



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church*

## Dear Lake Toxaway UMC Family and Community,

The concept of God's grace continues to pull me to closer to God. Our shared understanding and theology of grace in the Wesleyan tradition provide spiritual nourishment for me every day.

If you have spent much time listening to me preach or in the Methodist Church for that matter, you hear about abundant grace, prevenient grace, justifying grace, and sanctifying grace. This week as I have read the scripture passages of the lectionary, I have thought about a part of abundant grace we often forget, sufficient grace. While this concept could sound finite, I see it as a grace which proceeds out of God's abundant or extravagant grace. There are times in life when God provides grace sufficient to our present need and the Holy Spirit guides us to stay in the moment rather than focus on what is to come next and what we need for tomorrow.

As I try to plan for our worship and congregation in the weeks and months ahead, I have heard God reminding me His grace is sufficient for today. I have been invited to stay here and trust God to supply the needs for today and to know that all I need will be provided today.

The Apostle Paul In Romans 8 writes about the Spirit helping us in our weakness and our struggle to pray in a proper manner. Paul reminds us how the very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

The Spirit intercedes? This might seem like an idle question and a rabbit chase of theological speculation. But, in fact, it is a core reality of faith! Paul reminds us that when we struggle for words, the Spirit is there. The heart leads; the Spirit leads; the words follow. Then, to add to this joy and grace, Paul reminds us the Spirit leads with love!

And the powerful verse of Romans 8:28: "All things work together for good for those who love God." We often misunderstand this verse. This is a statement about God. This promise is about God's sufficient grace that flows from God's abundant grace. There is nothing in our life, both individual and shared, that God cannot take and bring a blessing for us and others. Paul stands firm on the belief of God's Spirit to bring something new out of our brokenness, our illnesses, our struggles. It is not intended to be a "feel good" statement. Rather, it is a statement of allowing the Spirit to lead, to intercede in all of life. This is the key to prayer: living in the constant awareness of the Presence of God. It is inviting the Presence, leaning into the Presence, longing for the Presence, trusting in The Presence. Even in those moments when we do not feel it because that is when faith kicks in and tells us the unseen is real!

I invite you to look at the places where God's grace is sufficient in this time. I invite you to ask if your life is led by The Spirit in a constant state of prayer. May we find ourselves letting go of attempts at constructing beautiful arrangements of words in prayer. Yes, I fall into this trap. May we find the **gift of unending prayer**: the gift of a life with the Presence of God.

I love you and seek to continue to serve you in faithfulness. I miss seeing you! I pray constantly for you!

Marcus

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church**  
**Home Worship for Community Worship Service**  
**Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, July 26th, 2020**

<https://youtu.be/8PG7TPtPyc4>

*If the video or sound are not synchronized please refresh your browser or click on the Livestream link again. Should the above link not work please go to <https://www.youtube.com/> and do a search for "Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church" and look for today's service; it may not display in date order. If the Livestream is interrupted, it cannot be restarted but we will have a backup of the recorded service on the LTUMC YouTube page/channel as soon as possible.*

**PRELUDE**

Seek Ye First                      arr. Douglas E. Wagner

**GREETING**

*L: The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed.*

***P: It is a small seed, but has some surprises in store for us.***

*L: When it is grown, it is a very large shrub.*

***P: Even the birds can find places in its branches for their nests.***

*L: God's transforming love begins in small ways to enter our hearts.*

***P: Lord, plant those amazing seeds of transforming love in us that they may grow into deeds of service to others in your name. AMEN.***

**HYMN #540**

I Love thy Kingdom, Lord  
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**INVOCATION**

***Lord of preparation and transitions, we are already halfway through our summer months. We sit and wonder where the time went, did we spend it well in your service. Give us these next few weeks for renewal that we may be prepared to work through your church for your world. Keep us mindful of the needs of family, friends and others, that we will be your faithful disciples, for we ask these things in Jesus' Name. AMEN.***

