

We Respond to God's Word

NO. 2022-39
September 25th, 2022

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison

Eternal God, whose will for humankind is that we live within your rule of love, call us out of our preoccupation with riches to sense our common plight with all who suffer. Help us to identify with rich and poor alike as your children, that through mutual care and compassion we might grow toward your eternal realm. May we hear and heed your life-changing warnings and promises. 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

What a joy to have something to give! Thank you, God, for granting us choices in the use of all you have placed on earth for our use. We have chosen this portion to dedicate for the ministry of the church in our community and in outreach throughout the world. Make us aware of the needy at our doors as well as lost ones everywhere who long for bread of life. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

***CLOSING HYMN** *Here I Am, Lord* UMH 593 (vs. 1 & 3)

***BENEDICTION** Pastor Jenny Lee

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



Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

ONE Parish THREE Churches
"16th 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 (10:00 AM, Sunday School)
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
September 18th, 2022
“16th Sunday After Pentecost”

*Please stand if you are able.

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

***OPENING HYMN** *Only Trust Him* UMH 337 (vs. 1 &2)

***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.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PASSING OF THE GREETINGS

“Peace be with you”

We Celebrate New Life in Christ

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Responsive

Come, all who live in the shelter of the Most High.

Gather together, all who trust in God Almighty.

God reigns through all generations.

We will praise God as long as we live.

We trust in God, our refuge and our fortress.

We can count on God’s faithfulness at all times.

God lifts us up when we are threatened or afraid.

We call God for protection and rescue.

Worship God, who richly provides us with all things.

Give thanks to the one who dwells in unapproachable light.

God, who made heaven and earth, keeps faith forever.

We will pour out our thankfulness in words and deeds. Amen!

***DEDICATE HYMN** *I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light*

UMH 206 (vs. 1&2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Ever-present God, let your Spirit fill this place, for we need to know that you are in charge. Through the terrors of night, amid the arrows that fly by day, we need to sense your power, your protection, your higher purpose. Show us here your saving, healing strength. Grant to us such confidence and contentment that we may look beyond ourselves to become a blessing to others. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs.1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Luke 16:19-31

19 “There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day. 20 And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores, 21 who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man’s table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores. 22 The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried. 23 In Hades, where he was being tormented, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side. 24 He called out, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am in agony in these flames.’ 25 But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things and Lazarus in like manner evil things, but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony. 26 Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.’ 27 He said, ‘Then I beg you, father, to send him to my father’s house— 28 for I have five brothers—that he may warn them, so that they will not also come into this place of torment.’ 29 Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the prophets; they should listen to them.’ 30 He said, ‘No, father Abraham, but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’ 31 He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’ ”

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

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

“Before It’s Too Late”

Pastor Jenny Lee

SEPTEMBER 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 Collecting loose change to support the Moolah for Milk program.</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>September Mission will be Moola for Milk. This is the Salvation Army program to raise money to supply milk vouchers for the backpack program.</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>September's Sailor Hat offering will go to support the SCF School Backpack Program & School Store.</p> 
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Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers

All God's People
Pastor Jenny Lee



Central:

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

Atlas:

Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist Sue Olson
 Usher(s) Don Schween
 Cleaning **Volunteer Needed**
 Sunday School Younger/older
 Josie Grimes/Colleen Adams-Schween

St. Croix Falls:

Pianist Sharon Asp
 Liturgist Karen Sciacca
 Usher(s) Jim Andrews
 Money Counter Peter Gionis
 Bell Ringer Jim Andrews
 Flowers Ladies of the church

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 our Sunday School kids, the Youth Group, and our teachers.

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=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) You may watch a recorded video of the service on our parish Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

This Week's Calendar:

Today: 16th Sunday after Pentecost. God bless you all!

Sunday Worship Service:

- 9/25: 8:30 am Grantsburg with Zoom
9:45 am Atlas (Sunday School- at 10:00am)
11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 9/28: 6:30 pm, 2022-2023 Confirmation Class Orientation (A)
9/29: 9:00 am, North West Clergy Meeting via Zoom
9/30: 3:00pm, Pastor Jenny visits a new planting church in Menomonie
10/1: 10am-4pm, Shayna & Kids Activity at Grantoberfest
11am, Graveside Service for Bevan Branstad at Riverside Cemetery

This Week's Birthdays

& Anniversaries:

Barb Melin 9/25
Terry Giles 9/26
Kristie Olson 9/28
LeAnn Sylvester 9/29

If you know anyone whose birthday or anniversary is missing, please let pastor Jenny know.



Next Sunday (October 2nd) Volunteers:

Central:

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

Atlas:

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Sue Olson
Usher(s)	Don Schween
Cleaning	Volunteer Needed
Communion	Sue Olson and All together
Sunday School	Younger/older Josie Grimes/Colleen Adams-Schween

St. Croix Falls:

Pianist	Sharon Asp
Liturgist	Karen Sciacca
Usher(s)	Jim Andrews
Money Counter	Peter Gionis
Bell Ringer	Jim Sciacca
Flowers	Ladies of the church
Communion	Karen Sciacca and all together



Oct. 2nd:

World Communion Sunday

(Check the signup sheet if you can provide your family with traditional bread for World Communion Sunday)



September 25th, 2022.
Luke 16:19-31.

