



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church*  
*Sunday, November 8th 2020*

*Dear Lake Toxaway UMC family and friends,*

*"Burnout" has become an overly used term but one we understand in its description of becoming exhausted by a major activity in life. The Gospel lesson from Matthew and the contrast between foolish and prudent bridesmaids can be heard as a story about burnout. Tragically, to experience a burnout is to lose a chance, to be left outside according to this scripture lesson.*

*I am reminded of a spiritual hymn I learned some years ago, "Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning." The lyrics describe a flame around which people gather and regain and recover a sense of place and courage in a world of pain, suffering, and uncertainty.*

*Keep your lamps trimmed and burning/keep your lamps trimmed and burning/keep lamps trimmed and burning/See what the LORD has done!*

*There are variations of the last line. One variation is "for the world's about to end." Either translation is a call to keep awake, as Jesus tells us. The call was not simply for what is not yet here, but what surrounds us already. We need to allow the Holy Spirit to breathe through the lesson in Matthew and remember there is another reality into which we lean, as we live and work in the present reality. There is a destination to our history, a culmination to all we are becoming. It is not a threat; it is a promise!*

*I like another variation of ending of this verse: "Keep your lamps trimmed and burning/for the work is almost done. Of all the images Jesus uses to help us grab hold of the kingdom of God or kingdom of heaven (Matthew's preference), this is one of the only ones where the future tense is used. This unique future tense focus of this parable states the kingdom of heaven will be like this.*

*Jesus appeared to enjoy weddings. He used the image of weddings about the kingdom often. He spoke about parties, feasts, and especially weddings. Because something special happens at a wedding: a binding, a connecting, a covenant, a vow, and whooping great party. What better description is there for the kingdom of heaven?*

*Why then the lamps? Why then wise and foolish? Aren't we supposed to share what we have? I go back to the Sermon on the Mount and the call to be "the light of the world." The light, the lamp is not only an object of illumination; it represents a life of service and sacrifice. It represents a life transformed by faith in Jesus, by the grace of God. The wise bridesmaids lived a life of preparing for the Bridegroom; the foolish ones thought it did not matter until the last minute. When he finally arrives, they have nothing to show they belong to him, nothing to shine as a way of living and giving and caring and hoping. The Lord says to the foolish, "I don't know you."*

*This is a sign for those who have been paying attention to Jesus, those who said "yes" some time ago. Each was required to participate according to the grace given to them, to use the gifts received. We cannot ride another person's coattails into the kingdom of God; we go into the kingdom of heaven by grace and grace alone. We listen for the shout at midnight and will recognize Christ among us. Keep your lamps trimmed and burning; the work is almost done! Amen? Amen!*

*Faithfully,*

*Marcus*

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church  
Community Worship Service  
Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost  
November 8th, 2020**

**9:30 A.M. Livestream link: <https://youtu.be/nkW5NldqTe0>**

**PRELUDE**

Change My Heart, O God      arr. Douglas E. Wagner

**GREETING**

*The God of our ancestors has led us to this place.*

***We are witnesses.***

*We have sworn to teach God's promises  
to all generations.*

***We are witnesses.***

*The time is coming when Christ will come again in glory.*

***We are witnesses.***

*Let us tell the world of God's faithful love.*

***We will worship and witness together!***

**HYMN #662**

Stand Up and Bless the Lord

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

**Opening Prayer**

***Your love has brought us together, O Lord,  
and it is your love that sustains us through each day.***

***We pray that you would keep us faithful.***

***Even as we watch for signs of your kingdom,  
strengthen us to work with you  
to bring about, here and now,  
your reign on earth.***

***Give us the courage  
to witness to your presence in the world,  
today, tomorrow, and into the future.***

***We pray in the name of the One who comes,  
Christ our Savior. Amen.***

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### **Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25**

- 24:1 Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God.
- 24:2 And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors--Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor--lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods.
- 24:3a Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River and led him through all the land of Canaan and made his offspring many.
- 24:14 "Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.
- 24:15 Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."
- 24:16 Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods;
- 24:17 for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed;
- 24:18 and the LORD drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore, we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God."
- 24:19 But Joshua said to the people, "You cannot serve the LORD, for he is a holy God. He is a jealous God; he will not forgive your transgressions or your sins.
- 24:20 If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign gods, then he will turn and do you harm, and consume you, after having done you good."
- 24:21 And the people said to Joshua, "No, we will serve the LORD!"
- 24:22 Then Joshua said to the people, "You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen the LORD, to serve him." And they said, "We are witnesses."
- 24:23 He said, "Then put away the foreign gods that are among you, and incline your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel."
- 24:24 The people said to Joshua, "The LORD our God we will serve, and him we will obey."
- 24:25 So, Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made statutes and ordinances for them at Shechem.

**Psalm 78:1-7 (read responsively – text in bold)**

- 78:1 Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 78:2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old,**
- 78:3 things that we have heard and known, that our ancestors have told us.**
- 78:4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.
- 78:5 He established a decree in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach to their children;**
- 78:6 that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children,
- 78:7 so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.**

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

- 4:13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.
- 4:14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died.
- 4:15 For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died.
- 4:16 For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
- 4:17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.
- 4:18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

### **Matthew 25:1-13**

- 25:1 "Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom.
- 25:2 Five of them were foolish, and five were wise.
- 25:3 When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them;
- 25:4 but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps.
- 25:5 As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept.
- 25:6 But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.'
- 25:7 Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps.
- 25:8 The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'
- 25:9 But the wise replied, 'No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.'
- 25:10 And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut.
- 25:11 Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.'
- 25:12 But he replied, 'Truly I tell you, I do not know you.'
- 25:13 Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

