

world and opportunities for growth within this congregation. Help us focus on what is important, that we may work together to make a difference in the world. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen!

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN *Jesus Is All the World to Me*
UMH 469 (vs. 1 & 2)

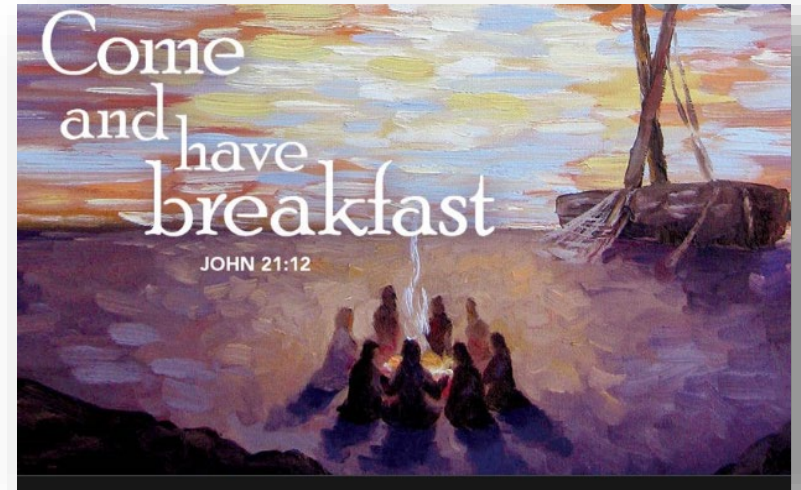
*BENEDICTION Unison
Let us raise and go where God directs.
We will follow where Christ leads us.
Blessing, honor, glory, and power be to our God. Amen!

*POSTLUDE

Worship Resources "Gathered by Love" by Lavon Bayler.

Upper St. Croix Parish

ONE Parish THREE Churches:
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
May 1st, 2022
"Third Sunday of Easter"



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

Pastor Jenny Lee: jennlee1732@gmail.com
Youth Director Shayna Schmid: snsnyder@gmail.com
Parish Secretary Colleen Norenberg: centralumc2016@gmail.com
Parish Office: 715-463- 2624 **St. Croix Falls Office:** 715-483-9494
www.upperstcroixparish.org
<https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

Upper St. Croix Parish
Grantsburg: Central, Atlas, St. Croix Falls
May 1st, 2022

“Third Sunday of Easter”

*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

Sing Praise to God, O you saints of God.

Give thanks to God’s holy name.

Praise God for the joyous gift of a new day.

Thank God for healing and ever-present help.

Extol the one who lifts us up from defeat

Praise the one who upholds us when we are discouraged.

God sees and hears our weeping.

God lifts our souls from the pit of despair.

Give thanks to God who turns mourning into dancing.

Praise God who hears our cries and answers our prayers.

We have cried to you in our need, O God.

We believe you are working to make us whole. Amen!

***OPENING HYMN** *Open My Eyes, That I May See*

UMH 454 (vs. 1, 2, & 3)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Come to us as a light from heaven, Sovereign God. Pierce the shadows of doubt and despair, anger and scorn, that we allow to rule in our lives. Turn us from ways that deny your rule among us. Awaken us from dull routines to worship that is alive with awe and wonder, spontaneity, and joy. Surprise us with a presence we cannot avoid, a summons we dare not evade, a mission we may not escape. We are gathered by the love of Christ, that we may feed others as we have been fed. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON (A & SCF)**

1Kings 3:4-12 (See Insert)

***THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON (A & SCF)**

James 3:13-18 (See Insert)

***THE GOSPEL LESSON (G)**

John 21:1-19 (See Insert)

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON *The Wisdom of God* Sharon Asp (A & SCF)

The Second Chance The Lord Gave Us Pastor Jenny Lee (G)

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

God of wisdom, we give you thanks for your guidance, and we honor and bless you, even as we seek wisdom to follow where Christ leads. May your favor rest upon us, your joy fill our lives, and your love motivate all we do. Make us instruments of good news who carry your name to others and share your blessing with delight. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

