



Lake Toxarway United Methodist Church
March 23rd, 2025

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
Third Sunday in Lent, March 23th

10:00 A.M. Livestream is available on the LTUMC YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgtuJe20i8DN7S_Cfg1sWCg

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

PRELUDE

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need Setting by John Carter

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

Children of God, what has God done for you?

God saves, provides, and holds us in God's steadfast love.

Consider and remember: in the joyful times and in the sorrowful times, what has God done for you?

God covers us and lifts us up, protecting and empowering us with steadfast love.

When you have been like the fig tree in Jesus' story that seems unable to produce and that everyone has given up on, what has God done for you?

God tends the soil and waters the ground, nurturing us into life with steadfast love.

Children of God, come, let us worship God who never gives up on us!

We come to worship and cling to God, for God's steadfast love never fails!

HYMN #381

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

OPENING PRAYER (*Please be seated*)

***God who offers us water,
even in the wilderness we have become comfortable.
As you did to your Prophet Isaiah,
direct our gaze toward the path to which you call us.
Come into this place and bless this, our worship of you.
Hear our praise and receive our attention
as we pray, sing, listen, speak, and discern
according to your Holy Spirit.
Come into this place, Holy God,
and turn us aside that we may go out into the world
and continue our worship of you. Amen.***

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 55:1-9 - *Come to the water*

- 55:1 Hear, everyone who thirsts; come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.
- 55:2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread and your earnings for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.
- 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.
- 55:4 See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples.
- 55:5 Now you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.
- 55:6 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near;
- 55:7 let the wicked forsake their way and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
- 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.
- 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Psalms 63:1-8 - *O God, eagerly I seek you (Psalter Lesson)* *(UMH Pg. 788) (Please read the bold text)*

- 63:1 O God, you are my God; I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where no water is.
- 63:2 So, I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.**
- 63:3 Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.
- 63:4 So, I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name.**
- 63:5 My soul is feasted as with marrow and fat, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips,

63:6 when I think of you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night;

63:7 for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.

63:8 My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me.

1 Corinthians 10:1-13 - Israel, baptized in cloud and seas (Epistle Reading)

10:1 I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea,

10:2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

10:3 and all ate the same spiritual food,

10:4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ.

10:5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

10:6 Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did.

10:7 Do not become idolaters as some of them did, as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play."

10:8 We must not engage in sexual immorality, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day.

10:9 We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents.

10:10 And do not complain, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

10:11 These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

10:12 So, if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.

10:13 No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Luke 13:1-9 - The parable of the fig tree (Gospel)

(Please stand as you are able)

- 13:1 At that very time there were some present who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.
- 13:2 He asked them, "Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans?"
- 13:3 No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.
- 13:4 Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them--do you think that they were worse offenders than all the other people living in Jerusalem?"
- 13:5 No, I tell you, but unless you repent you will all perish just as they did."
- 13:6 Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none.
- 13:7 So, he said to the man working the vineyard, 'See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?'
- 13:8 He replied, 'Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig around it and put manure on it.
- 13:9 If it bears fruit next year, well and good, but if not, you can cut it down.'"

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.)

Holy God,

We confess that we have not always brought forth good fruit.

In the midst of chaos and frenzy, we have often lost our way.

Our feet have strayed from the place where we met you.

Our egos have kept us from noticing our missteps;

Yet, with you, we know there's another chance for change.

There is another opportunity to bear good fruit

In a world full of spoiled and rotten produce,

we are called to be the channel of Your grace that sustains generations.

