



Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
13th Sunday after Pentecost

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
August 23, 2026**



*We have the closed hearing loop system.
You may be able to turn your hearing device to the "T" setting.*

***To allow all worshippers to reflect and prepare for the service,
please observe silence during the prelude.***

13th Sunday after Pentecost

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE Concerto for Violin and Organ Antonio Vivaldi
Allegro

CALL TO WORSHIP *(Please respond with words in bold)*

In a world where powerful people make decisions to lift themselves up and cast others aside, how does God teach us to use our power?

**God teaches us to protect the vulnerable,
resist the oppressors and persist in doing good.**

In a world where power means might,
how does God show us what power means?

**God shows us power through the midwives' daring,
Peter's truth-telling, and Jesus' humility.**

In a world where power is held over people's heads,
how does God exercise power?

**God exercises power, not over, but with—
with the oppressed, with the outcasts,
with the poor and downtrodden.**

Beloved, we gather to recognize our world as it is
and to not be conformed;

**Rather we seek to be transformed
as we grow as disciples and imitators of Christ.**

How will you use your power today?

**We will stand with the vulnerable, build community in the
margins, and love all our neighbors with the exuberant and
all-encompassing love of Christ.**

HYMN #126 Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above

OPENING PRAYER

O God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, you set us aside to be stewards, seeking not only our own well-being but the well-being of all. We pray for vision to see things from a wide perspective and not just from our own view. Grant that we may have a wise and humble estimate of our own power and live in full connection with all things high, true, and good. Give us courage to acknowledge where we fall short of living in harmony with your larger will and, by your grace, enable us to be better, to do better. Lift us above the unstable currents of our self-will and establish us on the rock of your purpose. Be to each of us the inner guide of our lives that each day would find us living more fully in alignment with your Spirit. We pray as followers of Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Exodus 1:8—2:10 *Midwives defy Pharaoh. Baby Moses is saved.*

Now a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph. ⁹ He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we." ¹⁰ Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." ¹¹ Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. ¹² But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. ¹³ The Egyptians subjected the Israelites to hard servitude ¹⁴ and made their lives bitter with hard servitude in mortar and bricks and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ "When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live." ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. ¹⁸ So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, "Why have you done this and allowed the boys to live?" ¹⁹ The midwives said to Pharaoh, "Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them." ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives, and the people multiplied and became very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared

God, he gave them families. ²² Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, "Every son that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live."

2 Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a Levite woman. ² The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine baby, she hid him three months. ³ When she could hide him no longer, she got a papyrus basket for him and plastered it with bitumen and pitch; she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds on the bank of the river. ⁴ His sister stood at a distance, to see what would happen to him. ⁵ The daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her attendants walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her maid to bring it. ⁶ When she opened it, she saw the child. He was crying, and she took pity on him. "This must be one of the Hebrews' children," she said. ⁷ Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and get you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" ⁸ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Yes." So the girl went and called the child's mother. ⁹ Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child and nurse it for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed it. ¹⁰ When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

Psalms 124 UMH 846 *Our help is in the name of the Lord*
(Please respond with the words in bold)

Romans 12:1-8 *Do not conform—be transformed*

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. ⁴ For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, ⁵ so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ⁶ We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ⁷ ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; ⁸ the encourager, in encouragement; the giver, in sincerity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Matthew 16:13-20 *Who do you say that I am?*
(Please stand as you are able.)

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Let us offer our silent confessions.)

Seeking God, we look for you in all the wrong places and wonder why we cannot find you. We wander the corridors of power, while you are on the sidewalks, beside the homeless. We sit at the head tables of the world, while you are handing out soup to the hungry at the kitchen's backdoor. We cheer for those who win the race, while you are encouraging those in the back of the pack. We do not naturally navigate to the least, the last, the lost, the lonely among us. We have worked too hard for what we have and fear being dragged back or reminded of what might be, but for the grace and opportunities with which we have been blessed. And yet you have sought us and brought us into your fold. In granting us mercy, o God, you challenge us to think of those we have ignored. May your forgiveness of us melt the coldness of our hearts that our fears may be transformed into gratitude and melted into loving service, following in the way of our Lord, Jesus. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Brothers and sisters, whoever we are, whatever we have, is ours by the grace of God. In proclaiming Christ, we acknowledge God's grace and forgiveness and are transformed.

In the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, we are forgiven and are offered new life. Thanks be to God! Amen.

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH UMH 887 Affirmation from Romans 8

(Please stand as you are able)

GLORIA PATRI #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 #141 Children of the Heavenly Father

OFFERTORY Concerto for Violin and Organ Antonio Vivaldi
Largo

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

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. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**Faithful God, you reveal true power not through fear or force,
but through love that gives life and builds community. You call
us to know who we are because we know whose we are—your
people, shaped by Christ and sent for the sake of the world.
Receive these gifts as signs of our trust in your way of life over
the ways of death, our willingness to choose courage over
control, to choose welcome over exclusion. Use what we offer
to strengthen your church as a living witness to your grace, that
through our sharing and our serving, others may discover the
identity of Christ and the hope found in him. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER

HYMN #438 Forth in Thy Name, O Lord

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE Concerto for Violin and Organ Antonio Vivaldi
(Please be seated) *Allegro*

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Carl Shealey, Jay Buehler, Carole Guffey, Sally Steinmeyer,
Bobbie Moore, Randall Galloway, Ed Byrd

STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS

Pastor: Marcus Dodson: 828-553-0282, marcus61dodson@gmail.com
Organist: Bob Kintner: 828-329-2457
Lay Leaders: Paula Markert: 828-553-9434, Maria Buehler: 828-553-2128
Audio/Visual & Livestream: Joe Haraschak 813-918-1916
Usher: Mike Taylor, Andrew Butz
Liturgist: Stephen Wood
Coffee Hour: Lysa Riggs
Liturgical selections are adapted from umcdiscipleship.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The flowers on the altar are given by Cynthia and Stephen Wood to the glory of God and in honor of their 45th wedding anniversary.

We are pleased to welcome violinist Hunter Holbert back to LTUMC as our guest musician. Hunter is a Hendersonville native and has undergraduate and graduate degrees from Appalachian State University. He plays regularly with the Hendersonville Symphony, Brevard Philharmonic, and Symphony of the Mountains. We are delighted to have him share his gift for music with us as we worship together today.

Would you like to become a lay reader? Our current schedule of readers will be ending in mid-October. A new schedule will be made to carry us through the winter until next March/Easter. Please contact Kim Dodson at kidods2061@gmail.com if you would like to be included on this schedule, including dates you are likely NOT available. It is a gift to hear a variety of voices in worship and we appreciate those who share in the leadership of worship in this way.

Name Tags--If any church attendees need a name tag, please contact Fred Markert at 828-553-3303 or let him know when you see him.

Scholarship Ministry--Through its mission committee, the Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church is proud to support twenty-four higher education students seeking degrees and/or certifications, dedicating more than \$55,000.00 in 2026/2027 outreach dollars to this vital mission. Our supportive congregation and the Scholarship Team are true blessings. Thank you all.

Sunday Morning Bible Study meets at 8:45am on Sundays. All are welcome! This is a 'come as you can' Bible Study and a study guide is provided.

The Prayer Ministry meets every Sunday after church at 11:30 in the Minnich conference room. Anyone is invited to join us on any given week as we lift up the prayer concerns of our community. Prayer requests may be mailed to LTUMCPrayerRequests@gmail.com.

AA Meets Every Thursday Night at 4:45 PM in the Dice Hall. To honor anonymity, please do not go to the Parish building from 4-6 PM.