

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** Unison
Help us, O God, to give enough of ourselves and our substance everyday that we will not be tempted to embrace the idolatry of greed. We here dedicate not just our offerings but all we possess to causes far greater than our own security. Before all our attachments require 'lager barns,' help us to reflect on how they might better be used by others than stored by us. Thank you for the abundant opportunity to share. Amen!

NO. 2022-31
July 31st, 2022

 **Upper St. Croix Parish**
United Methodist Church

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN** *Leave It There* UMH 522 (vs. 1 & 2)

***BENEDICTION** Pastor Jenny Lee

***POSTLUDE** Toni Koons (G) / Sharon Asp (A & SCF)

ONE Parish THREE Churches
“8th Sunday After Pentecost”



Grantsburg-Central,
Since 1897



Atlas, Since 1887



St. Croix Falls,
Since 1859

SUNDAY SERVICE:

8:30 AM at 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

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
July 31st, 2022

“8th Sunday After Pentecost”

*Please stand if you are able.

***PRELUDE** Toni Koons (G) /Sharon Asp (A & SCF)
WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
PASSING OF THE GREETINGS
“Peace be with you”

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Responsive
Listen, all who are fleeing from the Holy One;
God is calling us; God has called us together.

**O give thanks to God, for God is good;
God’s steadfast love endures forever.**

God is eager to put loving arms around us.
God is waiting to satisfy our hunger and thirst.

**God fills the hungry with good things.
Our thirsting souls are filled to overflowing.**

Set your minds on things that are above.
Put to death your earthly disobedience.

**God leads us to a new identity, to new life.
We seek renewal in the image of our Creator. Amen!**

***OPENING HYMN** *Close to Thee* UMH 407 (vs. 1 & 2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison
Loving God, in whose arms we have found our identity, come among us to direct our faltering steps in the ways you would have us go. Teach us to walk with Christ through the distractions that beckon us in other directions. Turn our vain striving into meaningful service, our foolish greed to the fulfillment of sharing, our confusion to clarity of vision, that we might worship you truly this hour. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME UMH 191 (vs. 1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON** Luke 12:13-21
13 Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." 14 But he said to him, "Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?" 15 And he said to them, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." 16 Then he told them a parable: "The land of a rich man produced abundantly. 17 And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" 18 Then he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.' 20 But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" 21 So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."

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

SERMON “Be Rich toward God!” Pastor Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison
Compassionate God, whose riches have been poured out among us in unrecognized abundance, help us today to reexamine our stewardship over the things and the relationships you have entrusted to us. Confront our greed, lest it destroy us and rob our sisters and brothers of the good you intend for them. Use us as the means of your grace in the good way you intend so that we extend your ministry. 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

JULY 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>We will CONTINUE supporting the food shelf!</p> 
--	---	---



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>SCHOOL SUPPLIES</p>  <p>We collect school supplies to support schools in Grantsburg.</p>
---	---

ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh

<p>Food Shelf (Communion Sunday)</p> 	<p>Sailor Hat Offering:</p> <p>JULY's Sailor hat offering will go to support HARBOR HOUSE.</p> 
---	--

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*
 Acolyte(s) Willow Nyland/Leland Snyder
 Lawn Mowing *Volunteer Needed*
 Fellowship *Volunteer Needed*
 Counter *Volunteer Needed*
 Cleaning Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson
 Sunday School Younger/Older
 LuAnn Martell/Barb Loomis

Atlas:
 Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist Colleen Adams-Schween
 Usher(s) Don Olson
 Cleaning *Volunteer Needed*
 Sunday school *Summer Break*

St. Croix Falls:
 Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist Kathy Gionis
 Usher(s) Jim Andrews
 Money Counter Peter Gionis
 Bell Ringer Jim Andrews
 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!

"Pray for Atlas' Annual Thrift & Bake Sale!"

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **An Online Zoom Service is scheduled for this Sunday at 8:30 am and 11:15 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=SDZleFNubmEvaDBlcytTRzVxMFIzZz09>
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 may watch a recorded video of the service on our parish Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

This Week's Calendar:

Today: 8th Sunday after Pentecost. God bless you all!

Sunday Worship Service:

- 7/31: 8:30 am Grantsburg with Zoom
9:45 am Atlas
11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 8/2: Annual National Night Out (G-Fire Department)
8/3: 6pm to 8pm, Youth & Kids Geocache Hike Night (*Questions to Youth Director Shayna Schmid*)
8/4: 10am to Noon, New Ministry Committee Board Meeting
8/5: 2pm to 5 pm, Bake Good Drop Off (A)
8/6: 9am to 1pm, Thrift & Bake Sale (A)

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries:

Joan Ziegler 7/31
Reed Olson 8/1
Sally Scmitt 8/1
Monica & Russel Mattson 8/2
Peter Branstad 8/3



Next Sunday (August 7th) Volunteers:

Ministers All God's People
Pastor Jenny Lee

Central:
Pianist Toni Koons
Liturgist *Volunteer Needed*
Acolyte(s) Willow Nyland/Leland Snyder
Lawn Mowing *Volunteer Needed*
Fellowship *Volunteer Needed*
Counter *Volunteer Needed*
Cleaning Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson
Sunday School Younger/Older
LuAnn Martell/Barb Loomis

Communion Barb Loomis



Atlas:

Pianist Sharon Asp
Liturgist Sue Olson
Usher(s) Don Schween
Cleaning *Volunteer Needed*
Sunday School Summer Break
Communion Sue Olson

St. Croix Falls:

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



8/8: Korean Clergy Picnic at Devil's Lake
8/10: UMW gathering at Mary's Cabin
8/11: Parsonage Open House



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

July 31st, 2022
Luke 12:13-21

“Be Rich Towards God!”

