



Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
4th Sunday after Epiphany

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship and Communion Service
February 1, 2026**



*We have the closed hearing loop system.
You may be able to turn your hearing device to the "T" setting.*

***To allow all worshippers to reflect and prepare for
the service, please observe silence during the
prelude.***

4th Sunday after Epiphany

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE

O Holy City, Seen of John

Seth Bingham

CALL TO WORSHIP *(Please respond with words in bold)*

We come today in worship and thanksgiving for our God
who is greater than our understanding.

Open our eyes that we may see the truth that Christ reveals.

We come today in worship and thanksgiving for our God
who is more loving than our hearts can respond to.

**Help us to give ourselves to the worship of God today
so that we might perceive what God calls us to be.**

We come today in worship and thanksgiving for our God
who is wiser than we can know.

**Still our minds as we worship today
that we might discern what God is speaking to us.**

In Jesus, God chose to come to the world in humility.

God chose the path that the world saw as foolish.

God used what the world considered weak.

**On this day, may we see God more clearly,
love God more dearly, and follow God more nearly,
in the name of Christ in whom God is revealed. Amen.**

HYMN #577 God of Grace and God of Glory

OPENING PRAYER

O God, source of all beauty and goodness, your grace comes fresh every morning. In each new day you give us light. We praise you for your never-failing love that satisfies our needs and shows us the way to follow. We rejoice in your constant care, for you are faithful in your love for all people, offering the world salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Micah 6:1-8 *God's challenge to the people*

Hear what the Lord says: Rise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. ² Hear, you mountains, the case of the Lord, and you enduring foundations of the earth, for the Lord has a case against his people, and he will contend with Israel.

³ "O my people, what have I done to you? In what have I wearied you? Answer me! ⁴ For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. ⁵ O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised, what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the saving acts of the Lord."

⁶ "With what shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? ⁷ Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?

Psalms 15 **UMH 747** *Who abides with God?*
(Please respond with the words in bold.)

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 *The wisdom and power of God in Christ*

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

¹⁹ For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." ²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scholar? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of the proclamation, to save those who believe. ²² For Jews ask for signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³ but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to gentiles, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶ Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to abolish things that are, ²⁹ so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ In contrast, God is why you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

Matthew 5:1-12 *Attitudes for blessed living* (Please stand as you are able.)

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.

L: This is the word of the Lord for the people of Christ.

P: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Let us offer our silent confessions.)

Gracious and loving God, hear our prayer.

When despair and suffering overwhelm us, we cry out for you and yet often feel helpless and abandoned. We doubt your presence and your promises. We believe you have turned away from us. We cower in the dark and ask why you have forsaken us. In these moments, strengthen us in faith and fill our hearts with courage. Forgive us. Help us to trust in your strength in our weakness. Help us turn toward the light. We pray, in the name of Christ who showed us your presence with us. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

"The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting."

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

In the light of Jesus Christ, we are known, loved, and forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH United Church of Canada UMH 883

(Please stand as you are able)

GLORIA PATRI #70

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERING

<https://www.wnccumc.org/online-donations-to-churches>

DOXOLOGY #95

(Please stand as you are able)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise Him, all creatures here below.

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of Justice and Mercy, you do not ask for thousands of offerings or rivers of oil, only that we live with love, humility, and a hunger for what is right. Accept these gifts we bring—not as bargaining chips, but as signs of our desire to follow you. Use them and us to pour out kindness where the world is aching, to walk alongside the weary, and to bring your healing presence into troubled places. May our giving be our affirmation of your call, our response to your grace, and our witness to your hope. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

HYMN #629 You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

(Please respond with words in bold)

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The pastor gives thanks and remembers God's acts of salvation, concluding:

"...and so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn":

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

The pastor continues the thanksgiving. The institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled. The pastor concludes: "...and so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith":

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

The pastor invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit and then praises the Trinity, concluding: "...all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever." Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING THE BREAD

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

COMMUNION PRAYER

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves to others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #584 Lord, You Give the Great Commission
(Please stand as you are able)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE The Heavens Declare the Glory of God Benedetto Marcello
(Please be seated)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



In what year was the first Valentine's Day celebrated? **You will have to attend the Potluck Dinner on Monday, February 9th at 6pm to find out!** Bring a dish to share and your Valentine Trivia skills. Look forward to seeing you there!

PLEASE BE AWARE OF EMAIL SCAMS!

Our pastor, Marcus, has had several recent email scams sent out from email addresses that are not from him. Marcus uses marcus61dodson@gmail.com, marcus.dodson@hcahealthcare.com or pastor@laketoxawayumc.org as his email addresses. Please do

not allow yourself to be scammed as this is a national problem. Marcus will never request personal assistance or request you to hold a secret in an email format. Marcus made efforts to report the recent scam; unfortunately, email scams have become an epic issue with no resolution other than personal vigilance to suspicious emails.

Sunday Morning Bible Study meets at 8:45 am in the Minnich Conference room on Sundays, prior to worship. All are welcome! This is a 'come as you can' Bible Study and a study guide is provided. Don Henderson facilitates this group. Please reach out to him if you have questions at bacpac@comporium.net.

The next meeting on the Administrative Council will take place on Friday, February 13 at 10:00am here at the church.

The Prayer Ministry meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 9:30 AM. Prayer requests may be mailed to LTUMCPrayerRequests@gmail.com.

AA Meets Every Thursday Night at 4:45 PM in the Dice Hall. To honor anonymity, please do not go to the Parish building from 4:00-6:00 PM.

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Katie Monkus, daughter of Stan & Bobbie Moore,
Charlotte Gilmore; Cody Collins, Sherry Minnich

STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS

Pastor: Marcus Dodson: 828-553-0282, marcus61dodson@gmail.com

Organist: Bob Kintner: 828-329-2457

Lay Leaders: Paula Markert: 828-553-9434, Maria Buehler: 828-553-2128

Audio/Visual & Livestream: Joe Haraschak: 813-918-1916

Ushers: Fred Markert, Maria Buehler

Liturgist: Tom Blackstock

Coffee Hour: Beth Holimon and Anita Harvill

Liturgical selections are adapted from umcdiscipleship.org resources, re:worship.