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 bring our offerings to feed your lambs and tend your sheep, gracious God. May these gifts extend love in the form of food, pure water, shelter, and acceptance. Let them provide outreach to the

MAY 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>Support Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry</p> 	<p>Thank you for supporting Ukraine!</p> <p>May Mission We will be supporting the food shelf!</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>Thank you for supporting the people of Ukraine.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>MAY MISSION: CHURCH SUPPLIES Please see list in the newsletter or at church for requested items.</p> 
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ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

 <p>Food Shelf (Communion Sunday)</p>	<p>Sailor Hat Offering:</p>  <p>May's Sailor hat offering will go to support the SCF Food Shelf.</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*
 Cleaning Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson
 Sunday School Younger/Older
 LuAnne Martell/Barb Loomis

Atlas:

Preach Sharon Asp
 Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist Sue Olson
 Usher(s) Don Schween
 Cleaning *Volunteer Needed*
 Sunday school Younger/Older
 Cheryl Olson/Colleen Adams-Schween

St. Croix Falls:

Preach Sharon Asp
 Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist Kathy Gionis
 Usher(s) Jim Andrews
 Money Counter Peter Gionis
 Bell Ringer Jim Sciacca
 Flowers Kathy Gionis



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!

"Please pray for Farmers in Wisconsin Land"

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 under Sermons!
- 3) **We don't offer "the service by Phone" any longer.**
- 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: Third Sunday of Easter. Christ has risen! Christ is risen indeed! Hallelujah!

Pastor Jenny's office hours will change to the following beginning in May:

Tuesday: 9am to 5pm at Grantsburg

Wednesday: 10am to 2pm at SCF & 3pm to 7pm at Grantsburg

Thursday: 11am to 4pm at SCF

Friday: by appointment only

Sunday Worship Service:

5/1: 8:30 am Grantsburg with Zoom

9:45 am Atlas

11:15 am St. Croix Falls (Zoom is not available this week)

5/1-5/2: Pastor Jenny is going the Provisional Elder Spring Workshop at to Pine Lake Camp

5/4: 6:30 pm, Youth Gathering (G)

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries:



Rekha Roelfs	5/1
LuAnne Martell	5/3
Ashleigh Olson	5/4
Colleen Norenberg	5/4
Jason Frenette	5/4
Naomi McLean	5/6
<i>Charlie & Joan Zeigler</i>	<i>5/7</i>

Next Sunday (May 8th) Volunteers:

Ministers All God's People
Pastor Jenny Lee

Central:

Pianist Toni Koons
Liturgist ***Volunteer Needed***
Snow Removal Stan Chute
Acolyte(s) Willow Nyland
Fellowship ***Volunteer Needed***
Counter ***Volunteer Needed***
Cleaning Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson
Sunday School Younger/Older
LuAnne Martell/ Barb Loomis
Communion Barb Loomis

Atlas:

Pianist Sharon Asp
Liturgist ***Volunteer Needed***
Usher(s) ***Volunteer Needed***
Cleaning ***Volunteer Needed***
Sunday School Younger/Older
Volunteer Needed
Communion Sue Olson

St. Croix Falls:

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



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**



5/8: COMMUNION SUNDAY & MOTHER'S DAY
PASTOR JENNY WILL PREACH AT GRACE KOREAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH IN SUPERIOR.

5/9-5/20 PASTOR JENNY ON VACATION

***THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON (A & SCF) 1Kings 3:4-12**

4 The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the principal high place; Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. 5 At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." 6 And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. 7 And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8 And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. 9 Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?"

10 It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 11 God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, 12 I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you.

***THE NEW TESTAMENT LESSON (A & SCF) James 3:13-18**

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Show by your good life that your works are done with gentleness born of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not be boastful and false to the truth. 15 Such wisdom does not come down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, devilish. 16 For where there is envy and selfish ambition, there will also be disorder and wickedness of every kind. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.

