

THE LORD'S PRAYER
INVITATION/PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND
OFFERINGS
*DOXOLOGY

MH 95

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION Unison

We devote ourselves and these tokens of our thankfulness toward the realization of your reign among us, holy God. We pray for purity of heart as we hunger and thirst for righteousness and as we seek to be peacemakers. We rejoice in this opportunity to share in the extension of your realm. Bless us and our offering, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

We Go Forth to Love God and Serve One Another

*CLOSING HYMN *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*
UMH 402 (vs. 1, 2 & 4)

*BENEDICTION **Pastor Jenny Lee**
*POSTLUDE **Toni Koons (G)/Sharon Asp (A & SCF)**

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

The 2023 Parish Ministry Theme:
“Fill My House” (Luke 14:23)

“4th Sunday After Epiphany”



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

Pastor Jenny Lee: jennlee1732@gmail.com
Youth Director Shayna Schmid: snssnyder@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
January 29th, 2023
“4th Sunday After Epiphany”

*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
Jesus taught us: Blessed are the poor in spirit.
He said that the realm of God is theirs.
We read that those who mourn are blessed.
Jesus said they will be comforted.
The meek will inherit the earth.
The merciful will obtain mercy.
All who hunger and thirst for rich treasures are blessed;
Jesus said they will be filled.
Blessed are the pure in heart and the peacemakers;
They are God’s children and will see God.
Those persecuted and falsely accused are blessed.
Even in the face of evil, we will rejoice. Amen.

***DEDICATING HYMN** Sanctuary TFWS 2164 (x2)

OPENING PRAYER Unison
Let the mountains hear our voices raised in prayer and praise,
wise and holy God. We gather in this sacred place to honor and
adore you. We come humbly, claiming the cross of Jesus Christ as
our sign. We give thanks that you lift up the weak and lowly, defy
the world’s foolishness, and invite us to share in life at its fullest
and best as disciples of Jesus. We want to accept your invitation.
We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

CHILDREN’S TIME

UMH 191 (vs.1)

Proclamation of God’s Word

***THE GOSPEL LESSON**

Matthew 5:1-12

5 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down,
his disciples came to him. 2 And he began to speak and taught them, saying:
3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
5 “Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be
filled.
7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.
8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.
9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs
is the kingdom of heaven.
11 “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds
of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your
reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who
were before you.

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

SERMON “Are You A Disciple of Jesus?” Pastor Jenny Lee

We Respond to God’s Word

RESPONDING PRAYER Unison
Loving God, your saving power has come to us in Jesus Christ. Grant
that we may hear and speak the truth and do what is right as the
disciples of Jesus so our lives may be a blessing to the world and do
justice, love others, be peacemakers and walk humbly with you. We
pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

After each prayer request:
Pastor: Lord, in your mercy,
All: Hear our Prayer.

PRAYER SONG

This is our prayer. This is our prayer, O God!

UMH 487

JANUARY CHURCH MISSIONS

ATLAS

Mission committee chair: Peggy Frederickson

INK JET RECYCLING PROGRAM:

Atlas collects and recycles ink jet cartridges and cell phones year-round.



We will collect donations for the Luck Food Pantry.



GRANTSBURG

Mission committee chair: Deb Hammer

BE A "BACK-PACK BACKER"!

REMEMBER ... Every Sunday Is MAC 'N CHEESE SUNDAY! Supporting the Salvation Army's "Happy Kids Back-Pack Program"



Grantsburg will support the following in January:

- Mittens and monetary donations for the Food Pantry in Grantsburg
- Middle School Supplies

ST. CROIX FALLS

Mission committee chair: Kate Murtaugh



Food Shelf
(Communion Sunday)



Sailor Hat Offering:

January's Sailor Hat offering will go to support the Salvation Army

Thank you for your support!

