**\*THE GOSPEL LESSON    Luke 15:11-32**

11 Then Jesus said, “There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.’ So he divided his property between them. 13 A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his

property in dissolute living. 14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. 16 He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. 17 But when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! 18 I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.”’ 20 So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. 21 Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ 22 But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; 24 for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

25 “Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. 26 He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. 27 He replied, ‘Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.’ 28 Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. 29 But he answered his father, ‘Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. 30 But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!’ 31 Then the father said to him, ‘Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32 But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

This is the word of God for the people of God.  
**Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON    *“Compassion for the Lost Ones!” (Stewardship Sermon # 3)***  
**Pastor Jenny Lee**

**We Respond to God’s Word**


**RESPONDING PRAYER    Unison**

**Merciful and loving God, whose clear direction to us includes loving actions toward all people, we pray for the insight and will to treat others as we wish to be treated. Open our eyes to see those who you see. Open our hearts to have compassion toward those who you have compassion for. Help us to embody lasting values in all our relationships as your faithful stewards, and to become a part of your transforming plans for our world. 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></p> <p><i>(Communion Sunday)</i></p>	<p><b>Sailor Hat Offering:</b></p> <p><i>Supporting the UMCOR Human Relations Mission</i></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	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Snow Removal	Stan Chute
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland
Fellowship	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Counter	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Sunday School	Younger/Older
	LuAnne Martell/Barb Loomis



**Atlas:**

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Sue Olson
Usher(s)	Colleen Adams-Schween
Cleaning	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Sunday school	Younger/Older
	Cheryl Olson/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 our church and congregation, especially those who are not back to the church yet after the pandemic."

## 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: 7th Sunday After Epiphany! We keep Stewardship Month in February. May God inspire us with a special stewardship mind!

*\*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

2/20: Youth Group-Snow tubing in Dresser (Trollhaugen Outdoor Recreation Area) meet at 12:15 pm at Central-G (if you need a ride) or contact our Youth Director, Shayna Schmid for additional information. Tubing costs, snacks and drinks will be provided.

2/23: 6:30pm, Confirmation Class (G)

### **This Week’s Birthdays and Anniversaries:**



*Deb & Russ Hammer 2/22*

*Scott Andrews Feb.22*

*Hannah Smestad 2/23*

### **Next Sunday (February 27th) Volunteers:**

Ministers All God’s People

**Pastor Jenny Lee**

#### **Central:**

Pianist Toni Koons  
Liturgist **Volunteer Needed**  
Snow Removal Stan Chute  
Acolyte(s) Willow Nylend  
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**

**DURING LENT: LENTEN BIBLE STUDY & CRAFT GROUP GATHERING  
(SEE INSERTS FOR DETAILS)**

**3/2: ASH WEDNESDAY (MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON)**

**3/4 -5: YOUTH CONFIRMATION RETREAT AT LAKE LUCERNE**



February 20th, 2022  
Luke 15:11-32

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

## **“Compassion for the Lost Ones!” (Stewardship Sermon # 3)**

I want to start with something funny. I heard this story about a congregation. Down in the south, many churches are known as “answer back” churches. When the Preacher says something, the congregation naturally replies. On Sunday, a preacher was speaking on what it would take for the church to become better. He said, “If the church is to become better, it must take up its bed and walk.” The congregation said, “Let it walk, Preacher, let it walk.” Encouraged by their response, he went further, “If this church is going to become better, it will have to throw aside its obstacles and run!” The congregation replied, “Let it run, Preacher, let it run!” Now really into his message, he spoke stronger. “If this church really wants to become great, it will have to take up its wings and fly!” The congregation shouted, “Let it fly, Preacher, let it fly!” The Preacher gets louder. “If this church is going to fly, it will cost money!” The congregation replied. “Let it walk, Preacher, let it walk.”

We keep February as “the Stewardship Month.” As you may remember, I talked about the meaning of “steward/stewardship” on the first Sunday of February. 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 members, 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 the steward of God whether one recognizes it or not.

And, we talked about being a faithful Steward of money last Sunday. I quoted John Wesley’s suggestion regarding the steward of God. 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 as you can.” Wesley’s purpose in earning and saving money was to give all to the poor.

Remember the parable story of talents. If we keep one talent in the ground, we have just one talent. Furthermore, we may lose one talent. However, if we work with one talent, we may double it. God entrusts us with his property according to our abilities. Some receive more, and some receive less. However, depending on how we manage them, our future could be different, like the stewards who received five or ten talents. Each of them worked sincerely until their master came back. They made their portions double, and the master entrusted them with more. The master said to them, “Well done, good and faithful servants. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master.” The way we help others would be the way we manage God’s property well, and it would be making our way to the eternal home.

God’s property that he entrusted to us is not limited to money, talents, skills, abilities, and opportunities, but also it includes people like our family members, friends, loved ones, and community family. Today, I want to talk about the stewardship of God’s people. We know about Jesus’ great commandments that say love God and love our neighbors. Loving our neighbors is one of the biggest commandments. Jesus said, “Love your

neighbors as you love yourself.” Who are our neighbors? Our neighbors are all people who might need our care, help, support, and love. As God entrusted us with his property, God entrusted us with his people to care for, love, and support. It also goes against God’s commandment if we don’t love ourselves. If we don’t care about our family, it also goes against God’s commandments. As Jesus said, “Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much” (Luke 16:10).