***THE GOSPEL LESSON (G)**

John 21:1-19

21 After these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias; and he showed himself in this way. 2 Gathered there together were Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of his disciples. 3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will go

with you." They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.

4 Just after daybreak, Jesus stood on the beach; but the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Jesus said to them, "Children, you have no fish, have you?" They answered him, "No." 6 He said to them, "Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in because there were so many fish. 7 That disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on some clothes, for he was naked, and jumped into the sea. 8 But the other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, only about a hundred yards off.

9 When they had gone ashore, they saw a charcoal fire there, with fish on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish that you have just caught." 11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, a hundred fifty-three of them; and though there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." Now none of the disciples dared to ask him, "Who are you?" because they knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. 14 This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead.

15 When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." 16 A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." 17 He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. 18 Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." 19 (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me."

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

Thanks be to God.

THE WISDOM OF GOD

[By Sharon Asp]

1 KINGS 3: 4-12

JAMES 3: 13-18

WHEN YOU THINK OF THE WISDOM, WHO IN THE BIBLE DO YOU THINK OF? OF COURSE, SOLOMON. AFTER HE BECAME KING, THE LORD APPEARED TO HIM IN A DREAM. "ASK FOR WHATEVER YOU WANT ME TO GIVE YOU." I ASK THAT YOU GIVE ME AN OBEDIENT HEART SO I CAN RULE MY PEOPLE IN THE RIGHT WAY AND WILL KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG. OTHERWISE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO RULE THIS GREAT PEOPLE OF YOURS. GOD SAID, "YOU DID NOT ASK FOR A LONG LIFE, OR RICHES FOR YOUR SELF, OR THE DEATH OF YOUR ENEMIES. SINCE YOU ASKED FOR WISDOM TO MAKE THE RIGHT DECISIONS, I WILL DO WHAT YOU ASKED. I WILL GIVE YOU WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING THAT IS GREATER THAN HAD BEEN IN THE PAST OR WILL HAVE BEEN IN THE FUTURE.

SOMEONE HAS SAID, "KNOWLEDGE IS HAVING INFORMATION; WISDOM IS KNOWING HOW TO APPY IT" WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY DEFINES WISDOM USING GOOD SENSE IN VIEW OF ALL FACTS. WISDOM IS INSIGHT, THE ABILITY TO DISCERN INNER QUALITIES AND RELATIONS, AND ALSO BEING ABLE TO EXERCISE GOOD JUDGEMENT.

IN THE BIBLE, WISDOM TAKES ON A SPECIAL MEANING BECAUSE WE ARE DEALING WITH THE ULTIMATE FACTS OF LIFE. GOD IS THE CREATOR, AND WE ARE HIS CREATION.

IN VIEW OF THIS FACT, WHAT IS THE WISE ATTITUDE FOR US TO TAKE TOWARD GOD?

GOD KNOWS US BETTER THAN WE KNOW OUR SELVES. SINCE THIS IS TRUE, WHAT DOES GOOD JUDGEMENT SAY ABOUT ACCEPTING HIS GUIDANCE?

GOD LOVES US AND WANTS ONLY THE BEST FOR OUR LIVES. DOES IT NOT THEN SEEM WISE TO OBEY THE GUIDELINES THAT HE LAYS DOWN FOR OUR SUCCESS AND WELL BEING?

WISDOM IS NOT JUST ACQUIRED INFORMATION BUT PRACTICAL INSIGHT WITH SPIRITUAL IMPLICATIONS. PROVERBS HAS MUCH TO SAY ABOUT WISDOM IN CHAPS 1: 2-4; 2:10-15; 5-9; AND 9:10-12. JAMES SPEAKS OF WISDOM 3 TIMES IN SIX VERSES 13-18. SENECA, A ROMAN PHILOSOPHER, SAYS "WISDOM TEACHES US TO DO AS WELL AS TO TALK." JAMES SAYS THIS COMES FROM THE DEVIL AS WELL AS SELFISH AMBITION. JAMES MAKES A CLEAR DEFINITION OF THE WISDOM THAT COMES FROM HEAVEN AND FROM GOD AND THE WISDOM THAT IS EARTHLY AND COMES FROM THE DEVIL..