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### **Genesis 29:15-28**

- 29:15 Then Laban said to Jacob, "Because you are my kinsman, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be?"
- 29:16 Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.
- 29:17 Leah's eyes were lovely, and Rachel was graceful and beautiful.
- 29:18 Jacob loved Rachel; so he said, "I will serve you seven years for your younger daughter Rachel."
- 29:19 Laban said, "It is better that I give her to you than that I should give her to any other man; stay with me."
- 29:20 So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her.
- 29:21 Then Jacob said to Laban, "Give me my wife that I may go in to her, for my time is completed."
- 29:22 So Laban gathered together all the people of the place, and made a feast.
- 29:23 But in the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob; and he went in to her.
- 29:24 (Laban gave his maid Zilpah to his daughter Leah to be her maid.)
- 29:25 When morning came, it was Leah! And Jacob said to Laban, "What is this you have done to me? Did I not serve with you for Rachel? Why then have you deceived me?"
- 29:26 Laban said, "This is not done in our country--giving the younger before the firstborn.
- 29:27 Complete the week of this one, and we will give you the other also in return for serving me another seven years."
- 29:28 Jacob did so, and completed her week; then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel as a wife.

### **Psalm 105:1-11, 45b (Read Responsively)**

- 105:1 O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples.
- 105:2 Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works.**
- 105:3 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice.
- 105:4 Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually.**
- 105:5 Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

**105:6 O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.**

105:7 He is the LORD our God; his judgments are in all the earth.

**105:8 He is mindful of his covenant forever, of the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,**

105:9 the covenant that he made with Abraham, his sworn promise to Isaac,

**105:10 which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute, to Israel as an everlasting covenant,**

105:11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance."

**105:45b Praise the LORD!**

### **Romans 8:26-39**

8:26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.

8:27 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

8:28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family.

8:30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

8:31 What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?

8:32 He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else?

8:33 Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.

8:34 Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

8:35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

8:36 As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

8:37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

8:38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,

8:39 nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

### **Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

13:31 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;

13:32 it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

13:33 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls;

13:46 on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

13:47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind;

13:48 when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.

13:49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous

13:50 and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

13:51 "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes."

13:52 And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

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

**P: *Thanks be to God!***

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

***Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.***

*(Let us offer our silent confessions.)*

***Diligent Lord, who watches over us at all times, be with us all these days. We confess that we have allowed a host of worries and frustrations to crowd out your word for us. As you give us peace and your transforming love, also***

***forgive all those times when we have been less than faithful disciples. Gently visit us again with your healing powers. Restore our hope and courage and joy for all the times ahead. We ask this in the name of the Master Healer, Jesus Christ. AMEN***

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

***Here is some wonderful news! While we were worrying and fretting, God has been at work in our lives offering healing and peace. Receive these gifts in the name and love of the Lord our God. AMEN.***

***In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!***

## **HOMILY**

### **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

***We believe in God the Father, God almighty, by whose plan earth and heaven sprang to being, all created things began. We believe in Christ the Savior, Son of God in human frame, virgin-born, the child of Mary upon whom the Spirit came. Christ, who on the cross forsaken, like a lamb to slaughter led, suffered under Pontius Pilate, he descended to the dead. We believe in Jesus risen, heaven's king to rule and reign, to the Father's side ascended till as judge he comes again. We believe in God the Spirit; in one Church, below, above: saints of God in one communion, one in holiness and love. So, by faith, our sins forgiven, Christ our Savior, Lord and friend, we shall rise with him in glory to the life that knows no end.***

### **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**

Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus

Robert J. Powell

### **DOXOLOGY**

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**

*God of grace and mercy: we offer our gifts to you this day, knowing that is your love and presence that have sustained us through all our difficult days. We know there have been days when fear and anxiety have gotten the better of us, and we have needed the reminder Paul gave in the Epistle to the Romans, "If God is for us, who is against us?" Help us to live as Christ calls us, to share what we have and show love and compassion, as Christ taught us. We boldly pray, in the name of Jesus our Savior and Redeemer. 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 #419**

