



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church*  
*Sunday, November 29th, 2020*

*Dear Lake Toxaway family and friends,*

*I spiritually need the season of Advent, especially in this year, 2020, marked by a pandemic, division, and uncertainty! Waiting has become a familiar practice to all of us in this year. I confess I am not one who likes to wait for anything, especially things beyond my control; therefore, I can move to despair, despondency, complacency and inactivity.*

*This is precisely why I need Advent. I need a "swift kick" to get the new liturgical year started, so the season begins with a call to get ready. I confess I have struggled in this year to remember there is something for which to prepare. Since I am being so honest this week, I'll share how I often prepare during Advent for a historical observance of what God did at one time. I am grateful for it, defined by it. But it is to an extent, old news. It can become a case of "been there, done that," but I know the Holy Spirit invites us to a different and fresh preparation.*

*What is it we are waiting for? The first reading reminds us we what we long for is not a historical remembrance but a new reality, a new encounter. And this new encounter can be shocking; it can wake us up from overlooking what really surrounds us.*

*We all remember being sent to clean our room. And we remember the first thought as we stumbled through the door and flopped onto the bed: "Looks clean to me!" Right? I could overlook the mess or shove it under a bed in a few minutes.*

*The prophet Isaiah comes along to invite us to take another look at our living space. The prophet stands at the door and tells us company is coming. He tells us to take another look around and ask what would happen if the company were to break through our door right now.*

*That is the task of Advent, to pay attention to what is and what might be, not simply to look back at what was. The people of God were in exile; the foundations of their nation had been shaken; the comforts they had taken for granted had been taken from them. The human institutions they had constructed no longer held the security they once knew. They looked elsewhere; they realized their faith was shaky as well. They needed encouragement, so they looked back. They also looked forward. The mountains of their society were shaken. The people of God needed an Advent "upside the head!"*

*Advent is a reminder to get out of our sense of complacency. During this difficult time of worldwide challenge, we need Advent as prayer, as a reminder to hope!*

*That is the call of Jesus in our Gospel passage this week. We sometimes must listen hard to hear something hopeful in these descriptions, but it is there! Rather than reading Jesus' words and becoming nervous, we can hear the promise the Master is near: not as a threat but as a promise! Life in all of its joy and promise is coming as promised!*

*And we forget every now and then. We forget we are looking for anything, hoping for anything. Until Advent comes and "knocks us upside the head" with a not-so subtle reminder. Then we look and see how complacent we have become in our comfortableness, our struggles of waiting in a pandemic, our indifference or anger with the divisions in our society. Then we see what a mess our rooms are, and how we need to do something about it because "Company is coming!"*

*Let us prepare spiritually to be awakened, restored, and enlivened as the bold people of God who hold the love of Christ in our hearts and community!*

*Marcus*

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church  
Community Worship Service  
First Sunday of Advent  
November 29th, 2020**

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

**PRELUDE**

Two Variations on "Veni Emmanuel" John G. Barr

**GREETING**

*Come, people of faith, come join your hearts  
in worship.*

***We hear the invitation  
and hunger to join in the feast.***

*God is faithful and calls us into the loving presence  
of Jesus, who is the Christ.*

***We come to join with those who watch  
and wait and celebrate. Amen.***

**HYMN #211**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel  
Stanzas 1-4

Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

**OPENING PRAYER**

***O Holy God,  
maker of every thought and thing,  
open our hearts this day,  
that we may know your presence  
in this time and place.  
Restore us now,  
so we may see the special gift and calling  
that you have for each of us.  
Masterful potter of life,  
mold us into the vessels  
you would have us be.  
Help us be ready for your promised return,  
when you will be among us and within us  
with new, creative, healing energy. Amen.***

## Lighting the Advent Wreath

*Reader #1: The prophet cries to God, "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down,  
so that the mountains would quake at your presence...  
so that the nations might tremble at your presence!" (Isaiah 64:1, 2b)*

*Reader #2: As people of faith, we wait for God's breakthrough,  
that moment when God will come to us and to our world,  
that time when the light of God will cut through the darkness.*

*Reader #1: As dark as it may seem, the promise of our faith is that God will surely come.*

*Reader #2: We join together in lighting the first Advent candle.  
May the children of Bethlehem of Rosman, Lake Toxaway, Sapphire, Balsam Grove, and  
of the whole world experience God's living hope  
as we journey on this advent road. (light one purple candle)*

*Let us pray:*

***O God, we have looked for you in the heavens, listened for you in the howling winds***

***and in the quaking mountains. But we now know that you will be found among us.***

***We will not see you in the glitter of a mall, but in a shelter of the homeless.  
We will not hear you in the pitch of a commercial, but in the whimper of a child.***

***You will come, not in the comforts of the privileged, but swaddled in the needs of the neglected. Open our eyes to your coming, let us see the glory of angels, hear the testimony of shepherds, and ponder the secrets of Mary, so that we might proclaim together that you are coming. We look to you in faithful hope. Amen.***

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### Isaiah 64:1-9

- 64:1 O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence--
- 64:2 as when fire kindles brushwood and the fire causes water to boil-- to make your name known to your adversaries, so that the nations might tremble at your presence!
- 64:3 When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.

- 64:4 From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.
- 64:5 You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself we transgressed.
- 64:6 We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
- 64:7 There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our iniquity.
- 64:8 Yet, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.
- 64:9 Do not be exceedingly angry, O LORD, and do not remember iniquity forever. Now consider, we are all your people.

**Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (Please read responsively the text in bold)**

- 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth
- 80:2 before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us!**
- 80:3 Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.
- 80:4 O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?**
- 80:5 You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure.
- 80:6 You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.**
- 80:7 Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.
- 80:17 But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself.**
- 80:18 Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.
- 80:19 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

**1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

- 1:3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1:4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus,
- 1:5 for in every way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind--
- 1:6 just as the testimony of Christ has been strengthened among you--
- 1:7 so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- 1:8 He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1:9 God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Mark 13:24-37 (Please stand)**

- 13:24 "But in those days, after that suffering, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light,
- 13:25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.
- 13:26 Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in clouds' with great power and glory.
- 13:27 Then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.
- 13:28 "From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near.
- 13:29 So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates.
- 13:30 Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place.
- 13:31 Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.
- 13:32 "But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.
- 13:33 Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come.
- 13:34 It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch.
- 13:35 Therefore, keep awake--for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn,
- 13:36 or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly.
- 13:37 And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake."

*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.)*

***Patient, everlasting source of life,  
we know that you are present  
with those who gladly do what's right;  
we know that you remember  
those who remember you;  
we know that your judgment is just.  
We hunger for the assurance of your love,  
but in our hearts we feel unclean.***

***We fear that the acts we think so righteous  
are more like filthy bits of cloth,  
unfit to dress a wound or to clothe the naked.  
Do not be angry beyond measure,  
O holy and loving champion of the forgotten.  
Do not remember our sins forever,  
but embrace us with your love,  
for we are all your people,  
even though we so often forget. Amen***

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

*Fear not, for our creator is the loving maker  
of every thought and thing.*

*We are the clay; each one of us is being formed  
by God's all-loving hand, crafted for a purpose  
and cherished as a vessel made for love.*

*In the name of Jesus, who is the Christ,  
you are forgiven.*

***In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. AMEN.***

## **HOMILY**

### **STATEMENT OF FAITH *(The Apostles' Creed)***

***I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.***

***I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.***

***I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. 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**

Lo, How a rose E'er Blooming      Michael Praeatorius

## **DOXOLOGY**

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

***Holy God, triumphant liberating savior of all,  
receive these gifts  
and the hopeful hearts that offer them  
as part of your bountiful harvest.  
Strengthen and sustain us  
through our hungers and our fears  
until your unexpected advent.  
Help us as we wait  
to know each day  
that we are a part  
of your generous, expectant household,  
the body of Christ. 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 #203**

Hail to the Lord's Anointed

Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed with permission)



## **BENEDICTION**

## **POSTLUDE**

Prepare the Royal Highway      arr. John A. Behnke

## **STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS**

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

Soloist/Vocalist: Will Cowan

## **Prayer Concerns of the Community**

**Please pray for Chad Zimmerman, 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**

### ***Administrative Council Meeting***

The Administrative Council will meet on ***Friday, December 11th at 9:00 AM***. 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 e-mail Tom at [Tom.Blackstock@gmail.com](mailto:Tom.Blackstock@gmail.com) or Saunders at [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org).

### ***Our Daily Bread***

We have copies of Our Daily Bread for December, January and February. We also have a Christmas Journey from Our Daily Bread. Copies will be available in the church for you to pick up. Please reach out to Saunders at [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org) or 469-569-2314 to schedule a time to pick them up at the church during the week.

# 211 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran-som cap-tive  
 2. O come, thou Wis-dom from on high, and or - der all things  
 3. O come, O come, great Lord of might, who to thy tribes on  
 4. O come, thou Root of Jes - se's tree, an en-sign of thy

Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone-ly ex - ile here  
 far and nigh; to us the path of knowl - edge show  
 Si - nai's height in an-cient times once gave the law  
 peo - ple be; be - fore thee ru - lers si - lent fall;

*Refrain*  
 un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
 and cause us in her ways to go. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -  
 in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.  
 all peo-ples on thy mer - cy call.

man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

WORDS: 9th cent. Latin; trans. st. 1, 3, 5ab, 6cd, 7ab *The Hymnal*, 1940; st. 2, Henry VENI EMMANUEL  
 Sloane Coffin, 1916; st. 4, 5cd, 6ab, 7cd, Laurence Hull Stookey, 1986 LM with Refrain  
 MUSIC: 15th cent. French; arr. and harm. by Thomas Helmore, 1854

Sts. 1, 3, 5ab, 6cd, 7ab © 1940, 1943, renewed 1981 The Church Pension Fund; trans. sts. 4, 5cd, 6ab, 7cd © 1989 The United  
 Methodist Publishing House; antiphons © 1962 Sisters of St. Benedict

1. Hail to the Lord's A - noint - ed, great Da-vid's great-er Son!  
 2. He comes with suc-cor speed - y to those who suf-fer wrong;  
 3. He shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit-ful earth;  
 4. To him shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows as - cend;

Hail in the time ap - point - ed, his reign on earth be - gun!  
 to help the poor and need - y, and bid the weak be strong;  
 love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, spring in his path to birth.  
 his king-dom still in - creas - ing, a king-dom with-out end.

He comes to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap-tive free;  
 to give them songs for sigh - ing, their dark-ness turn to light,  
 Be - fore him, on the moun - tains, shall peace, the her-ald, go,  
 The tide of time shall nev - er his cov - e - nant re - move;

to take a - way trans - gres - sion, and rule in eq - ui - ty.  
 whose souls, con-demned and dy - ing, are pre-cious in his sight.  
 and righ-teous-ness, in foun - tains, from hill to val-ley flow.  
 his name shall stand for - ev - er; that name to us is love.

WORDS: James Montgomery, 1821 (Ps. 72)  
 MUSIC: *Gesangbuch der H. W. k. Hofkapelle*, 1784, alt;  
 adapt. and harm. by W. H. Monk, 1868

ELLACOMBE  
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