

We Respond to God's Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

God, whose Word calls us to take risks and whose revelation in Jesus Christ gives us confidence to try again when we have failed, appear to us now as we listen to the Scriptures and lift our eyes to see your face. Grant that we may feel your presence and discern your calling us as the faithful steward. Equip us to respond with confident faithfulness to the work you give us to do. We want to go where you send us and live up to what you expect of us. Open your people to live together as your stewards. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

*DOXOLOGY

UMH 95

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

Your voice, O God, we have heard. Your presence has moved us to respond. Send us where you want us to go. Use the resources we dedicate here to empower others to witness to your love and care. Fill our lives with thanksgiving. Fill our days with purpose. We rededicate ourselves to work and worship that express our profound gratitude for life and all its opportunities. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN

Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus

UMH 514 (vs. 1 & 2)

*BENEDICTION

Pastor Jenny Lee

*POSTLUDE

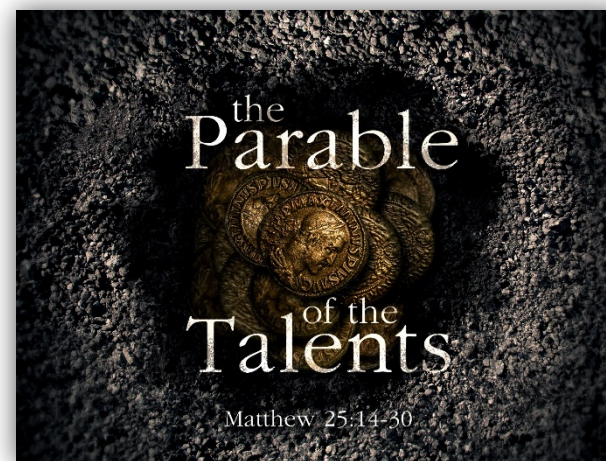
Upper St. Croix Parish

ONE Parish THREE Churches:

Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls

February 6th, 2022

“5th 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

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www.upperstcroixparish.org

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

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
February 6th, 2022
“5th Sunday After Epiphany”
“Stewardship Month”

*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 *I Am Thine, O Lord* UMH 419 (vs. 1 & 2)**

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)

Sacrament of Holy Communion

INVITATION FOR COMMUNION

Pastor Jenny Lee

CONFESSION AND PARDON Unison

Merciful God,

We confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart.

We have failed to be an obedient church.

We have not done your will,

we have broken your law,

we have rebelled against your love,

we have not loved our neighbors,

and we have not heard the cry of the needy.

Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(All pray in silence)

Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;

that proves God’s love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

UMH 13-14 (See insert)

THE LORD’S PRAYER

GIVING (TAKING) THE HOLY COMMUNION

COMMUNION PRAYER Unison

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you

have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the

strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the

name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Matthew 25:14-30 (See insert)

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Blessed are the Faithful Steward!

Pastor Jenny Lee

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

UMH 13-14

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his
disciples,

and said: "take, eat; this is my body which given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it
to his disciples, and said: "drink from this, all of you; this is my blood
of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the
forgiveness of sins.

Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living
sacrifice,

in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of
faith.

(Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.)

(You may hold the communion elements with your two hands.)

**(Together) Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on
these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and
blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.**

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,

and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly
banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy
Church,

all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

*THE GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 25:14-30

14 "For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and
entrusted his property to them; 15 to one he gave five talents, to another
two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.
16 The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded
with them, and made five more talents. 17 In the same way, the one who
had the two talents made two more talents. 18 But the one who had
received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his
master's money. 19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and
settled accounts with them. 20 Then the one who had received the five
talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you
handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' 21 His
master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been
trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter
into the joy of your master.' 22 And the one with the two talents also came
forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have
made two more talents.' 23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and
trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put
you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 24 Then
the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying,
'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not
sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; 25 so I was afraid, and
I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' 26
But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you,
that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? 27
Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my
return I would have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take
the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. 29 For to all
those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but
from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 30
As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there
will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

FEBRUARY CHURCH MISSIONS



ATLAS

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

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 cash donation to support Grantsburg Food Shelf</p>
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ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

 <p>Food Shelf (Communion Sunday)</p>	<p>Sailor Hat Offering: 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 LuAnne Martell
 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 Sue Olson
 Usher(s) Sue Olson
 Cleaning **Volunteer Needed**
 Sunday school Younger/Older
 Cheryl Olson/ Colleen Adams-Schween

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=SDZleFNubmEvaD B1cytTRzVxMFIIZz09>
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: 5th Sunday After Epiphany! May you experience the presence of God in everyday life!

*We have new 2022 sign-up 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.

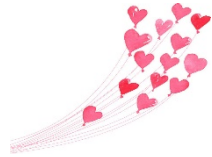
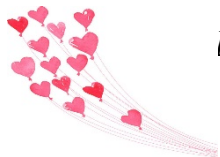
Sunday Worship Service:

- 2/6: 8:30 am Grantsburg with Zoom
9:45 am Atlas
11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 2/9: 10 am, UMW Meeting & Kitchen Cleaning
6:30pm, Confirmation Class (G)
- 2/10: 6pm-9pm, 2022 SPRC Training via Zoom (or 2/5, 9am-noon)
- 2/12: 8am, UMM Meeting (G)
9am to 3pm, Bishop’s Convocation of Laity Leadership 2022

This Week’s Birthdays and Anniversaries:

Lee & Peggy Frederickson

Kathleen Gionis 2/12



Next Sunday (February 13th) Volunteers:

Ministers	All God’s People <i>Pastor Jenny Lee</i>
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	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 (3rd Sunday)



FEBRUARY IS THE MONTH OF STEWARDSHIP

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

AD COUNCIL MEETINGS

2/15: 1:30 PM AT ATLAS

6:30 PM AT GRANTSBURG

2/17: 4:00 PM AT ST. CROIX FALLS



February 6th, 2022
Matthew 25:14-30

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

“Blessed are the Faithful Stewards”

I want to start with something funny. I heard about this boy who attended a Sunday worship service with his parents. In the church the little boy watched as the ushers passed the offering plate. When they neared the pew where he sat, the youngster piped up so that everyone could hear. “Don't pay for me, Daddy. I'm under five.”