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

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

**SOLO**

Change My Heart, O God

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

***Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.  
(Let us offer our silent confessions.)***

***God of Mystery,  
we want to stay awake  
and be ready for your surprises,  
but we are tired and overcome  
with the usual routine.  
We want to wait patiently  
for the fulfillment of your kingdom,  
but we are frustrated by our need  
for immediate gratification.  
We want to believe your promises from ancient days,  
but we are overwhelmed with postmodern doubts.  
Come to us again, O God.  
Awaken us with your unexpected grace.  
Shock us with your daring mercy.  
Lift us up from lethargy  
and set our feet on your path once more. Amen.***

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

*Encourage one another with these words:  
"We will be with the Lord forever."  
God's promises are never forgotten.  
Do not grieve as those who have no hope.  
Our hope is in God,  
and not even death can overcome that hope.  
Enter into God's mercy and love!  
***In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God. AMEN.****

## **HOMILY**

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH (*Affirmation from Romans*)**

*Pastor: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress, or persecution or famine, or nakedness or peril or sword?*

***People: No! In all things we are more than conquerors through the One who loved us. We are sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 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. Thanks be to God! 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.***

## **OFFERING**

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

## **OFFERTORY**

O Rest in the Lord      Felix Mendelssohn

## **DOXOLOGY**

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

***We dedicate these gifts to you, Generous God,  
even as we dedicate our lives to you.  
Keep us true to our promise,  
that we may witness to you  
with all that we are and all that we do. 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 #540**

I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord

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

## **BENEDICTION**

## **POSTLUDE**

Postlude on a Shape Note Tune James Boeringer

## **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

Liturgist: Carole Guffey

## **Prayer Concerns of the Community**

**Please pray for Marty Young, Madison Coleman & the Jeter Family, Chad Zimmerman 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**

**Liturgists needed.** Do you like being a reader at our Sunday services? If so, please e-mail Saunders at [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org) to let her know your availability.

***Seven of our Students Scholars need you:*** Student Scholars Mentors are still needed. If you can pray, text, e-mail and call lending your support to our student scholars please reach out to Cathie Fussell at [linguafrog@gmail.com](mailto:linguafrog@gmail.com) or 910-572-2167. The students are in their final month of this semester as it will end at Thanksgiving. Now is a perfect time to be a mentor.

## **Administrative Council Meeting**

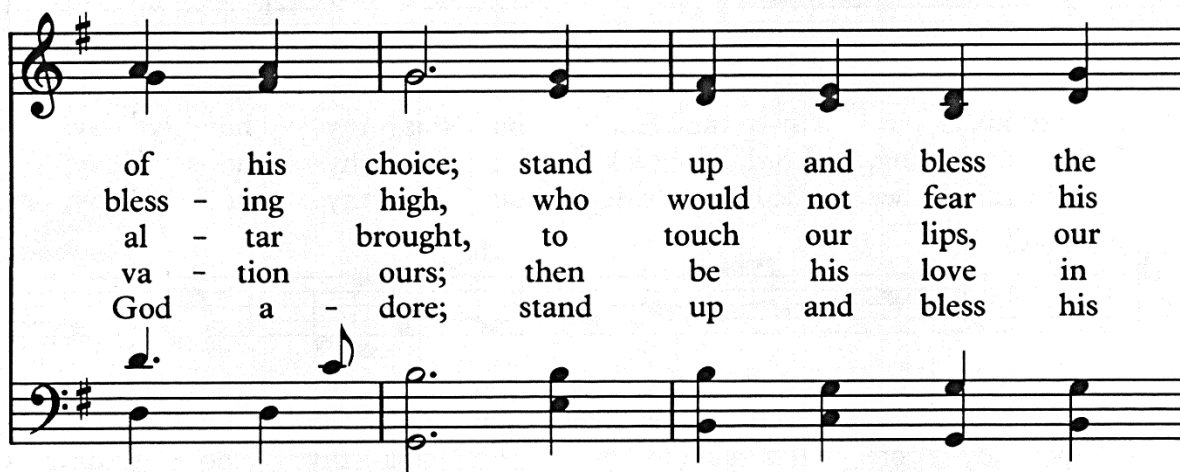
The Administrative Council will meet on ***Friday, December 11th at 9:00 AM***. If you are a member of the Council, you will receive a Zoom Invite. If you are not a member and would like to attend the meeting, please email Tom Blackstock or Saunders Grommesh as these meetings are open to all members, but only members have a vote if actions are required. You may e-mail Tom at [tomblackstock@gmail.com](mailto:tomblackstock@gmail.com) or Saunders at [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org).

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## Stand Up and Bless the Lord



1. Stand up and bless the Lord, ye peo - ple  
 2. Though high a - bove all praise, a - bove all  
 3. O for the liv - ing flame from his own  
 4. God is our strength and song, and his sal -  
 5. Stand up and bless the Lord; the Lord your



of his choice; stand up and bless the  
 bless - ing high, who would not fear his  
 al - tar brought, to touch our lips, our  
 va - tion ours; then be his love in  
 God a - dore; stand up and bless his



Lord your God with heart and soul and voice.  
 ho - ly name, and laud and mag - ni - fy?  
 minds in - spire, and wing to heaven our thought!  
 Christ pro - claimed with all our ran - somed powers.  
 glo - rious name, hence - forth for - ev - er - more.

WORDS: James Montgomery (Neh. 9:5)

MUSIC: *Genevan Psalter*, 1551; adapt. by William Crotch, 1836ST. MICHAEL  
SM

# I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord

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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