IN VERSE 15, JAMES TRIES TO TELL HOW BAD THE SPIRIT OF SELFISHNESS IS. WHAT FOLLOWS ENVY AND SELFISH AMBITION. DISORDER AND EVERY EVIL PRACTICE. FOLLOWING THESE ATTITUDES MIGHT LEAD TO PASSING JUDGEMENTS ACCORDING TO WORLDLY STANDARDS,

MEASURING SUCCESS IN WORLDLY TERMS, REACTING IN CIRCUMSTANCES WITH ALL FORETHOUGHT.

JAMES' ULTIMATE CONDEMNATION OF A SELFISH SPIRIT IS TO CALL IT DEVILISH. HE DESCRIBES SOME OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF THAT ATTITUDE. ENVY AND SELFISHNESS WILL DRIVE PEOPLE APART, SELFISHNESS WILL PRODUCE STRIFE, ENVY DISRUPTS PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

THE WISDOM OF GOD IN VERSES 17 AND 18, JAMES NOW RETURNS TO A DESCRIPTION OF THE WISDOM THAT HE COMMANDED TO THE WORLD IN VERSE 13. THIS IS THE WISDOM FROM HEAVEN.

IN GALATIANS 5: 22 AND 23, PAUL LISTS NINE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT. HERE, JAMES GIVES US EIGHT ELEMENTS THAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN A CHRISTIAN LIFE.

- 1. JAMES TELLS US THAT WISDOM IS "FIRST OF ALL , PURE." KRERKEGAARD, A DANISH THEOLOGIAN, HAS SAID "PURITY IS TO WILL ONE THING." JESUS HIMSELF , DECLARES, "THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART." IN MARK IN 12:30 AND BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART, MATT. 5:8..PURE REFLECTS THE MORAL CHARACTER OF GOD. THE PURE LONG FOR CONFORMITY TO GOD'S WILL AND SEEK WHAT GOD WANTS FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN IT IS HIS WILL WITH UNDIVIDED DEVOTION; THE PURE SERVE AND PRAISE GOD.**

- 2. TO BE "PEACE LOVING" IS TO HAVE RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MAN AND MAN, AND BETWEEN GOD AND MAN. THE TRUE WISDOM WHICH AT TIMES BRINGS MAN CLOSER TO ONE ANOTHER AND CLOSER TO GOD. IT MEANS COMMITMENT TO THE WAYS OF PEACE, AND NOT, JUST ABSENCE OF CONFLICT..**
- 3. THE NEXT VERTUE IS "CONCIDERATE". ARISTOLE DEFINES THIS GREEK WORD AS "JUSTICE AND BETTER THAN JUSTICE". IT IS GOD'S WISDOM TO EXTEND TO OTHERS THE KINDLY CONSIDERATION THAT WE OUR SELVES WOULD WISH RECEIVED FROM THEM. IT IS A GENTLENESS THAT PUTS OTHERS AT EASE.**
- 4. THE TERM "SUBMISSIVE" OFTEN CONVEYS A FALSE IMAGE OF SPINELESSNESS. BUT THIS IS NOT THE CORRECT PICTURE. THE WORD MEANS "EASY TO PERSUADE"...IN THE SENSE OF NOT BEING STUBBORN, AND OF BEING WILLING TO LISTEN TO REASON AND TO APPEAL. IT IS THE OPPOSITE OF ARGUEMENTIVE.**
- 5. BUT GOD HIMSELF IS WHOLE AND COMPLETE; ALL OF HIS ATTIBUTS ARE IN HARMONIOUS. IN US, THEREFORE, HIS WISDOM ENABLES US TO DISCERN RIGHT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TWO VIRTUES. THIS IS A BELEIVER WHO IS WILLING TO LISTEN TO REASON, IS ALSO IMPARTIAL. BELEIVERS HOLD CERTAIN CONVICTIONS THAT DO NOT CHANGE. THUS BEING OPEN TO REASON AND BEING FIRM IN CONVICRTIONS,**

COMPLIMENT ONE ANOTHER RESULTING IN BEING IMPARTIAL.