Let us review today’s scripture. Today’s scripture is used to talk about God’s love and a prodigal son. But, I want to talk about this story from the stewardship perspective on family. The story goes like this: There was a man with two sons. One day, the younger son asked his father about his heritage, “Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.” His father divided his property between them. The younger son left his father’s house, taking his father’s property and spending all things. There was a severe famine in that country, and he began to need. He was hired to feed pigs and eat the pigs’ pods because no one gave him food. He repented that he had left his father’s house with his father’s heritage. Finally, the younger son came back home.

His father was waiting for him, and as soon as he saw his younger son, he ran to him and hugged him. His father didn’t ask anything from his younger son but welcomed him joyfully and provided him with good clothes, shoes, and even a ring. In addition, his father had a party with good food. Later on, the older son came back from work and heard that his brother came back and how his father treated his brother. And the older son was upset with his father and refused to join the party, saying, “Listen! For all these years, I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has spent your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!” Then his father said, “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.”

Jesus told this parable story to Pharisees and teachers of the law, who were grumbling when Jesus had meals with tax collectors and sinners. So, the old son implies the Pharisees and teachers, and the younger son implies the tax collectors and sinners. I want to point out the old son’s behavior rather than the younger son’s because we Christians are mostly like the old son and like Pharisees and teachers. As Christians, I wonder if we judge people outside the church or don’t want people who have sinned to come to church. We Christians, perhaps work hard at the church as the old son worked hard in his father’s house. However, I wonder why we don’t care about others who left the church like the old son didn’t care for his brother. The younger son was welcomed back home because of his father’s compassion toward his lost son. His father was waiting for his lost son every day. That’s why his father could see his younger son and accept him in his home.

Let us think about where our brothers and sisters are, where our sons and daughters are, and where our loved ones are. They perhaps, left you refusing your care, love, and support, but please make space for them in your hearts and prayers. Someday, God may ask us where our brothers and sisters are, like counting our stewardship on God’s property. In the story, the father says, “your brother was dead and is alive again.” Like this, our lost ones are perhaps going to die in spirit. Let us make them alive. Do you remember the parable story of the lost sheep? When the master noticed he had lost a sheep out of a hundred sheep, he left ninety-nine sheep and went out to find the one sheep. We may be curious why he left ninety-nine sheep for a single sheep. If he doesn’t find the sheep, the sheep shall be killed by wild animals. Don’t leave your loved ones in the field. Please try to find them and bring them back alive. Don’t cease praying for them. Don’t give them up trying to get them back to God’s house. Let us have compassion for lost ones as God has for them. Thanks be to God. Amen!



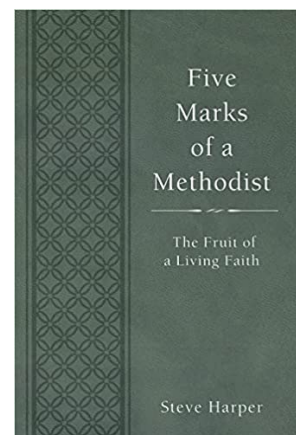
## Lenten Small Group Gatherings

We will be starting two new small group gatherings during Lent. The purpose of these gatherings is to continue to help us build good relationships with God and with one another. We are working to help revitalize our faith and our church community. In addition, we will evolve in our faith as disciples of Jesus Christ, and contribute to our local community and the global world.

We will meet (gather) regularly (once a week) via Zoom. Each group has a leader and an assistant leader (or secretary). Each leader and assistant has the responsibility to communicate with members, and prepare for each gathering. They will also work with Pastor Jenny. These two groups are open to everyone, and they welcome all! Details for each group are below. We hope to see you there!

### 1. Lenten Bible Study

- Bible Study is open to everyone
- We will be learning about the faith of Methodist Christians
- Books are \$11 each
- Register with Pastor Jenny by February 27th
- Class Schedule: Thursdays during Lent at 6:30 pm via Zoom (3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31, and 4/14)



### 2. Craft Group Gatherings

- The Craft Group is open to everyone
- We will be making Rice Heating Pads/Bags (We will be sending the Rice Pads to people in need in nursing homes and the Food Pantry)
- NO COST
- Register with Pastor Jenny by February 27th
- Class Schedule: Wednesdays during Lent at 1:00 pm at Central-G (3/16, 3/23, 3/30, 4/6, and 4/13)
- Questions to Pastor Jenny or Paulie Kratchmer (715-520-2397)



If you are interested in either of these groups, please contact Pastor Jenny.  
(Main Office: 715-463-2624, Cell: 773-793-7307, or Email: [jennlee1732@gmail.com](mailto:jennlee1732@gmail.com)).

*We look forward to gathering-God always shows up, we hope you do too.*