



*Lake Tossaway United Methodist Church
Christmas Eve 12-24-24*

**ORDER OF WORSHIP
CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION & CANDLELIGHT SERVICE 2024**

**7:00 PM 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

Coventry Carol

GREETING

All people are welcome here tonight.

We have gathered to hear the story of Jesus' birth.

Augustus and Quirinius—

ancient names that seem odd to today's ears...

characters in an ancient story

that we long to hear.

Nazareth and Bethlehem—

distant towns we know little about...

places our hearts long for,

because of the One who traveled there.

We gather together to hear once more,

a story so ancient and yet so current,

so distant and yet so near.

We come to hear the story

of God coming to us.

HYMN #234

O Come, All Ye Faithful (Stanzas 1-4)

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE (*Dodson Family*)

Reader #1: *All Advent we gathered around this wreath to light candles. The wreath reminds us of the circle of our human community, and the candles illuminate the many ways in which we bring ourselves to Emmanuel — God with us and God coming to us — as we anticipate the birth of Jesus of Nazareth in Bethlehem long ago.*

Reader #2: *We light again the Candle of Hope for the Christmas story shines hope on our lives and we bring all our stories to this circle.*

Reader #3: *We light again the Candle of Peace to honor all the places where we have found peace in our lives and all the places for which we pray that peace may come.*

Reader #4 (pink candle): *We light again the Candle of Joy to reflect on our celebrations in this season and to pray for those who experience feelings of loss and loneliness.*

Reader #5: *We light again this Candle of Love because Jesus Christ was born into human loving and we are born again into the love of God.*

Reader #1: *The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem shows us how to hope, where to find and make peace, why our Christmas customs have meaning, and truly what it is to love. For on this night, we meet Emmanuel, God with us, who lifts us up and gives us His light here and everywhere.*

OPENING PRAYER *(Please be seated)*

O Holy God, we light the Christ candle. It shines on smiles and tears. It shines on younger and older. It shines and we hear angels. It shines and we see a manger. It shines and we remember the story. It shines on our world, like Bethlehem long ago. It can never be extinguished, because You, O Christ, are the light that shines in darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it. Thanks be to God. Amen.

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

HYMN # 217

Away in a Manger

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 9:2-7 - A child is born for us

- 9:2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.
- 9:3 You have multiplied the exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.
- 9:4 For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- 9:5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
- 9:6 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 9:7 Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Psalms 96 - Let the earth be glad (Psalter Lesson)

(Please read the bold text)

96:1 O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth.

96:2 Sing to the Lord, bless God's name; proclaim God's salvation from day to day.

- 96:3 Declare the Lord's glory among the nations, the Lord's marvelous works among all the peoples!
- 96:4 For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; to be feared above all gods.**
- 96:5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the Lord made the heavens.
- 96:6 Honor and majesty are before the Lord; in whose sanctuary are strength and beauty.**
- 96:7 Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
- 96:8 Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.**
- 96:9 Worship the Lord in holy splendor; **tremble before him, all the earth!**
- 96:10 Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns! **The Lord has established the world; it shall never be moved. The Lord will judge the peoples with equity.**"
- 96:11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
- 96:12 let the field exult, and everything in it. **Then shall all the wood sing for joy**
- 96:13 before the Lord; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. The Lord will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.**

Titus 2:11-14 - The grace of God has appeared (Epistle Reading)

- 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,
- 2:12 training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly,
- 2:13 while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- 2:14 He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Luke 2:1-14, 15-20 - God with us (Gospel)

(Please stand as you are able)

- 2:1 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.
- 2:2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.
- 2:3 All went to their own towns to be registered.
- 2:4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.
- 2:5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.
- 2:6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.
- 2:7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place in the guest room.
- 2:8 Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.
- 2:9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.
- 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:
- 2:11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.
- 2:12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."
- 2:13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
- 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"
- 2:15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."
- 2:16 So, they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.
- 2:17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child,
- 2:18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them,

2:19 and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

2:20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

HOMILY

THE APOSTLES' CREED # 881

HYMN OF PREPARATION #240

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God, as we celebrate the birth of your Son, we yearn for light, joy, and peace to fill our world and our lives, yet we also stand in need of forgiveness in our sins. We long to see your love for all people in the joy of this holy night. May we have faith like Mary and Joseph, who accepted the demands of government to travel as their child was ready to be born. May we have faith like the shepherds, who accepted God's unexpected message and went to see God's gift with their own eyes. May we have faith like your people throughout history, who have longed to see the glory of Jesus made manifest this holy night. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Beloved people of God,

Jesus Christ has been born for us.

He is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The baby lying in a manger

is the promise of God's peace and favor,

given to all.

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

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

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, and concludes): ... 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 has 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 Father, now and forever. Amen

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

COMMUNION PRAYER

Most gracious God, source of all blessing, we give You thanks for inviting us to share this meal as your family; strengthen us to be a blessing to all the world, glorifying you in all things; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SENDING FORTH

SOLO: Sofia Pandolfo, Soprano

O HOLY NIGHT

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES AND HYMN #239

Silent Night (all verses)

(Candles will be lit at this time. The ushers will bring the light to you. Please keep burning wicks upright. Tip only the unlighted candles. Enjoy the symbolism and bask in the glow of candlelight, but please be careful and respectful of the church's furnishings.)

WITNESS TO THE LIGHT

In darkness we arrived.

In light we now leave.

Though once we stumbled,

we now walk with confidence.

*Rise up and go, for the grace of God has appeared,
bringing salvation to all.*

May the light of Christ lead us forevermore.