6. THE WORD HERE TRANSLATED "MERCY" MEANT FOR THE GREEKS "PITY FOR THE MAN WHO IS SUFFERING UNJUSTLY". BUT THE WORD ACQUIRED A NEW MEANING IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT. CHRISTIAN MERCY IS MERCY FOR ANY MAN WHO IS IN TROUBLE, EVEN IF HE HAS BROUGHT THAT TROUBLE ON HIMSELF. CHRISTIAN MERCY IS MERCY THAT GOES THE SECOND MILE AND IS EAGER TO SHOW GRACE TO OTHERS.

7. THE "GOOD FRUIT" OF CHRISTIAN MERCY IS PRACTICAL HELP. CHRIST LIKE COMPASSION IS NO MERE SENTIMENT; CHRISTIAN PITY GIVES HELP TO THE ONE IN DISTRESS. WISDOM RESULTS IN "EVERY EVIL PRACTICE" BUT BY CONTRAST, THE WISDOM FROM ABOVE IS FULL OF GOOD FRUIT RESULTING IN HEALTHY RELATIONS WITH OTHERS.

8. FINALLY, THE BELIEVER IS "SINCERE". HE IS WITHOUT HYPOCRISY. CHRISTIAN WISDOM DOES NOT DEAL IN DECEPTION FOR ITS OWN ENDS. IT IS THE WISDOM OF GOD TO BE HONEST, TO SPEAK THE TRUTH AND TO HAVE NO HIDDEN AGENDAS.

JESUS DECLARED "BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS; FOR THEY SHALL BE CALLED THE CHILDREN OF GOD". MATT.5:9. HERE IN VERSE 18, "PEACEMAKERS WHO SOW IN PEACE RAISE A HARVEST OF RIGHTEOUSNESS".

**THOSE WITH DIVINE WISDOM PREPARE THE SOIL OF
COMMUNITY TO RECEIVE THE SEEDS OF PEACE. THEY
RESPECTFULLY TEND AND NURTURE THE COMMUNITY UNTIL
THE HARVEST, WHEN A BUMPER CROP OF PEACE BLESSES THE
PEOPLE. SUCH WISDOM IS THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND
FLOWS FROM HEAVEN.**

PRAISE GOD, AMEN...



May 1st, 2022
John 21:1-19

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

The Second Chance the Lord Gave Us!

We are going through Eastertide after the Lenten Season and Easter Sunday. In the Christian Calendar, “Lent” is 40 days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. During Lent, we pray not to fall into temptation, practice self-control and spend some time meditating on how great God’s grace is. Then, we have a big celebration on Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday is a big celebration day for Christians as much so as Christmas. From the day after Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday is 50 days. We call it “Eastertide.” We call the Sunday’s the first Sunday of Easter, the second Sunday of Easter, the Third Sunday of Easter, etc. It has a little different meaning than “after Easter.” “After Easter” means that “after Easter is done,” but “of Easter” means we are still “in the Easter season.” We may still say, “Christ is risen indeed!” and celebrate it. But somehow, it is not as familiar to us as if the greeting, “he has risen!” is applicable only on Easter Sunday, not any longer. I wonder why we forget the joy of Easter so fast. Today, I want to talk about “The Second Chance the Lord Gave us.” As God loves everyone, God also gives everyone a second chance. But, what matters is if we can catch it.