We laughed at the funny story together. But, some still misunderstand about offering and tithes. After talking with our church leadership, we will keep February as “the Stewardship Month.” While some of you may know about “Stewardship” clearly, some of you don't. Therefore, I will talk about “the stewardship of God” in February for four weeks.

Today, as the first session, I want to talk about the meaning of steward/stewardship. The word “Steward” comes from “oikonomos” in Greek, which is a component word, “Oikos” (house) and “nemein” (manage). It has the same root as the word “economy.” The word “steward” means an economic manager who takes care of whole house affairs. For these reasons, when we talk or hear about stewardship, money (offering), tithing, or apportionment comes to mind first. That being said, we can find a more profound meaning of steward in the biblical word. In the scriptures, “oikonomos” sometimes translated to “manager” (Luke 16:1-13; Matthew 20:8), steward (Luke 8:3), slaves or servants (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 19:13). These words' common points are that the Master entrusted them with his property with authority to manage them. That is, the steward is the manager of the property with authority. In other words, 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.

Today's Scripture is about the parable of talent. Some scholars interpret the talent in our language to mean “natural aptitude, skill, gifts or abilities that people have.” In the parable story, a man plans to go on a journey, and called his slaves and “entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability.” As we see the man (Master) entrusted his slaves with his property, we guess the slaves mean the stewards. The word “talent” in this story was a weight, and its value depended on whether the object weighed was copper, silver, or gold. Some scholar says, “One talent was worth more than a thousand dollars.” In the Scripture, talents were given to several stewards according to their “abilities.” We may interpret the talents as “opportunities.” And in the parable, each steward is given opportunity according to their ability and is expected to serve faithfully, which means that the steward has accountability.

As we see, two of them respectively took a risk and applied themselves actively in their responsibility. But, the unfaithful steward thought only of himself and his security, risked nothing, and achieved nothing. On the Master's return, there is an accounting from each. The two stewards, representing faithful disciples, had transformed privilege into action. And the Master said, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave. You have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your Master.” However, the one who

didn't take any risk and action was judged according to his conduct. Furthermore, everything has been taken away, even his one talent. The conclusion of the parable story is that "for to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away" (v.29).

What did you learn from this parable story. I learned 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, and we may even lose all our abilities. What about money? The more we use money, the more we gain money. Well, you may say, how does it affect money? Well, it depends on how you use your money. If we use your money for God's mission work, you may gain more money to do so if God is pleased with you. Let us think about what abilities or what opportunities we have received from God and how we manage our opportunities and abilities. I hope that when Jesus our Lord is back, we may hear, "Well done, my faithful steward!"

Its first origin we can find is from Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. God's first stewardship order was toward Adam and Eve, "God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them, and God said to them, "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (Genesis 1:27-28). As God is the creator and owner of all creatures, God gave Adam and Eve the authority to manage all creation. Humankind is the steward of all creation. We are the steward of all creation to manage well. We have to manage water, nature, animals, mountains, hills, rivers, lakes, oceans, fish, and birds. If you feed birds, you did well, and are the steward. You are also the faithful steward if you take care of nature, like gardening, collecting recycled materials, and conserving water.

Some of you have more talents like leadership. The steward of leadership is like Moses, who led God's people and judged right and wrong among the people's affairs according to God's calling. The steward is like the minister to lead God's people in spirit. God entrusted Moses with His people and gave him the authority to lead His people. However, good leadership serves God's people humbly like Jesus served his people. Jesus said, "the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Through incarnation in the flesh, he came into the world humbly and served the people. Jesus showed us how to live as a servant minister in the world.

The United Methodists believe that all baptized Christians are called "ministers" to servant ministry of the church in the world. The servant ministry is from the biblical term "*Diakonia*," which means "to serve one another in the body of Christ." The term is used at several parts in Scripture; Martha's "preparing at the table" (Luke 10:40), Women "distribution of food" in the early church (Acts 6:1), "devoted themselves to the service of the saints" with materials, time, food and so on (1 Corinthians 16:15). Therefore, the term "*Diakonia*" means a commitment to serve others in the church's servant ministry. This includes the UMW and UMM's activities, Mission Work, Food Pantry ministry, coffee or food fellowship, and many other tasks for the church and our neighbors.

Stewardship requires that we dedicate ourselves to be faithful servants living in our everyday lives as Jesus served through his daily encounters with God's people. Therefore, the role of stewardship means economic management and managing ourselves our whole life, including our time, opportunities, gifts (or talents), having good relationships with people, and all creation. No one can avoid being the steward of God. According to our abilities, God has entrusted each of us to serve God's people like our families and loved ones; nature like water, mountains, birds and animals, and opportunity, time, talents and skills. Let us be the faithful stewards. Thanks be to God. Amen!