

We Respond to God’s Word**RESPONDING PRAYER** Unison

Faithful God, whose mercy is offered to the just and the unjust, help us to reorder our priorities so the wealth we possess becomes a tool, not an idol. We would use our wealth to address problems you call us to solve, to win others to your way of love, and to heal the brokenness of your world. Bless our learning and our doing. 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 give, loving God, because of your generosity to us. We share because this is your will for us. In faithfulness to your call, we seek to manage the resources you provide for the greatest benefit to humankind. May they bring a bit closer to an awareness of your intentions for us and your rule among us. We worship and serve you with all we have. We pray in your holy name. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another***CLOSING HYMN** *Marching to Zion* UMH 733 (vs. 1 & 2)***BENEDICTION** Pastor Jenny Lee***POSTLUDE** Toni Koons (G) / Sharon Asp (A & SCF)


Upper St. Croix Parish United Methodist Church

ONE Parish THREE Churches
“15th 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
“15th Sunday After Pentecost”

*Please stand if you are able.

***PRELUDE** Toni Koons (G) / Sharon Asp (A & SCF)
***OPENING HYMN** *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*
UMH 57(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

God welcomes those whose hearts are sick.
God’s invitation comes to people whose joy is gone.

Why is the health of God’s people not restored?

Why must we weep day and night for those we have lost?

There is a balm in Gilead. There is a physician who heals.
Jesus Christ is our mediator, healer, and savior.

We bring all our pain and unsolved anger.

We come in all our confusion to seek answers.

Bring all your urgent prayers and honest laments.
God is eager to offer salvation and open us to truth.

We cry out to God for deliverance from our sin.

We cry out for relief from our suffering. Amen!

DEDICATE HYMN *Lord, I want to Be a Christian*
UMH 402 (vs. 1&2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison

Gracious God, we have come into this holy temple. This is not our church but yours. We cannot claim our world; it is a trust from your hand. Our lives, our health, our length of days call forth our stewardship. We are stewards, not owners, so we come to you now to give account and seek your further commands. help us, O God of our salvation. We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs.1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Luke 16:1-13

16 Then Jesus said to the disciples, “There was a rich man who had a manager, and charges were brought to him that this man was squandering his property. 2 So he summoned him and said to him, ‘What is this that I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer.’ 3 Then the manager said to himself, ‘What will I do, now that my master is taking the position away from me? I am not strong enough to dig, and I am ashamed to beg. 4 I have decided what to do so that, when I am dismissed as manager, people may welcome me into their homes.’ 5 So, summoning his master’s debtors one by one, he asked the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ 6 He answered, ‘A hundred jugs of olive oil.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ 7 Then he asked another, ‘And how much do you owe?’ He replied, ‘A hundred containers of wheat.’ He said to him, ‘Take your bill and make it eighty.’ 8 And his master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly, for the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light. 9 And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone they may welcome you into the eternal homes.

10 “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much. 11 If, then, you have not been faithful with the dishonest wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? 12 And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to another, who will give you what is your own? 13 No slave can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

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

Thanks be to God.

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!</p> <p>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 *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 Adam-Schween
Usher(s) Sue Olson
Cleaning *Volunteer Needed*
Sunday School Younger/Older
Cheryl Olson/Jamie Steffen

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

VOLUNTEERS DO NOT NECESSARILY HAVE THE TIME; THEY HAVE THE HEART

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: 15th Sunday after Pentecost. God bless you all!

Sunday Worship Service:

- 9/18: 8:30 am Grantsburg with Zoom
9:45 am Atlas (Sunday School-at 10:00am)
11:15 am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 9/20: 6:30 pm, Ad Council Meeting (G)
- 9/22: 11:00 am - 1:00 pm at Loaves & Fishes, Volunteer Work
- 9/23-9/24: Pastor Jenny attend in "Cultural Competency" in Sun Prairie

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries:

Linda Hokanson 9/18
Dustin & Chelsie Kunze 9/20
Anneliese Snyder 9/22
Monica Mattson 9/24



If you know anyone's birthday is missing,
please let pastor Jenny know.

Next Sunday (September 25th) Volunteers:



Central:

Pianist	Toni Koons
Liturgist	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Acolyte(s)	Willow Nyland/Leland Snyder
Lawn Mowing	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Fellowship	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Counter	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
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	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>
Sunday School	<i>Volunteer Needed</i>

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



Oct. 1st: Grantoberfest
Check the signup sheet if you can donate candy.

Oct. 2nd: World Communion Sunday
(Check the signup sheet if you can provide your family traditional bread for World Communion Sunday)

September 18th, 2022
Luke 16:1-13

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



“The Things We Can’t Buy with Money”

I want to start with something funny. I found this story on an internet site: There was an 85 years old couple, having been married almost 60 years, who died in a car crash. They had been in good health for the last ten years, mainly due to her interest in healthy food and exercise. When they reached the Pearly Gates, St. Peter took them to their mansion, decked out with a beautiful kitchen, master bath suite, and Jacuzzi. As they “Oohed and aahed,” the old man asked Peter, “How much is all this going to cost?” “It’s free,” Peter replied, “this is heaven.” Next, they went out back to survey the championship golf course that the home backed up to. They would have golfing privileges every day, and each week the course changed to a new one representing the great golf courses on earth. The old man asked, “What are the green fees?” Peter replied, “This is heaven; you play for free.”