In today’s scripture, the disciples of Jesus forgot Easter’s joy even though they met the risen Christ. The disciples gathered in a place and shut the doors in fear after Jesus died on the cross. Jesus came to them and showed them that he had risen from the dead. They rejoiced in his resurrection. However, their joy didn’t last long. They remained without Jesus. They went back to Galilee, where they first met Jesus three years ago. To wait for the risen Jesus, they might need patience, confidence, courage, and faith in Jesus’ teaching and promise. But, it was not easy for those who had experienced failure already. Peter denied Jesus three times; Thomas, who doubted Jesus’ resurrection, and Nathanael, who was suspicious of Jesus, saying, “how does come goodness from Galilee?”

They began their journey with Jesus three years ago from Galilee. They pretended to gain powerful authority with Jesus, seeing Jesus’ miraculous work. They expected to get a prominent position next to Jesus, who would be the King of the world and Jews. They were full of confidence because of Jesus, as Peter said, “I am ready to go to prison and death with you.” But, they experienced that they couldn’t do anything without Jesus. Even though Jesus showed up to them as the risen Christ, they were still weak, lacked patience, and had low-self-esteem. Even they didn’t have the energy to encourage one another because they thought they failed.

Therefore, as soon as the oldest disciple, Peter, said, “I’m going fishing,” as if they would wait, they said, “We will go with you.” They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. They were experts in fishing. However, perhaps, they couldn’t focus on fishing. Instead, they might have been regretful, shameful and worried about when they would see Jesus again.

Jesus stood on the beach as he called his disciples the first time three years ago, saying, “I will make you fishers of men” (Mark 1:17). Jesus, who knew their concerns, said to them first with compassion and mercy, “Children, you have no fish, have you?” Jesus called them “children,” which means to show his compassion and mercy on them. Jesus advised, “Cast the net to the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” So, they cast it, and now they could not haul it in because there were so many fish. At that moment, they notice that it was the Lord, Jesus Christ. As soon as they noticed he was Jesus, Peter ran to the Lord first.

Jesus made a charcoal fire there and invited Peter. The charcoal fire might have traumatized Peter because he denied Jesus when he was next to the charcoal fire when Jesus was arrested. We make mistakes sometime in our lives, but we may face failure or mistakes again directly to overcome them. Jesus invited Peter to the place he previously failed and asked him, “Do you love me?” Can you imagine it? How did Peter feel? Lots of regret and shame might come to his mind, but he answered, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” And he didn’t stop there and asked him again, “Simon Peter, do you love me?” Peter answered him, “Yes, Lord. You know that I love you.” And Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” Jesus again asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, which reminded him that he had denied Jesus a third time. And Peter answered, “Lord, you know everything; You know I love you.” And Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.”

No one can throw stones at Peter, who denied Jesus when he was arrested. No one can argue that he didn’t love Jesus. Jesus also didn’t ask him why he denied him. Instead, fed him and asked him, “Do you love me?” Peter was a person like us. Even though Peter failed, Jesus gave him a second chance to the ministry for God’s kingdom. Even though we sometimes make mistakes or fail, we are Christians. We cannot deny our faith in Jesus Christ because of our mistakes. In other words, we cannot judge others who make mistakes, saying, “a Christian wouldn’t do this!” Jesus, who knows our weakness, surely comes to us again in order to give us a second chance. As Jesus invited Peter to the charcoal fire, the place of his failure, perhaps, we may face our failures again like some trauma. However, don’t be afraid of failure because Jesus is there with you. The risen Jesus came to Galilee again to see his disciples and gave them a second chance to be “fishermen of people.”

Where is the place you feel you have failed? You may go back there and pray and wait for a second chance. The Lord will give you a second chance. If one door is closed, the other door would be open for you. I have to say, I am map blind; when I lose my way, I go back to the first place I started, and eventually, I can find my way even though it takes me a longer. If you feel that you have lost your way about what to do, even though it takes you a little longer, you may start at the beginning. Our faith is the same; if you lose the joy of Easter, you may remember when you meet Jesus first, and it will remind you how to rejoice in the Lord. I hope you recall your first love of God and revitalize your faith in the Lord. And, don't miss the second chance the Lord gave you to serve God and serve his people. It's never too late! Thanks be to God. Amen!