TODAY'S SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

Ministers

All God's People
Pastor Jenny Lee

Central:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Pianist | Toni Koons |
| Liturgist | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Acolyte(s) | Willow Nyland/Indie Tooze |
| Snow Removal | Tom Goepfert |
| 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 | Colleen Adams-Schween |
| Usher(s) | Sue Olson |
| Acolyte(s) | Copelan Grimes |
| Cleaning | <i>Volunteer Needed</i> |
| Sunday School | Younger/Older Josie Grimes/Jamie Steffen |

St. Croix Falls:

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 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 the one who you invite to God!

PLEASE NOTE:

- 1) **Online Zoom Services are scheduled for this Sunday at 8:30 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) You may watch a recorded video of the service on our parish Facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/UpperStCroixParishUMC>

This Week's Calendar:

Today: "4th Sunday after Epiphany"
God bless you all!

Sunday Worship Service:

- 1/29: 8:30 am Grantsburg with Zoom
9:45 am Atlas (10:00 am Sunday School)
11:15am St. Croix Falls with Zoom
- 1/31: 2:00 pm Visiting Grantsburg Police Department
2/1: 6:00 pm Youth Gathering (G)
2/2: 9:00 am North West Clergy Meeting via Zoom

PLEASE NOTE: WHEN WRITING A CHECK PLEASE MAKE IT PAYABLE TO YOUR INDIVIDUAL CHURCH. WHEN THE OFFERING IS MAILED IN WE ARE THEN ABLE CREDIT THE APPROPRIATE CHURCH. THANK YOU!

This Week's Birthdays & Anniversaries

Russ Hammer 1/29

Joseph Murtaugh 2/2



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

Next Sunday (February 5th) Volunteers:

Central:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Pianist | Toni Koons |
| Liturgist | Volunteer Needed |
| Acolyte(s) | Willow Nyland/Indie Tooze |
| Snow Removal | Tom Goepfert |
| Fellowship | Volunteer Needed |
| Counter | Volunteer Needed |
| Cleaning | Charlie Glonek and Sandra Erickson |
| Communion | Barb Loomis |
| Sunday School | Younger/Older LuAnn Martell/Barb Loomis |



Atlas:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Pianist | Sharon Asp |
| Liturgist | Sue Olson |
| Usher | Colleen Adams-Schween |
| Acolyte(s) | Chase Steffen |
| Cleaning | Volunteer Needed |
| Communion | Sue Olson |
| Sunday School | Younger/Older Cheryl Olson/ attending service |

St. Croix Falls:

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| Pianist | Sharon Asp |
| Liturgist | Karen Sciacca |
| Usher(s) | Kathy Gionis |
| Money Counter | Peter Gionis |
| Bell Ringer | Jim Andrews |
| Flowers | Kathy Gionis |
| Communion | Karen Sciacca |



February 5th, Communion Sunday

Pastor Jenny leads C.C. Center's Worship Service

February 8th, UMW Meeting (G), Confirmation Class (A)

February 9th, SPRC Online Training (SPRC Members Please Register)



January 29, 2023
Matthew 5:1-12

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

“Are You A Disciple of Jesus?”

I want to start with something funny that I found on an internet site: “Satan’s Beatitudes.” Blessed are those who are too tired, too busy, and too distracted to spend an hour once a week with their fellow Christians in the church because they are my best workers. Blessed are those who wait to be asked and expect to be thanked because I can use them in my business. Blessed are those who are touchy. Soon they will stop going to church because, verily, they shall be my missionaries. Blessed are those who sow gossip and trouble because they are my beloved children. Blessed are those who have no time to pray because they are my prey. Blessed are those who gossip because they are my secret agents. Blessed are you when you read this and think it has everything to do with other people and nothing to do with you because I’ve got room for you at my inn.