Next, they went to the clubhouse and saw the lavish buffet lunch with all the world’s cuisines. “How much to eat?” asked the old man. “Don’t you understand yet? This is heaven. It is free.” Peter replied with some exasperation. “Well, where are the low fat and low cholesterol tables?” the old man asked timidly. Peter lectured, “That’s the best part. You can eat as much as you like of whatever you like and never get fat or sick. This is heaven.”

With that, the old man went into a fit of anger, throwing down his hat, stomping on it, and shrieking wildly. Peter and his wife both tried to calm him down, asking him what was wrong. The old man looked at his wife and said, “This is all your fault. If it weren’t for your blasted bran muffins, I could have been here ten years ago!”

Today, I want to talk about “the things we can’t buy with money.” Basically, we can buy almost everything that we want if we have enough money. We can buy a beautiful mansion, golf club membership, clothes, shoes, jewelry, and good food. We can even pursue good health and nutrition by buying special food, health supplies, and medical support if we have enough money. Also, we can take a worldwide cruise or extravagant vacation if we had enough money. What else could we buy if we had a lot of money? Simply put, we could buy almost anything if we had the money. Therefore, many people pursue wealth to have enough money to meet their needs. I wonder what it would be like if we said “enough” focusing on money. Perhaps, those who seek to be wealthy would never be satisfied. Such people, tend to place value on things based on money, even with regards to their quality of life. For such people, money is everything. In other words, they live in a money-centered world, so-called “Mammonism.” At this point, let’s think about what things we cannot buy even though we have enough money? Things like life, faith, salvation, and eternal life. These are things that cannot be bought.

Jesus used to say if we pursue “mammon,” we cannot serve God. Furthermore, Jesus said, “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear” (Matthew 6:24-25). It sounds like he means if we pursue money, or we are rich, we are not suitable to be Christians. In other words, it sounds like, “don’t worry about money or materials because God provides you everything you need.” Furthermore, it sounds like, “you don’t need to work for money.” Suppose it does explain why we see people in poverty and why my neighbor is

rich and not me. Therefore, we should understand God's Word correctly. I hope today's scripture helps us better understand what Jesus meant about money.

In today's scripture, the master heard his steward squandered his property, called him, and said, "I heard about you. Give me an accounting of your management because you cannot be my manager any longer." The steward is about to lose his job and thinks about his situation, 'What can I do? If I lose my job, how can I get the other job? What do I do? If I get a job to be a farmer, I don't have enough strength to dig. But I don't want to be a beggar on the street because it is too shameful. What am I going to be?' At this point, we must know about "the steward" in Israelite society. A steward was the person to manage everything the master had. In other words, the master gives the steward all authority to manage his property, such as selling or buying, lending or borrowing, dealing with trading all his master's possession; he could make all trade related decisions for his master. The steward even had the right to use his master's signature, which means he must be his master's most-trusted person.

Back to the scripture; the steward has a chance to correct his accounting record before submitting it to his master because his master told him, "Give me an accounting of your management." He decides to fix the trading account records before losing his job. In other words, he decides to give the master's debtors mercy with his final authority. He thought if he did so, the people might welcome him into their homes even after losing his job. So, he called his master's debtors individually and discounted their debts. We can find how he used his master's money in today's scripture, verses 5 -7. He asked the first, 'how much do you owe my master?' He answered, a hundred jugs of olive oil.' He said, 'Take your bill, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.' Then he asked another, 'how much do you owe?' He replied, 'A hundred containers of wheat.' He said, 'Take your bill and make it eighty.'

What do you think of his work? He even fabricated documents, not by his hands, but asking the debtors to create them themselves. Even though the master sees the documents, he may not find out it is the fabricated document. We may assume the master gets angrier with him. However, surprisingly, the master commends him. Let's see verse 8: "His master commended the dishonest manager because he had acted shrewdly."

According to the Book of Deuteronomy, Israelites couldn't charge any interest between their people, "You shall not charge interest on loans to another Israelite, interest on money, interest on provisions, interest on anything that is lent" (Deuteronomy 23:19). However, the leaders made the laws distorted for their greed. They added the interest to the actual portion they lent. The reason the master commended him is he noticed what he was wrong and corrected it shrewdly. So, "the children of this age are more shrewd in dealing with their own generation than are the children of light" means, somehow, non-Christians are wiser than Christians in dealing with worldly wealth.

The dishonest steward thought if he gave charity to the debtors, which would be his last decision of authority, they might welcome him into their home. That's a non-Christians' limited idea. They live in a limited world and may pursue to gain more wealth. However, an eternal home can't deal with money. Christians pursue eternal life, and we don't store wealth in the world but in heaven. We save our money in heaven to share it with our needy neighbors. Jesus says, "make friends for yourselves by means of dishonest wealth so that when it is gone, they may welcome you into the eternal homes." Dishonest wealth means worldly wealth. Worldly wealth itself is not a wrong tool. Instead, it is essential for our earthly lives. However, depending on how we use material wealth, we may be dishonest or honest stewards of God. God chose us as his stewards and entrusted us with everything to manage in the world. You have the authority to handle everything God has given you. How are you going to manage it? That's your choice. Thanks be to God, Amen!