Enable us to lean into Your love as we seek your forgiveness. We offer this prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

*God's grace and mercy abounds.
God is with us in the change.
God's everlasting arms embrace us.
Each of us is beloved, affirmed, and set free.*

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

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH #882 (Apostles' Creed, Ecumenical Version)

(Please stand as able)

***I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.***

***I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.***

***I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. 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 #361

Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY

Reflections on "O Perfect Love" Setting by John Carter

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)*

Faithful God, our guide and sustainer, as we offer these gifts, may they bear fruit for your kingdom. In this solemn season of Lent, we remember your call to repentance and renewal. Help us tend the soil of our hearts so that we may grow in faith and bear witness to your grace. Use these offerings to bring hope to those in need and light to those in darkness. May we live as your fruitful servants, trusting in your abundant mercy. In the name of Christ who calls us to new life, 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 #340 *(Please stand as you are able)*

Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy
Located in the back of the bulletin - (printed w/permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *(Please be seated)*

How Firm a Foundation Arr. by Cindy Berry

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flowers on the Altar

The flowers on the altar for January, February and March are from **Paula and Fred Markert and Jim and Beth Holimon in memory of their mothers.**

Spring Bible Study

The **Spring Bible Study** is **Sunday mornings, at 8:45 AM** in the **Bill Minnich Conference room**. This is a come as you can Bible Study and a study guide will be provided. **It will be led by Don Henderson**. Please reach out to him if you have questions at bacpac@comporium.net.

Missions Committee Announces Emergency Grant Awarded

The Missions Committee (formerly known as the Outreach Committee) is pleased to announce that, at their March meeting, an emergency grant of \$5,000 was awarded to North Toxaway Baptist Church (NTBC) for Disaster Relief. They are performing a worthwhile service of feeding victims of the storm and volunteers helping with storm recovery. To date, they have served over 8000 meals, a worthy endeavor. NTBC is one of LTUMC's Mission partners, though this grant was in addition to the monies we have awarded them towards their great Food Pantry ministry.

LTUMC Name Tags

We are ordering name tags. If you need one, please email Saunders at administrator@laketoxawayumc.org. They are magnet backs unless you need a pin back. Please specify which type you need.

No More Hymns in Bulletins & on Our Website

After April 20 (Easter Sunday), the weekly email of the bulletin will no longer include the hymn texts with music. The Church Website will not have the hymns either. If you participate at home and sign the hymns or follow in the hymnal, Pastor Marcus would like to suggest you go to www.Cokesbury.com and search for the UMC hymnal and purchase one for home use. The hymnals are available at a cost of \$28.99; there is a large print version also. There will be additional costs related to shipping and taxes. This change is prompted by a need to be in compliance with copyright laws. Pastor Marcus polled several regular on-line worshippers and learned most do not use the hymns, but we wanted to give you advance notice so you could have the hymnal to join in singing if you desire.

Flowers & Coffee Hour Sign-Up Calendars

The sign-up calendars are located in the Parish Hall. **For Coffee Hour, please reach out to Nancee Salyer at nsalyer331@aol.com and for Flowers please e-mail Beth Holimon at roxy1011@gmail.com and for flower wording for the bulletin please reach out to Saunders before 5:00 PM the Wednesday prior.**

Prayer Ministry

The **Prayer Ministry** meets the **2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 9:30 AM** in the church. If you have a prayer request and cannot make it in person, please e-mail it to LTUMCPrayerRequests@gmail.com

AA Meetings Thursday Nights

The weekly AA meeting is every Thursday at 4:45 PM in the Dice Hall. In an effort to honor anonymity, please do not go to the **Parish building from 4:15 PM – 6:00 PM on Thursdays.**

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Please pray for those who have long-term illness, health concerns and special intentions. We pray for Tacia Butz who is healing from an accident while hiking.

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. We especially pray for Nancy & Don Henderson. Nancy Henderson's cousin, for whom she was guardian, died unexpectedly this week. His name is Mike Harrison.

We pray for Tom and Kay Blackstock and Hallie, their daughter & her family as they grieve the loss of Thomas. Thomas Blackstock died Thursday evening, 3/20/25 after his valiant fight with cancer. He was home with his family and dogs during his final days. Thomas was able to open some of the cars and cards you sent him. Kay and Tom are thankful to the entire congregation for all of your prayers and support throughout this very difficult period of time. Their address is: Tom & Kay Blackstock, 208 Hidden Ln. #58, Sapphire, NC 28774.

