



Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Sunday, January 3rd, 2021

Dear Lake Toxaway UMC family and friends,

The Gospel Lesson for this week always remains one of my favorite readings of the Christmas story. Actually, the readings are reserved for Epiphany which is celebrated on January 6, 12 days after Christmas. I chose to use the Epiphany readings today and celebrate Epiphany and then to have the readings next Sunday of Jesus' baptism.

The entire story of the Incarnation of Jesus in Matthew's gospel has a different tone than the story we read in Luke's gospel. Dreams are used as a primary way for God to communicate to Joseph and now the Magi or Wise Men about their responses to the Divine Birth.

The phrase that captures my attention this week is "having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they (the Magi) left for their own country by another road (Matthew 2:12)." The Magi followed a star to Bethlehem; they saw Mary and Jesus. Then as a result of the warning received in a dream, they took a different road home.

I live in a neighborhood where I can approach our home by several roads. I admittedly have a familiar and usual route: down Country Club Rd, right on Country Club Circle, bear right up the hill on Evergreen Street and take the first driveway on the left into our detached garage. It is the backside approach to our home; I never catch a glimpse of the front of our home on Ridgewood Place (our home is on a corner lot and has 2 driveways). I also make this usual trip without any thought or consideration. Interestingly, Kim takes another approach to our home and always get the front view of our home. Enough about my driving patterns to my home.

Perhaps, we all might ask ourselves what road God is leading us to take in our personal and church journey. In many ways, we have been on a different road since the pandemic began. Is this the road we are called to continue to take; we will deal with the pandemic for many additional months according to the infectious disease experts. I think this road would be a short-sided road to take.

Now in the calm after the Christmas rush, I am reassured and reminded how God speaks to us: in Scripture, in dreams, in words of other Christians, in music... God invites us to find another road in our continued journey of following Jesus. Perhaps, God will lead some of us to an honest assessment of our journeys and invite us to open time to commit ourselves to areas of new service, to examine our core beliefs about God and allow the Spirit to work anew in understanding these documents. Perhaps God will lead us away from the powerful "herods" and back to our interdependence upon the Christian community and our trust in God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Please join me in prayerful exploration of what new or different roads God might invite us to take in our journey of faith in this new calendar year.

I serve joyfully among you and seek to be faithful with you!

Marcus

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
Second Sunday after Christmas January 3rd with readings
for the Epiphany January 6th 2021**

9:30 A.M. Livestream link: <https://youtu.be/eBlfE34DqoY>

PRELUDE

Go Tell It on the Mountain arr. James Biery

GREETING

*Radiant Morning Star,
you are both guidance and mystery,
Visit our rest with disturbing dreams,
and our journeys with strange companions.
Grace us with the hospitality
to open our hearts and homes
to visitors filled with unfamiliar wisdom
bearing profound and unusual gifts. Amen.*

HYMN #220

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

OPENING PRAYER

***O God of light and peace,
whose glory, shining in the child of Bethlehem,
still draws the nations to yourself:
dispel the darkness that shrouds our path,
that we may come
to kneel before Christ in true worship,
offer Him our hearts and our souls,
and return from His presence to live as He has taught.
Amen.***

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 60:1-6

- 60:1 Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
- 60:2 For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.
- 60:3 Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
- 60:4 Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.
- 60:5 Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
- 60:6 A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (Please read responsively the bold text)

- 72:1 Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son.
- 72:2 May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.**
- 72:3 May the mountains yield prosperity for the people, and the hills, in righteousness.
- 72:4 May he defend the cause of the poor of the people, give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.**
- 72:5 May he live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon, throughout all generations.
- 72:6 May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass, like showers that water the earth.**
- 72:7 In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound, until the moon is no more.
- 72:10 May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute, may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.**
- 72:11 May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.
- 72:12 For he delivers the needy when they call, the poor and those who have no helper.**
- 72:13 He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy.

72:14 From oppression and violence, he redeems their life; and precious is their blood in his sight.

Ephesians 3:1-12

- 3:1 This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles--
- 3:2 for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you,
- 3:3 and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words,
- 3:4 a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ.
- 3:5 In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit:
- 3:6 that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.
- 3:7 Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power.
- 3:8 Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ,
- 3:9 and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things;
- 3:10 so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.
- 3:11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,
- 3:12 in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Matthew 2:1-12 (Please stand for the Gospel)

- 2:1 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,
- 2:2 asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."
- 2:3 When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him;
- 2:4 and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

- 2:5 They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:
- 2:6 And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel."
- 2:7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared.
- 2:8 Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."
- 2:9 When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.
- 2:10 When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.
- 2:11 On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
- 2:12 And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

L: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

P: Thanks be to God!

SOLO - MARY'S LULLABY TO THE INFANT KING ARR. RICHARD WARNER

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Let us offer our silent confessions.)

