



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Second Sunday of Advent, December 8th, 2024*

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
Second Sunday of Advent, December 8th

10:00 A.M. Livestream is available on the LTUMC YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgtuJe20i8DN7S_Cfg1sWCq

RINGING OF THE BELL – *Please observe silence as we prepare for the service.*

PRELUDE

Now Thank We All Our God/ Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Please stand as you are able*)

Children of God, prepare the way! The Word of God is coming!

We come to listen and receive God's Word among us.

Children of God, the prophets call to us now and from generations past, urging us to prepare and refine our hearts for the coming of the Word of God. Are you listening?

We come to listen and prepare to receive God's Word among us.

Children of God, this is the mark of our preparation: that passion for God's Word would burn within us, cleansing us and renewing us to reflect God's love throughout the world.

May God ignite our passion for God's Word that has come among us as we listen, prepare, and receive all that God has for us today. Amen.

HYMN #220

Angels from the Realms of Glory
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH

Reader 1: *Today we light two candles- the first Candle is called HOPE and it is a reminder that God's promises are true.*

Reader 2: *The second Candle is called PEACE, God's gentle loving peace for our lives.*

Reader1: *We seek God's peace in this time of stress.*

Reader 2: *Come, all is ready. Let the light of these candles, called HOPE and PEACE, bring brightness to your spirits.*

(Light two blue candles of the Advent wreath.)

OPENING PRAYER *(Please be seated)*

Compassionate God, greet us with your grace this day, for we need you. We cannot save ourselves. Though we may be frantic with activity, our efforts do not yield peace; peace as you can give. Today we would be quiet enough to hear your voice. Today we would be still enough to feel your touch. Help us to find that place where we can receive as well as give, wait as well as act, and listen as well as speak. We need your peace. Let us come before you and learn your ways. Come to us now, through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Baruch 5:1-9 - The return of scattered Israel

- 5:1 Take off the garment of your sorrow and affliction, O Jerusalem, and put on forever the beauty of the glory from God.
- 5:2 Put on the robe of the righteousness that comes from God; put on your head the diadem of the glory of the Everlasting,
- 5:3 for God will show your splendor everywhere under heaven,
- 5:4 for God will give you evermore the name, "Righteous Peace, Godly Glory."
- 5:5 Arise, O Jerusalem, stand upon the height; look toward the east, and see your children gathered from west and east at the word of the Holy One, rejoicing that God has remembered them.
- 5:6 For they went out from you on foot, led away by their enemies, but God will bring them back to you, carried in glory, as on a royal throne.
- 5:7 For God has ordered that every high mountain and the everlasting hills be made low and the valleys filled up, to make level ground, so that Israel may walk safely in the glory of God.
- 5:8 The woods and every fragrant tree have shaded Israel at God's command.
- 5:9 For God will lead Israel with joy, in the light of his glory, with the mercy and righteousness that come from him.

Luke 1:68-79 - God's tender compassion (Psalter Lesson)

(Please read the bold text)

- 1:68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.
- 1:69 He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his child David,**
- 1:70 as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
- 1:71 that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.**
- 1:72 Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors and has remembered his holy covenant,

1:73 the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us

1:74 that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

1:75 in holiness and righteousness in his presence all our days.

1:76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

1:77 to give his people knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.

1:78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us,

1:79 to shine upon those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Philippians 1:3-11 - A harvest of righteousness (Epistle Reading)

1:3 I thank my God for every remembrance of you,

1:4 always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy

1:5 for your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

1:6 I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work in you will continue to complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.

1:7 It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because I hold you in my heart, for all of you are my partners in God's grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

1:8 For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the tender affection of Christ Jesus.

1:9 And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight

1:10 to help you to determine what really matters, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless,

1:11 having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Luke 3:1-6 - Prepare the way of the Lord (Gospel)

(Please stand as you are able)

3:1 In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene,

3:2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness.

- 3:3 He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,
- 3:4 as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.
- 3:5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth,
- 3:6 and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

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

P: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Please be seated)*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Let us offer our silent confessions.)

Lord, hear us this day as we open our hearts and our spirits to you. These times in which we live are often confusing and fearful. We are pushed to make preparations for a season which is supposed to bring hope and peace; yet we crowd it with obligations and stresses and shut the door to your healing love and compassion. We find ourselves being on edge, fretful, wondering if we have done enough, can do enough. You answer our fears with your voice, "Peace, be still". Help us to hear you. Slow us down. Encourage us to take some time to listen rather than shout, to stop and rest rather than run. Cause us to look around at situations and people who are in need and to place our focus on helping them. For it is in helping your people and reaching out in love that we will find true peace. These things we pray, in Jesus' Name. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Jesus said, "I am bring you peace, not the kind of peace the world would give to you. My peace I give to you, now and forever." Be at peace. Know God's love is given for you. AMEN.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Amen!