Please continue to pray for our student scholars, our local students, teachers and staff.

STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS

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

Pianist/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

Livestream Chair: Joe Haraschak: 813-918-1916

Liturgist: Scott Walter

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

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

1. Sav - ior, like a shep-herd lead us,
 2. We are thine, thou dost be - friend us,
 3. Thou hast prom - ised to re - ceive us,
 4. Ear - ly let us seek thy fa - vor,

3

much we need thy ten - der care;
 be the guard - ian of our way;
 poor and sin - ful though we be;
 ear - ly let us do thy will;

5

in thy pleas - ant pas - tures feed us,
 keep thy flock, from sin de - fend us,
 thou hast mer - cy to re - lieve us,
 bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior,

United Methodist Hymnal 381

WORDS: Arr. by Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1858 (Ec. 10:1-29)

MUSIC (BRADBURY 87-87 D): William B. Bradbury, 1859

7

for our use thy folds pre-
pare. Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed
seek us when we go a-stray. Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed
grace to cleanse and power to free. Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed
with thy love our bos-oms fill. Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed

10

Je-sus! Thou hast bought us, thine we are. Bless-ed Je-sus,
Je-sus! Hear, O hear us when we pray. Bless-ed Je-sus,
Je-sus! We will ear - ly turn to thee. Bless-ed Je-sus,
Je-sus! Thou hast loved us, love us still. Bless-ed Je-sus,

bless-ed Je-sus! Thou hast bought us, thine we are.
bless-ed Je-sus! Hear, O hear us when we pray.
bless-ed Je-sus! We will ear - ly turn to thee.
bless-ed Je-sus! Thou hast loved us, love us still.

United Methodist Hymnal 381
 WORDS: Atr. to Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1836 (Jn. 10:1-29)
 MUSIC (BRADBURY 87.87 D): William B. Bradbury, 1859

361 Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

1. Rock of A - ges, cleft for me, let me
 2. Not the la - bors of my hands can ful -
 3. Noth - ing in my hand I bring, sim - ply
 4. While I draw this fleet - ing breath, when mine

hide my - self in thee; let the wa - ter and the blood,
 fill thy law's de - mands; could my zeal no res - pite know,
 to the cross I cling; na - ked, come to thee for dress;
 eyes shall close in death, when I soar to worlds un - known,

from thy wound - ed side which flowed, be of sin the
 could my tears for - ev - er flow, all for sin could
 help - less, look to thee for grace; foul, I to the
 see thee on thy judg - ment throne, Rock of A - ges,

dou - ble cure; save from wrath and make me pure.
 not a - tone; thou must save, and thou a - lone.
 foun - tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die.
 cleft for me, let me hide my - self in thee.

WORDS: Augustus M. Toplady, 1776
 MUSIC: Thomas Hastings, 1830

TOPLADY
 77.77.77

#340

Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy

1 Come ye sin - ners, — poor and nee - dy, Weak and woun - ded, — sick and sore;
 2 Come, ye thir - sty, — come and wel - come, God's free boun - ty — glo - ri - fy;
 3 Come ye wea - ry, — hea - vy - la - den, Lost and ru - ined — by the fall;
 4 Let not cons - cience make you lin - ger, Nor of fit - ness — fond - ly dream;

Je - sus read - y stands to save_ you, Full of pi - ty, — love and pow'r.
 True be - lief_ and true re - pen - tance, Ev' - ry grace that_ brings you nigh.
 If you tar - ry till you're bet - ter, You will ne - ver_ come at all.
 All the fit - ness He re - qui - reth Is to feel_ your_ need of Him.

Chorus

I will a - rise and_ go to Je - sus, He will em - brace me_ in His arms;

In the arms_ of my dear Sa - vior, O there are_ ten_ thou - sand charms.

Text: Joseph Hart (1712-1768);
 Refrain, Anonymous
 Tune: Walker's *Southern Harmony*

87 87 Refrain
 RESTORATION