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



“Before It’s Too Late”

I want to start with something funny. A man died and arrived at the Pearly Gates. St. Peter asked him, “What have you done to merit entrance into heaven?” The man thought for a moment and said, “A week ago, I gave a quarter to a homeless person on the street.” St. Peter asked the angel Gabriel to check this out in the records, and after a moment, Gabriel affirmed that this was true. St. Peter said, “Well, that’s fine, but it’s not really quite enough to get you into heaven.” The man said, “Wait, wait! There’s more! Three years ago, I also gave a homeless person a quarter.” St. Peter nodded to Gabriel, who after a moment nodded back, affirming this, too, has been verified. St. Peter whispered to Gabriel, “Well, what do you suggest we do with this fellow?” Gabriel gave the man a sidelong glance, then said to St. Peter, “Let’s give him back his 50 cents and tell him to go to hell.”

We continue to see the Gospel of Luke according to the lectionary. You may notice that the Gospel of Luke has more stories about the poor, the sick, and women than other Gospel Books. I want to point out who the author Luke was. The author of the Gospel of Luke was a medical doctor, and more notably, the primary doctor of the Apostle Paul (Colossians 4:14). He was with Paul for the second and third mission trips and also with Paul when he was imprisoned in Rome. Luke wrote the Gospel of Luke and Acts. He was not the Apostle or one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, but he learned, saw, and experienced how the disciples of Jesus should live, along with Paul. Because he was a physician, he had mercy on the sick, the poor, and the powerless, who couldn’t get treatment easily. We are following Jesus’ teachings through Luke’s view.

Today’s scripture is one of the parable stories Jesus told to the Pharisees and scribes. He told many people that they should love God more than others if they wanted to be his disciples. After hearing about the cost of being a disciple, the tax collectors and “sinners” gathered around to hear him. But, the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law grumbled and complained to Jesus. So, Jesus began to tell them the parable stories like the lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost son, and the dishonest manager (steward) we talked about last Sunday. However, the Pharisees still couldn’t understand that Jesus was talking to them. Rather, they were sneering at Jesus because they loved money (Luke 16:14). Finally, Jesus told them the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, warning them to be aware before it’s too late.

Today, I want to talk about “before it’s too late.” Before it’s too late, we should try to understand what Jesus wanted us to know through the parable story, “the rich man and Lazarus.” This is a summary of the story: There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. In contrast, at his gate, a man named Lazarus laid who was poor and sick, longing to eat what fell from the rich man’s table. They both died. The rich man went to hell, and Lazarus went to heaven. Unlike in their earthly lives, the rich man begged for help, and Lazarus was surrounded by comfort. As Lazarus was longing to eat the crumbled food from the rich man’s table while alive in the world, the rich man begged for a drop of water through Lazarus’ finger. However, he realized that it was not possible and too late to repent. He asked Abraham to send Lazarus to his father’s house: before it got too late, he wanted his brothers to know about the reality of hell. However, Abraham said, “They have Moses and the Prophets; They should listen to them.” He said, “No, father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent.” Abraham said to him, “If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.”

Do you wonder why the rich man went to hell, and Lazarus went to heaven? We can study this story through the consistency of Israelite culture and Jesus’ teachings. The audience of this story must be the Pharisees and teachers of the Law because Jesus’ storytelling began with the grumbling Pharisees. One more clue was that they dressed up in Purple. In the Israelite Society, only Religious Leaders could wear purple

robes, and they were very rich. They taught people about God's love but didn't practice loving their neighbors in their everyday lives. It is about how to manage everything God has given us. In other words, it is an example of a dishonest manager. The rich man must be a believer in God. You may say, "Just a minute! Did the believer in God go to hell?" Listen carefully! Jesus told this story to religious leaders like the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law, and today it is for us.

Think about Jesus' other lesson about the final judgment, Matthew 25:31-46. At the final judgment, the son of man separates all the nations, like the goats and sheep. The sheep means those who give food to the hungry, give water to the thirsty and invite a stranger in to their home, and the goat means those who don't provide food, water, and care to those in need. Jesus added, 'whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers or sisters, you did for me. Whatever you didn't do for one of the least, you didn't do for me.'

I know you are confused about salvation; we learned that we are saved only by faith in Jesus by the grace of God. And now, we learned we are judged at the end of our lives as to if we did good work or not. Let me tell you the other example Jesus taught us in Luke 18:18-30. A rich ruler came to Jesus and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "you know the commandments: you shall not commit adultery; you shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall bear false witness; honor your father and mother." He replied, "I have kept all these since my youth." When Jesus heard that and said, "There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasures in heaven; then come, follow me." Hearing him, the rich ruler went back with sadness. And Jesus said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the Kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone rich to enter the kingdom of God."

As we name an apple tree, even though the tree hasn't produced apples yet, we are Christians whether we bear fruit or not. However, if the apple tree grows well with good nutrition, it should bear fruit. In the same manor, if we grow in faith according to God's Word, we should bear good fruit. Attending Sunday services and church programs, reading the scripture, and praying every day are all means of grace in which we can live with God. Sharing gifts and talents with others is the adult Christians' virtue as it was when the good steward managed his master's possessions. Loving God and loving our neighbor is all part of having a God-Centered mind, in which God is the owner of our lives. However, the rich man in Jesus' lesson was a person who had a money-centered mind. He loved money more than God. We have been entrusted by God to manage all our possessions, including money, for God's ministry. Through the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus tells us, before it's too late, to repent and share all we have with our neighbors in need for God, because it is the way of Jesus' disciples. Remember, we are Christians who follow Jesus' teachings. Before it's too late, repent, and come back to God with your whole heart, mind and soul. Before it's too late, let your loved ones know how much you love them through your actions not just your words. Thanks be to God. Amen!