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH #883 *(United Church of Canada – Please stand as you are able)*

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

***who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.***

We trust in God.

***We are called to be the church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God. Amen.***

GLORIA PATRI (UMH #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 #213

Lift Up Heads, Ye Mighty Gates
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY

God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

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***

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING (Please continue standing)

Loving God, in this Advent season, we bring our offerings with hearts open to your call. Just as John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, may our gifts help prepare the way for your kingdom. Use these offerings to bring hope and transformation. Help us to look beyond the surface, to see your work in surprising places and people. Bless our giving, that it may shine with the presence of Emmanuel. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Please be seated)

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN #382 (Please stand as you are able)

Have Thine Own Way, Lord
Located in the back of the bulletin - (printed w/permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (Please be seated)

For All the Saints

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flowers on the Altar

The flowers on the altar are given by the Patterson family in loving memory of Robert Patterson.

Christmas Eve Service

Our candle light Christmas Eve service will be Tuesday, December 24th at 7:00 PM.

Thank you

Thank you to all who decorated the church for Advent and Christmas.

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Please pray for those who have long-term illness, health concerns and special intentions. Especially for Thomas Blackstock and his last treatment this month.

Please pray for those having or had a surgery and their recovery.

Our heartfelt prayers for all who have experienced the recent passing of a loved one. Especially for the Patterson family.

Please continue to pray for our student scholars taking finals and traveling home for Christmas, our local students, teachers and staff.

STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS

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

Organist: Kathy Palmer

Church Administrator: Saunders Grommesh, 469-569-2314, administrator@laketoxawayumc.org

Lay Leaders: Paula Markert: 828-553-9434 & Scott Walter: 314-374-2969

Audio/Visual for Livestream Chair: Joe Haraschak: 813-918-1916

Liturgist: John Lefler

Hymns are located on the next few pages and used with permission via One License #737113-A

220 Angels from the Realms of Glory

1. An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er
 2. Shep-herds, in the field a - bid - ing, watch-ing o'er your
 3. Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions
 4. Saints, be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch-ing long in

all the earth; ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry
 flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing;
 beam a - far; seek the great De - sire of na - tions;
 hope and fear; sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,

Refrain

now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
 yon - der shines the in - fant light: Come and wor - ship,
 ye have seen his na - tal star:
 in his tem - ple shall ap - pear:

come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

WORDS: James Montgomery, 1816 (Lk. 2:8-20; Mt. 2:1-12; Mal. 3:1)
 MUSIC: Henry T. Smart, 1867

REGENT SQUARE
 87.87.87

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates 213

1. Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates;
 2. Fling wide the por - tals of your heart;
 3. Re - deem - er, come, with us a - bide;
 4. Thy Ho - ly Spir - it lead us on

be - hold, the King of glo - ry waits;
 make it a tem - ple, set a - part
 our hearts to thee we o - pen wide;
 un - til our glo - rious goal is won;

the King of kings is draw - ing near;
 from earth - ly use for heaven's em - ploy,
 let us thy in - ner pres - ence feel;
 e - ter - nal praise, e - ter - nal fame

the Sav - ior of the world is here!
 a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
 thy grace and love in us re - veal.
 be of - fered, Sav - ior, to thy name!

WORDS: Georg Weissel, 1642; trans. by Catherine Winkworth, 1855 (Ps. 24)
 MUSIC: *Psalmodia Evangelica*, 1789

TRURO
 LM

382 Have Thine Own Way, Lord

1. - 4. Have thine own way, Lord! Have thine own way!

Thou art the pot - ter; I am the clay.
 Search me and try me, Sav - ior to - day!
 Wound - ed and wea - ry, help me I pray!
 Hold o'er my be - ing ab - so - lute sway.

Mold me and make me af - ter thy will,
 Wash me just now, Lord, wash me just now,
 Pow - er, all pow - er, sure - ly is thine!
 Fill with thy Spir - it till all shall see

while I am wait - ing, yield - ed and still.
 as in thy pres - ence hum - bly I bow.
 Touch me and heal me, Sav - ior di - vine!
 Christ on - ly, al - ways, liv - ing in me!

WORDS: Adelaide A. Pollard, 1902 (Jer. 18:6)
 MUSIC: George C. Stebbins, 1907

ADELAIDE
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