CLOSING HYMN #246

Joy to the World

BENEDICTION

CHORAL CLOSING HYMN #251

Go Tell It on the Mountain

POSTLUDE (Please be seated for the Postlude)

Bach prelude in C

(Please extinguish your candle during the Postlude)

SOLOIST

Please welcome Sofia Pandolfo. She is a native of Transylvania County, and is a recent graduate from the University of North Carolina Greensboro. During her time at UNCG, she received her Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance. Currently, she is residing in Pittsburgh while she applies for graduate programs. She is very happy to be singing for LTUMC while home for the holidays!”

TRUMPETER

We welcome back Luke Norton is one of us at Lake Toxaway UMC and is completing his degree in Music Education at Western Carolina University. He joyfully shares his trumpet with us as we sing the wonderful Christmas hymns.

WELCOME ALL

Welcome to this service of candlelight and communion on this holy night. Whether small or large in number, we believe that God in Christ is the focus of our worship. Please use the time prior to the start of the service to reflect quietly.

In the United Methodist tradition, all people are welcome at the communion rail. We observe communion by the coming to the rails at the altar. The ushers will direct you to use the center aisle to come to the communion rail. You are invited to kneel or to stand at the altar rail. You will be offered a piece of bread which you can dip in the communion cup. Consume the bread that you have dipped and then remain at the altar until the Pastor offers a blessing to each group. Children are welcome to receive communion. If you do not wish to receive the elements, cross your arms at the rail and receive the gift of coming to the altar.

STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS

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

Pianist: Kathy Palmer

Soloist: Sofia Pandolfo

Trumpeter: Luke Norton

Church Admin.: 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

Liturgists: The Dodson Family

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

O Come, All Ye Faithful

1. O come, all ye faith-ful, joy-ful and tri-um-phant, O
 1. *A - des - te, fi - de - les, lae - ti tri - um - phan - tes; ve -*
 2. True God of true God, Light from Light E - ter - nal,
 3. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; O
 * 4. See how the shep-herds, sum-moned to his cra - dle,

come ye, O come ye, to Beth - le - hem.
ni - te, ve - ni - te in Beth - le - hem.
 lo, he shuns not the Vir - gin's womb;
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!
 leav - ing their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;

Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;
Na - tum vi - de - te Re - gem an - ge - lor - um.
 Son of the Fa - ther, be - got - ten, not cre - at - ed;
 Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;
 we too will thith - er bend our joy - ful foot - steps;

Refrain
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,
Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.
ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, Do - mi - num.

Away in a Manger

217

1. A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
 2. The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
 3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus, I ask thee to stay

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes;
 close by me for - ev - er, and love me, I pray;

The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus, look down from the sky
 bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus, a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is night.
 and fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

WORDS: Anon. (Lk. 2:7)
 MUSIC: James R. Murray, 1887

AWAY IN A MANGER
 11 11.11 11

240 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;
2. Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored; Christ, the ev - er - last-ing Lord;
3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on-ciled!"
late in time be - hold him come, off-spring of a vir-gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na-tions rise, join the tri-umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'in-car-nate De - i - ty,
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with th'an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739; alt. by George Whitefield, 1753, and others (Lk. 2:8-14) MENDELSSOHN
MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. by William H. Cummings, 1856 77.77 D with Refrain

Silent Night, Holy Night

239



1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm, all is bright
 1. *Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft, ein - sam wacht*
 2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake at the sight;
 3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light;
 4. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, won - drous star, lend thy light;



round yon vir - gin moth - er and child. Ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild,
nur das trau - te hoch - hei - li - ge Paar, Hold - er Kna - be mit lock - i - gem Haar,
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing Al - le - lu - ia!
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,
 with the an - gels let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia to our King;



sleep in heav - en - ly peace,	sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
<i>schlaf im himm - li - scher Ruh,</i>	<i>schlaf im himm - li - scher Ruh.</i>
Christ the Sav - ior is born,	Christ the Sav - ior is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth,	Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.
Christ the Sav - ior is born,	Christ the Sav - ior is born!



WORDS: Joseph Mohr, 1818, alt.; sts. 1, 2, 3 trans. by John F. Young;
 st. 4 trans. anon. (Lk. 2:6-20)
 MUSIC: Franz Gruber, 1818

STILLE NACHT
 Irr.

Joy to the World

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
 2. Joy to the world, the Sav - ior reigns!
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow,
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace,

Let earth re - ceive her King; let
 Let all their songs em - ploy; while
 nor thorns in - fest the ground; he
 and makes the na - tions prove the

ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,
 fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
 comes to make his bless - ings flow
 glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness,

WORDS: Issac Watts, 1719 (Ps. 98:4-9)
 MUSIC: Arr. from G. F. Handel, 1741, by Lowell Mason, 1848

ANTIOCH
 CM with Repeat

BIRTH AND BAPTISM

and heaven and na - ture sing, and
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -
 far as the curse is found, far
 and won - ders of his love, and

and heaven and na - ture
 re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his

heaven and na - ture sing, and
 peat the sound - ing joy, re -
 as the curse is found, far
 won - ders of his love, and

sing,
 joy,
 found,
 love,

and re - peat the sound - ing
 far as the curse is
 and won - ders of his

heaven, and heaven, and na - ture sing.
 peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 as, far as the curse is found.
 won - ders, won - ders of his love.

sing,
 joy,
 found,
 love,

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

251

Refrain

Go, tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hills, and ev - 'ry - where;

go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born.

1 While shep - herds kept their watch - ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep - herds feared and trem - bled when lo, a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,

Refrain

be - hold, through - out the heav - ens there shone a ho - ly light.
 rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

Text: African-American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work II, 1873-1925, verses, alt.

Tune: African-American spiritual; setting: Hugh Porter, 1897-1960

Text and music: public domain

GO, TELL IT
 76 76 WITH REFRAIN

LA 22-20; HA 409-91