

# Peace



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church  
2nd Sunday of Advent*

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church  
Community Worship Service & Communion  
December 7, 2025**



*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.***

***2nd Sunday of Advent***

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**RINGING OF THE BELL**

**PRELUDE**      Behold, A Rose Is Blooming      Johannes Brahms

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

Beloved, we gather to remember who we are, not who the world tells us to be.

**Come, O come, Emmanuel**

We recall the story of God's people, how God has called us to live in peace and righteousness in a world full of conflict and twisted morality.

**Come, O come, Emmanuel**

We recount the story of our journey with God, the moments of God's provision, God's prodding, and God's prophetic guidance.

**Come, O come, Emmanuel**

We gather to repent and return anew to God's story that guides our lives to work for peace and flourishing for all God's creation.

**Come, O come, Emmanuel, that the shadows may be dispersed and your holy light may shine.**

**HYMN** *(see insert)* Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE** *(Please be seated)*

Reader: Advent reminds us that we are people who share a story, the story of Jesus, who enacts peace by judging in favor of the poor and deciding with equity for the meek of the earth. We long for the day when "the wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them." (*Isaiah 11:6*)

**All: Today, we choose to live the story of peace, believing that true peace comes when we seek the flourishing of all God's creation.**

Reader: We light this candle of peace as a sign of our commitment to bring Light to the places the world seeks to hide until that day when all creation lives together in harmony and abundance.

*Light the first candle of the Advent wreath.*

### **Advent Prayer**

Let us pray together: **God of all that was, and is, and is to come, you are the God who offers peace. As we journey through this Advent season, cause us to remember that, regardless of our circumstances or our situations, we can experience a Christmas free from turmoil and chaos. In Jesus, you offer us peace that passes understanding. Keep us in perfect peace as our mind stays on the truth of your powerful love for us and for all. Thank you for your mighty, sovereign hand. Help us to trust fully in you and rest in the peace that you offer. We pray in the name of Christ, our Prince of Peace, Amen.**

## **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Isaiah 11:1-10** *The one who will bring justice and peace*

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.<sup>2</sup> The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. <sup>3</sup> His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see or decide by what his ears hear, <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup> Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist and faithfulness the belt around his loins. <sup>6</sup> The wolf shall live with the

lamb; the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the lion will feed together, and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup> They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. <sup>10</sup> On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

**Psalm 72: 1-8, 15-17    UMH 795    *The righteous shall flourish***  
*(Please respond with the words in bold.)*

**Romans 15:4-13    *Hope for peace and harmony***

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. <sup>5</sup> May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>7</sup> Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. <sup>8</sup> For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the ancestors <sup>9</sup> and that the gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, "Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name"; <sup>10</sup> and again he says, "Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people"; <sup>11</sup> and again, "Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him"; <sup>12</sup> and again Isaiah says, "The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope."

<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Matthew 3:1-12    *Prepare the Way of the Lord***  
*(Please stand as you are able.)*

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, <sup>2</sup> "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." <sup>3</sup> This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'" <sup>4</sup> Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region around the

Jordan were going out to him, <sup>6</sup> and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

<sup>7</sup> But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, <sup>9</sup> and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>10</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore, every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>11</sup> "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

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.)*

**O God, when our faith is rooted deeply in you, our lives reflect your kingdom values of justice and righteousness. But too often our lives become so entangled with the values of the world, that your values take second place. Forgive us, O God, and reconnect us to your Spirit, our source of power and life. Merciful God, strip our hearts all that prevents our lives from being firmly rooted in you. May our lives bear good fruit as we watch and wait for your breaking into our world once more, in the person of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

### **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Blessed be the Lord our God, who does wondrous things, the most wondrous of all being God's entry into our world in Jesus Christ, "not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him." *(John 3:17)*

**In the name of Christ, the one who comes to dwell among us, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

**STATEMENT OF FAITH UMH 883** United Church of Canada  
*(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**

**OFFERTORY**

People Look East

Judson Trebor

**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**

**Persistent God of new paths, we have been called to prepare the way—not with platitudes, but with changed hearts and lives. In this season of anticipation and turning, we offer these gifts as signs that we long to live in your story. Use them and use us to bear fruit worthy of repentance: fruit of justice, compassion, hospitality, and peace. Let our generosity reflect the nearness of your kingdom and the urgency of your call. In the wilderness of fear and want, may this offering clear a path for hope to be seen, joy to be known, and peace to be shared. In the name of the one who is coming and is already among us—Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**HYMN OF PREPARATION #626**

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

**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 #209**    Blessed Be the God of Israel

## **BENEDICTION**

### **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #393**

### **POSTLUDE**

Improvisation

*(Please be seated)*

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### **STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS**

Pastor: Marcus Dodson: 828-553-0282, [marcus61dodson@gmail.com](mailto: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

Liturgist: Beth Holimon    Advent Candle: Fred & Paula Markert

Coffee Hour\*: Jay and Maria Buehler

\*Volunteers needed next 2 weeks—see chart in FH

*Liturgical selections adapted from [umcdiscipleship.org](http://umcdiscipleship.org) resources.*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Advent Bible Study-open to all!** The 3<sup>rd</sup> week of our Advent study continues this Tuesday at 10:00am. All are welcome to jump in and join us. Please contact Kim at [mldkjd@comporium.net](mailto:mldkjd@comporium.net) for more information.

**Sunday Morning Bible Study** meets before worship at 8:45 am in the Minnich Conference room. All are welcome! This is a 'come as you can' Bible Study and a study guide is provided. Don Henderson facilitates this group.

**Christmas Eve Services** will be held at **5:00pm** this year.

Invite family and friends. Casual dress.

We look forward to sharing this holy celebration with you.

### **Year-End Gifts**

If you are planning on mailing a year-end gift, please be sure to use our mailing address: **Lake Toxaway UMC, P.O. Box 83, Lake Toxaway, NC 28747**. Please let the church know if your winter address has changed by sending an email to [pastor@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:pastor@laketoxawayumc.org) to ensure your 2025 giving statement gets to you for your taxes. Giving statements will be mailed in the early part of 2026.

**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](mailto:LTUMCPrayerRequests@gmail.com). We will not be meeting on December 25<sup>th</sup> but welcome your prayer concerns.

### **Invitation to Become a Scripture Reader for Worship in 2026**

We are inviting anyone interested to become a scripture reader for worship in the new year. Contact Kim at [mldkjd@comporium.net](mailto:mldkjd@comporium.net) or text 828-553-0283 to express your interest. She will work with Marcus to plan a schedule that works for you. Thank you for sharing your gifts in this way.

**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.

### **An Update from Saunders Grommesh**

*Matt and Saunders are grateful to share that Saunders is now home after an extended period of recovery. While this has been a challenging season, they are thankful for steady progress and for the prayers and support of their church family. They wish to express heartfelt appreciation for the many cards, texts, the angel ornament, love offerings, and the generous care shown to them throughout this time.*

*Matt and Saunders hope to attend a Sunday service soon. Saunders is continuing to regain strength, and they look forward to greeting the congregation before worship as they are able.*

*They send their love and wish everyone a meaningful Advent season filled with hope and the anticipation of Christ's coming.*

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## **PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY**

Charlotte Gilmore; Those missing loved ones during this season