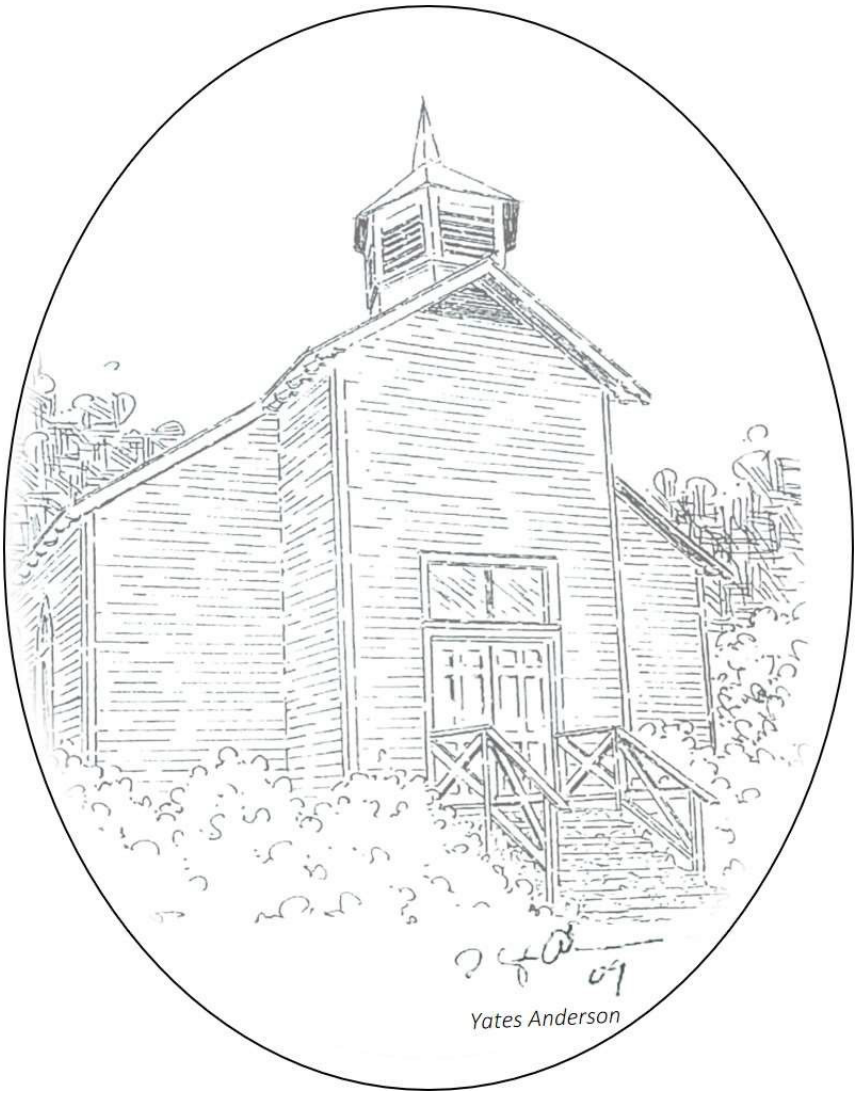

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church

17th Sunday after Pentecost

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
September 20, 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.

17th Sunday after Pentecost

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE Larghetto from Sonata IV for Flute G. F. Handel
Arr. for Organ

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

In times of joy and rest when we feel
the peace of God's presence deep in our bones…
we gather to share in the joy
of God's goodness and provision.
In times of conflict and distress when we feel
just how hard it is to live in unity together…
we gather to hear again the call to work side by side
with care and compassion.
Disciples of Christ, come, let us worship God
who empowers us to press on…
as we learn to live as the people of God,
following in the way of Christ.

HYMN #731 Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

OPENING PRAYER

Holy God, we enter your presence with thanksgiving and hope. You have formed us as your people. You join us on the journey of life to expansive mountaintops, through valleys of uncertainty, and on the plains of daily living. Wherever we are, may we set our attention on you and seek your wisdom, encouragement, and grace. Reveal your will to us as we worship your holy name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Exodus 16:1-15 *Manna in the wilderness*

The whole congregation of the Israelites set out from Elim and came to
the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth
day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt.
2 The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and
Aaron in the wilderness. **3** The Israelites said to them, "If only we had
died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the
pots of meat and ate our fill of bread, for you have brought us out into
this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

4 Then the Lord said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for
you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that
day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction
or not. **5** On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will
be twice as much as they gather on other days." **6** So Moses and Aaron
said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you shall know that it was the
Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt, **7** and in the morning you
shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your complaining
against the Lord. For what are we, that you complain against us?" **8** And
Moses said, "When the Lord gives you meat to eat in the evening and
your fill of bread in the morning, because the Lord has heard the
complaining that you utter against him—what are we? Your complaining
is not against us but against the Lord."

9 Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the
Israelites: 'Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.'"
10 And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they
looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the
cloud. **11** The Lord spoke to Moses, **12** "I have heard the complaining of
the Israelites; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the
morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am
the Lord your God.'"

13 In the evening quails came up and covered the camp, and in the
morning, there was a layer of dew around the camp. **14** When the layer
of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky
substance, as fine as frost on the ground. **15** When the Israelites saw it,
they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it
was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the Lord has given you to
eat.

