



Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
3rd Sunday after Epiphany

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
January 25, 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.

3^d Sunday after Epiphany

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE O Holy City, Seen of John Seth Bingham

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

Children of God, when fears press in on every side, we can proclaim with confidence:

God is our light and salvation! Whom shall we fear?

When our problems overwhelm us and we feel pressed in on every side, we can declare with confidence:

God is the stronghold of our lives!

Of whom shall we be afraid?

No matter the troubles we face, we seek after God with hope in God's promise to always be with us.

God shelters and protects us in the day of trouble.

Come, let us worship God with joy,
for God is our light and salvation!

We come to worship as bearers of the Light.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

HYMN #577 God of Grace and God of Glory

OPENING PRAYER

God of ever-revealing epiphanies, you show yourself to us over and over again in diverse and numerous ways, and yet we miss so much and fail to acknowledge your presence with us in our daily lives. Free us the distractions that turn our focus away from you and your Word. Open us to the truth you reveal to us today, in this time of worship, that we may see, hear and perceive your presence more and more in each day to come. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 9:1-4 *Light shines in the darkness*

But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

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.

³ You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. 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.

Psalms 27 UMH 758 *Confidence in God's presence* (Please respond with the words in bold.)

1 Corinthians 1:10-18 *Find unity in the gospel*

Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been made clear to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I belong to Christ." ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I

thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel—and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power. ¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Matthew 4:12-23 *Jesus begins his ministry*
(Please stand as you are able.)

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.” ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. ²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

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.)

Gracious and loving God, hear our prayer.

When despair and suffering overwhelm us, we cry out for you and yet often feel abandoned. We doubt your presence and your promises. We believe you have turned away from us. We cower in the dark and ask why you have forsaken us. In these moments, strengthen us in faith and fill our hearts with courage. Forgive us. Help us turn toward the light. We pray, in the name of Christ who showed us your presence with us. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

"The steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting."

Know that you are forgiven and be at peace.

In the light of Jesus Christ, we are known, loved, and forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH # 880 The Nicene Creed

(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 #540 I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord

OFFERTORY Sarabande Seth Bingham

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

Holy God, the steadfast light of our salvation, in a world that trembles with uncertainty and teaches us to fear, you shine with unwavering hope. You call us to seek your face and trust in your presence more than in our own strength. Receive these gifts, given not out of fear but in joyful confidence that your love casts out fear and your grace makes us courageous. Use our offerings to build a world where your light leads, your justice reigns, and your people—unafraid—become living testimonies of your goodness. In the name of Christ, our rock and redeemer, we pray. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

CLOSING HYMN #664 Sent Forth by God's Blessing

(Please stand as you are able)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE The Heavens Declare the Glory of God Benedetto Marcello
(Please be seated)

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

Ushers: Fred Markert, Andrew Butz

Liturgist: Scott Walter

Coffee Hour: Stephanie Taylor & Beth Holiman**

****COFFEE HOUR HOST NEEDED NEXT SUNDAY! Please contact Kim (828-553-0283) to volunteer. Thanks!**

Liturgical selections are adapted from umcdiscipleship.org resources, and Pres-Outlook.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The flowers on the altar are offered by Jim & Beth Holimon and Fred & Paula Markert in praise of the glory of God and all his wonderful works.

Sunday Morning Bible Study meets at 8:45 am in the Minnich Conference room on Sundays, prior to worship. All are welcome! This is a 'come as you can' Bible Study and a study guide is provided. Don Henderson facilitates this group. Please reach out to him if you have questions at bacpac@comporium.net.

The next meeting on the Administrative Council will take place on Friday, February 13 at 10:00am here at the church.

The Prayer Ministry meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 9:30 AM. 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 4:00-6:00 PM.

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Katie Monkus, daughter of Stan & Bobbie Moore,
Charlotte Gilmore; Cody Collins, Sherry Minnich