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

We pray for confidence

to share your Word with others

and for the opportunity to proclaim it.

Forgive our reluctance,

our timidity.

We pray for wisdom

to know what should be said

and the moment in which to say it.

Forgive our reticence,

*our anxiety.
We pray for knowledge
of the fullness of your Grace
and the willingness to live it.
Forgive our ignorance,
our self-reliance.
Be the center of all we are
The Light by which we walk
The blessing we bring to others
Through Jesus Christ alone we ask. Amen*

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

*The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance,
that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ, Righteous Lord;
and He is the expiation for our sins,
and not for ours only
but, also, for the sins of the whole world.*

In the name of Christ, you are forgiven.

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH *(Alternate for Season of Epiphany)*

*We believe in God,
the creator of all things,
the giver of life and breath.
We believe in Jesus Christ,
born Emmanuel, God with us,
baptized and revealed the most beloved Son of God;
he sought to heal humanity by taking our brokenness upon himself,
suffering for us,
dying for us
and being raised from the dead for our sake
and for the sake of all the world.
We believe that he will come again.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
continually poured out refreshing our lives,
leading us into a new day,
ever birthing the church, the body of Christ in the world.
This Spirit is our constant companion and counselor of truth
reminding us
of the gift of faith,
the ever presence of God
and the promise of eternal life.
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.

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY

There's a Star in the East arr. Charles Callahan

DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*Generous God, for all that sustains us;
air to breath, warmth and light,
food to eat, water to drink,
we offer our thanks and praise.
For spiritual gifts that bind us together;
one people, one body
empowered for service
we offer our hands and voices.
For the Good News of the Gospel;
healing and wholeness
we offer our hearts in service.
Accept these financial gifts in celebration of your salvation to us;
may they be used to continue to dispel the darkness in the world. Amen*

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 #249

There's a Song in the Air
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed with permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow arr. Betty Roe

STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS

Pastor: Marcus Dodson: 828-553-0282, marcus61dodson@gmail.com
Organist: Charlie Steele: cwsorgan@comporium.net
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Lay Leaders: Barbara Kline: 828-862-5585 and Paula Markert: 828-553-9434
Audio/Visual for Livestream Chair: Andy Harvill
Soloist/Vocalist: Jacolyn Campbell
Liturgist: Donna Shealy

Prayer Concerns of the Community

Please pray for Rev. Evelyn Owen-Patterson and her son. Evelyn is the pastor of the Selicia UMC, so we also need to pray for the congregation. They were in a bad car accident and is hospitalized with serious injuries.

Please pray for Chad Zimmerman, Doris Sims, Thomas Blackstock, Cathie Fussell's nephew, Jeff Tilley, Marty Young, Madison Coleman & the Jeter family and Frank Hardin.

Please continue to pray for those who have had the death of a loved one in the recent weeks and months.

Announcements

9:30 AM Virtual Services: The Worship Committee would like to remind everyone that we will continue to have 9:30 AM Virtual services until further notice. This is in order to maintain the health and safety of our congregation. Our attendance may include 12 - 15 people and still keep within our guidelines. So those of you who wish to attend please contact Saunders at administrator@laketoxawayumc.org. We look forward to seeing you.

We also would like to have a schedule for liturgy readers. Those who would like to participate in reading the liturgy for the week may contact Saunders at the email listed above.

May the Blessings of this New Year be with each of you.

Peace,
Worship Committee

Can you be a gift to our Students Scholars? Four Student Scholars Mentors are still needed. If you can pray, text, e-mail and call lending your support to our student scholars please reach out to Cathie Fussell at linguafrog@gmail.com or 910-572-2167. Now is a perfect time to be a mentor for next semester.

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

249 There's a Song in the Air

1. There's a song in the air! There's a star in the sky!
 2. There's a tu - mult of joy o'er the won - der - ful birth,
 3. In the light of that star lie the a - ges im - pearled;
 4. We re - joice in the light, and we ech - o the song

There's a moth - er's deep prayer and a ba - by's low cry!
 for the vir - gin's sweet boy is the Lord of the earth.
 and that song from a - far has swept o - ver the world.
 that comes down through the night from the heav - en - ly throng.

And the star rains its fire while the beau - ti - ful sing,
 Ay! the star rains its fire while the beau - ti - ful sing,
 Ev - ery hearth is a - flame, and the beau - ti - ful sing
 Ay! we shout to the love - ly e - van - gel they bring,

for the man - ger of Beth - le - hem cra - dles a King!
 for the man - ger of Beth - le - hem cra - dles a King!
 in the homes of the na - tions that Je - sus is King!
 and we greet in his cra - dle our Sav - ior and King!

WORDS: Josiah G. Holland, 1874
 MUSIC: Karl P. Harrington, 1904

CHRISTMAS SONG
 66.66.12 12