I Am Thine, O Lord  
(Printed w/ permission)

## **BENEDICTION**

## **POSTLUDE**

I Will Go in the Strength of the Lord      Douglas E. Wagner  
(Psalm 71:16)

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

Organist: Charlie Steele: [cwsorgan@comporium.net](mailto:cwsorgan@comporium.net)

Church Administrator: Saunders Grommesh, 469-569-2314, [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org)

Lay Leaders: Barbara Kline: 828-862-5585 and Paula Markert: 828-553-9434

Audio/Visual for Livestream Chair: Andy Harvill

Liturgist: Beth Holiman

## Announcements

### **New Service Livestream time starting – 8:30 AM Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup>:**

We have moved the Sunday service to 8:30 AM for the Livestream recording. This is to be ready for some of you to host "Home Church" services. The groups should remain small of 10 or fewer inside or 25 on a cover porch with 6' social distancing during Covid-19. The Livestream is recorded and will be available for "Home Church" services at 11:00 AM. If you do not want to participate in a "Home Church" service and want to watch the Livestream, you may watch/participate at 8:30 AM. Please let Saunders know if you have any questions at [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org) or 469-569-2314.

### **Administrative Council Meeting**

The Administrative Council will meet on **Friday, August 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM** (correction from last week's bulletin). If you are a member of the Council, you will receive a Zoom Invite. If you are not a member and would like to attend the meeting, please email Tom Blackstock or Saunders Grommesh as these meetings are open to all members, but only members have a vote if actions are required. You may email Tom at [tombblackstock@gmail.com](mailto:tombblackstock@gmail.com) or Saunders at [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org).

### **LTUMC new directory picture sign up**

*Come one come all.* We want you to please sign up to have your picture taken for the LTUMC updated directory. Please call, text or e-mail Saunders at [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org) or 469-569-2314. The remaining time and dates are:

Monday, July 27<sup>th</sup> 9:00-11:00 & 1:00-3:00  
Tuesday, July 28<sup>th</sup> 9:00-11:00 & 1:00-3:00  
Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup> 9:00-11:00 & 1:00-3:00

We are scheduling in 15-minute intervals for social distancing (I.e. 9:00, 9:15, 9:30 etc.) Please wear your mask and you may remove it for the picture.

# I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord

540

1. I love thy king-dom, Lord, the house of thine a - bode, the  
2. I love thy church, O God! Her walls be-fore thee stand dear  
3. For her my tears shall fall, for her my prayers as - cend, to  
4. Be - yond my high - est joy I prize her heaven-ly ways, her  
5. Sure as thy truth shall last, to Zi - on shall be given the

church our blest Re - deem - er saved with his own pre - cious blood.  
as the ap - ple of thine eye, and grav - en on thy hand.  
her my cares and toils be given, till toils and cares shall end.  
sweet com - mu - nion, sol - emn vows, her hymns of love and praise.  
bright - est glo - ries earth can yield, and bright - er bliss of heaven.

WORDS: Timothy Dwight, 1801  
MUSIC: Aaron Williams, *The New Universal Psalmist*, 1770

ST. THOMAS  
SM

I Am Thine, O Lord

1. I am thine, O Lord, I have heard thy voice, and it  
 2. Con - se - crate me now to thy ser - vice, Lord, by the  
 3. O the pure de - light of a sin - gle hour that be -  
 4. There are depths of love that I can - not know till I

told thy love to me; but I long to rise in the  
 power of grace di - vine; let my soul look up with a  
 fore thy throne I spend, when I kneel in prayer, and with  
 cross the nar - row sea; there are heights of joy that I

arms of faith and be clos - er drawn to thee.  
 stead - fast hope, and my will be lost in thine.  
 thee, my God, I com - mune as friend with friend!  
 may not reach till I rest in peace with thee.

*Refrain*

Draw me near - er, near - er, bless - ed Lord, to the  
 near - er, near - er,

cross where thou hast died. Draw me near - er, near - er,

near - er, bless - ed Lord, to thy pre - cious, bleed - ing side.