I want to start with something funny. I found this joke on an internet site: A pastor doesn't like to talk to the congregation about “offering.” But when the coffers were running low, he had no choice. “There is good news and bad news,” he told the congregation. “The good news is that we have more than enough money for all the current and future needs of the parish. The bad news is, it's still in your pockets.”

You may have heard that “when it is time to die, the person who is dying knows it is time to leave.” And then, after the person passes away, we rethink why they said the things they did. I am unsure whether it is true, but I have heard this several times, including in my mother's case. When my mother passed away unexpectedly in a hospital, my siblings and I thought about my mother's last words to each of us. And, we regarded how they would be my mother's last wishes for each of us. My mother's last wish to me, as I have perhaps mentioned several times, is that I “Go to America, and study more and become a pastor.” I think that it is a great treasure my mother handed down to me. By keeping my mother's last wishes, I became a pastor and am here today. If when the time comes and you are about to leave this world, what do you want to hand down to your children, or what kind of last wish do you want to give them or other loved ones?

Some people have a wish list, like a to-do list. Some call it a “Bucket List,” which means “The things to do before you die.” According to a media survey with younger people, the top ten bucket list items are 1) Travel all around the world, 2) Learn a new language, 3) Get married, 4) Buy a house, 5) Go sky diving, 6) Go Scuba diving, 7) Go on a Cruise, 8) Get a tattoo, 9) Swim with dolphins, 10) Write a book. Most of them look like luxury, leisure life pastimes. If we don't have enough money, we can't complete the list. As they show us, most people want to enjoy or wish for a luxurious life. I wonder how many of you have completed items from the top ten list.

The bucket list is from the movie “Bucket List” (2007, Warner Bros Film). In the movie, a rich man worked hard from a young age, succeeded in his business, and became rich. However, he gets a cancer diagnosis. He regretted how he lived his younger life because he only worked hard without enjoying life. And then, he made a bucket list that wanted to do before he died. He completed them one by one with a new friend whom he met in a hospital. Perhaps we can work on our bucket lists after monetarily succeeding in our life, according to the movie. Otherwise, how can we enjoy a leisure life without money? It sounds like a successful life means “becoming rich.” Many people work hard to succeed or to be rich. Even though we become rich if we die tonight or at a young age, how useless!

However, here is the good news God promises us eternal life. The Gospel, the Book of John, says, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (John 3:16). Therefore, be rich towards God, not for yourselves alone! How we can be rich towards Go? Let's get some wisdom from the parable story Jesus gives us today.

In today's scripture, one in the crowd came to Jesus and said, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.” In the Israelite society, people used to ask for wisdom from the Law teachers when they got in trouble in their everyday life. So, this man, as usual, asked Jesus to let his brother share his family inheritance with him. Jesus said to him, “Friend, who set me to be a judge or arbitrator over you?” Jesus sounds like he is refusing to help him, saying, “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.” And then, he gives him the parable story of a rich man like the following:

There is a rich man. He seems to like working hard and managing his farming business well. His land has been producing so abundantly that he does not have enough storage space in his barns. So he plans to pull down his barns and build bigger ones to store all his grain and goods. Then he will have big savings set aside for the future and will be all set to enjoy his golden years. In other words, he is ready to retire and enjoy the rest of his life without having to continue to work hard. That's our dream. Isn't it wise and responsible to save for the future? The man would probably be a good financial advisor. He seems to have things figured out. He worked hard and saved wisely. Now he can sit back, relax, and enjoy the fruits of his labor, right?

However, we hear God say to him, "You fool!" What? We wonder why God called him "Fool." He is good enough in our eyes, and we perhaps, envy him. But, from God's side, he is a fool. We wonder why God doesn't want us to save for retirement or future needs. And why doesn't God want us to "eat, drink, and be merry and enjoy what God has given us. However, we remember Jesus also spent time eating and drinking with people and enjoying his life with them. However, Jesus was clear about where his true security lay. The rich farmer is a fool not because he is wealthy or because he saves for the future, but because he appears to live only for himself and believes that he can secure his life with his abundant possessions.

Remember, Jesus says, "One's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." It is all about priorities. It is about who is truly God in our lives. It is about how we invest our lives and the gifts that God has given us. It is about how our lives are fundamentally aligned, if it is toward ourselves and our passing desire or God and our neighbor, toward God's mission to bless and redeem the world. It is a difference between Christians and non-Christians. Christians must be a God-centered mindset versus a self-centered mindset.

In the parable story, the rich man seems to like having good fruits of his life, but not exactly. One very important thing the rich man has not planned for is his final reckoning with God. God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" (12:20). Hmm, let's see what is wrong with him. After he got an abundant harvest, he was concerned. Verse 17 says, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" Then he got an idea: as verse 18 says, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods." As you see, he thinks of his possessions and goods as his own and is concerned about how to store them for his own future life.

Our lives and possessions are not our own. They belong to God. We are merely stewards of them for the time God has given us on this earth. We easily go against this truth because we want to be in charge of our lives and belongings. But, there is good news for us. Because all that we are and all we have belongs to God, our future is secure beyond all measure. Jesus tells us, "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). We have secure insurance for eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ by the grace of God. I have heard many kinds of regrets expressed by people nearing the end of life, but I have never heard anyone say, "I wish I hadn't given so much away. I wish I had kept more for myself." Death has a way of clarifying what really matters. Jesus says, "Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be" (Matthew 6:20-21). Therefore, let us share all the gifts and fruits given by God with our neighbors. It is the way to store our treasure in heaven. It is the way to be rich towards God. Thanks be to God. Amen!