Psalm 105:1-7a, 37-45 *God has led his people*

(Please respond with the words in bold)

1 O give thanks to the Lord; call on his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples.
2 **Sing to him, sing praises to him;**
tell of all his wonderful works.
3 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.
4 **Seek the Lord and his strength;**
seek his presence continually.
5 Remember the wonderful works he has done,
his miracles and the judgments he has uttered,
6 **O offspring of his servant Abraham,**
children of Jacob, his chosen ones.
7 **He is the Lord our God;**

37 Then he brought Israel out with silver and gold,
and there was no one among their tribes who stumbled.
38 **Egypt was glad when they departed,**
for dread of them had fallen upon it.
39 He spread a cloud for a covering
and fire to give light by night.
40 **They asked, and he brought quails**
and gave them food from heaven in abundance.
41 He opened the rock, and water gushed out;
it flowed through the desert like a river.
42 **For he remembered his holy promise**
and Abraham, his servant.
43 So he brought his people out with joy,
his chosen ones with singing.
44 **He gave them the lands of the nations,**
and they took possession of the wealth of the peoples,
45 that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws.
Praise the Lord!

Philippians 1:21-30 *Live a life worthy of Christ*

For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. **22** If I am to live in the flesh,
that means fruitful labor for me, yet I cannot say which I will choose.
23 I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be
with Christ, for that is far better, **24** but to remain in the flesh is more
necessary for you. **25** Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will
remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith,

26 so that, by my presence again with you, your boast might abound in Christ Jesus because of me. **27** Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel **28** and in no way frightened by those opposing you. For them, this is evidence of their destruction but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. **29** For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ but of suffering for him as well, **30** since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Matthew 20:1-16 *A parable of God's grace to all*
(Please stand as you are able.)

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. **2** After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.

When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, **4** and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. **5** When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. **6** And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' **7** They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'

8 When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' **9** When those hired at about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. **10** Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. **11** And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, **12** saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' **13** But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? **14** Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. **15** Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?'

16 So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

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.)

God of Grace, it seems we cannot decide who we are or what we are called to be. We say we will live to serve others but end up meeting only our needs. We claim to live in a way that honors Christ, but we do consider the way of Christ at work or school, in our community or our homes. We believe that the gospel can transform lives, but not our own. We seek your guidance, until the way becomes difficult or uncertain. Forgive us, God. You know us and walk with us. You hear our words of praise and our murmurs of complaint. Instead of grumblers, may we become ambassadors of grace. Instead of continual complaining, may we carry compassion to the hurting. Instead of being whiners, always nit-picking about what is wrong, may we be workers with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, to reach out and bring the kingdom of God to everyone we meet. Help us follow your way, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

We continue to believe that we must earn our way into God's heart.
But God's grace is given to each of us and all of us,
freely, unconditionally, always.
**God has kept the covenant. We have been forgiven. We have been made new, through God's provision and power.
Thanks be to God. Amen.**

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH UMH 882 The Apostles' Creed
(Please stand as you are able) **Ecumenical Version**

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.**

HYMN #553 And Are We Yet Alive

OFFERTORY Allegro G. F. Handel

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

Steadfast God, we claim that, for us, to live is Christ. Our identity is in you. In every season, you hold us, and in every struggle, you knit us together as one body. Receive these gifts as signs that we choose to stand firm, striving with each other and you for the building of your kingdom of hope and peace. Use what we offer today and every day to encourage the weary, strengthen your church, and bear witness that love is stronger than fear. Shape our common life to be worthy of the gospel, until our unity itself proclaims your grace. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN #581 Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Toccata in E Minor Johann Pachelbel
(Please be seated)

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Hallie Colantonio, granddaughter of Stephen & Cynthia Wood,
Laura & Woody Livingston, Gary Landrum, Carl Shealey,
Bobbi Moore, Jim Ditzel, Jay Buehler, Carole Guffey,
Sally Steinmeyer, Randall Galloway, Ed Byrd

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The flowers on the altar are given by Bob and Lee Cowan in honor of God and the blessing of sharing the past 40 years together (anniversary was September 12).

Would you like to become a lay reader? Our current schedule of readers will be ending in mid-October. A new schedule will be made in the coming week to carry us through the winter until next March/Easter. Please contact Kim Dodson at kidods2061@gmail.com if you would like to be included on this schedule, including dates you are likely NOT available. It is a gift to hear a variety of voices in worship and we appreciate those who share in the leadership of worship in this way.

Memorial Garden Construction Has Begun!
We are excited that the updates for the Memorial Garden have finally moved from the dream stage to actual construction. You will notice that work has begun. In the coming weeks, you may notice some adjustments to our traffic patterns in entering the church or Fellowship Hall. However, these should cause little disruption as we watch the evolution of the new design and the additional opportunities for prayer, reflection, and internment that our updated memorial garden will provide to our church and community. We will share updates periodically on the progression and we will watch it together as we gather each week. We celebrate the gifts of funding, talent and time that are making this possible all offered to the glory of God. If you have concerns during the construction, please direct them to Mike Taylor, Chair of Trustees. He will manage the design team and communicate weekly with them.

Name Tags--If any church attendees need a name tag, please contact Fred Markert at 828-553-3303 or let him know when you see him.

Sunday Morning Bible Study meets at 8:45am on Sundays. All are welcome! This is a 'come as you can' Bible Study and a study guide is provided.

The Prayer Ministry meets every Sunday after church at 11:30 in the Minnich conference room. Anyone is invited to join us on any given week as we lift up the prayer concerns of our community. 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 4-6 PM.

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
Usher: Joe Haraschak
Liturgist: Brian Singleton
Coffee Hour: Marilyn Beck
Liturgical selections are adapted from umcdiscipleship.