I want to repeat the last line, “Blessed are you when you read this and think it has everything to do with other people and nothing to do with you,” because you are a disciple of Jesus or a prospective disciple of Jesus. You may have heard the word “Beatitudes” as often as the phrase “the disciple of Jesus.” As often as we have heard them, we used to regard them as our nametags, which we freely receive. It is similar to those who come to church once a year on Christmas and pretend they are Christians. To be called Christian or a disciple of Jesus is not a free nametag, but is for those who practice Jesus’ teachings in everyday life. Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of God, but only the One who does the will of my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

I want to ask you if you are a disciple of Jesus. The phrase “the disciple of Jesus” does not mean a person who learns about who Jesus is and what Jesus taught as a theory, but also a person who lives them out in daily life. In today’s scripture, as we see 5:1-2, there are two sorts of people: one is the crowds; the other is his disciples. They moved together with Jesus wherever Jesus went. However, their purposes for following Jesus were very different. While the crowds followed Jesus to watch miracles and get any benefits, such as healing or feeding, the disciple followed him to learn his teachings and life. Verses 1 and 2 say, “When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak and taught them. When Jesus sat down on the Holy Mountain, among many people, only his disciples came closer to Jesus to listen to him and dedicate their lives to the kingdom of God.

What kind of people do you belong to? Are you the crowd or the disciple? While the crowd were onlookers who kept a distance from Jesus, the disciple was like a family member to Jesus, eating at a table, sleeping at a place, and dedicating their lives to the kingdom of God.

“The Beatitudes” sounds like an ideal attitude of Christians, which could never be practiced. However, Jesus wanted his disciples to live his teachings out in their everyday life. Therefore, it is a virtue Christians should practice in everyday life. Jesus began his public ministry by calling his first disciples from the task of fishing for fish to the task of fishing for people (Matthew 4:18-22). Therefore, it is for those who would be ready to fish for people.

Let’s try to understand the Beatitudes. A key principle is “blessedness.” This is a refrain that runs throughout verses 5-10; those are blessed who are poor in spirit, mourn, meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, and are persecuted. The word “blessed” does not mean “holy,” and neither does it mean “happy” in the sense of being in a good mood. Rather, the word “blessed” refers to a fortunate state of life. If it is so, it sounds like more nonsense. How could they be blessed? They seemed to be unfortunate. Are they who are poor in spirit fortunate? Are those who are persecuted fortunate? It may surprise us that Jesus speaks these words about those whose present circumstances that seem so unfortunate.

How could we live like those who are blessed in the Beatitudes? You may say, “We live in a chaotic world full of fight, competition, struggle, and jealousy, but not in the kingdom of God yet.” Yes, it is true. You are right. But, as Jesus proclaimed, “Repent, the Kingdom of God comes near,” he wanted his disciples to bring the kingdom of God with him into the world. In other words, Jesus wanted his disciples to transform the world by loving God and loving others. The kingdom of God is the place God is the king. If you live in a God-centered mind, spirit, and soul, you live in the kingdom of God. In other words, Jesus speaks the Beatitudes from a kingdom perspective. The Beatitudes extend his proclamation of the good news by applying the presence of the kingdom of God to the poor and persecuted. In other words, those who possess the kingdom of God are “blessed.” If you are in the kingdom of God, you are blessed, right?

Let’s see verses 3 & 10. Only two verses have the present tense, while the rest have the future tense. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven;” “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’s sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Because the kingdom of God is theirs currently, the poor in spirit and the persecuted are blessed. Again, because they live in the kingdom of God, they are blessed.

Jesus calls us and gives us a radical vision to see the kingdom of God. Even though we live in a chaotic world, we may live partially in the kingdom of God. As when we share our possessions with those in need, we taste the kingdom of God. It is like a felt blessing that we have something to share. It is like a felt blessing we have the physical strength to work for the church, community, and the people of God. It is like a felt blessing that we have a mind laughing and sharing with others even though we have limited resources. It is the life of the disciple of Jesus. It is a life of loving God and our neighbors. It is likely the Apostle’s confession, “Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully even as I am fully known” (1 Corinthians 13:12). The disciple of Jesus lives in the kingdom of God, staying in the world. We may see and taste the kingdom of God partly in our daily lives, but it is coming soon in its entirety when we see the kingdom of God and live it out fully. Thanks be to God. Amen!