



Third Sunday of Advent

*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Sunday, December 12th 2021*

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
Third Sunday of Advent, December 12th

9:30 A.M. 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

In Dulci Jubilo Paul Manz
(Tune of Hymn 224)

GREETING

Pastor: A path to our God,

People: Winding through the ordinary,

Pastor: Weaving through the busyness,

People: Overcoming roadblocks and detours.

Pastor: A way to go home,

People: Leaving the past in the past,

Pastor: Moving from darkness and exile,

People: Coming into the light.

Pastor: Advent is a path to our God,

People: A way to come home,

Pastor: A discovery of God's voice:

People: Rejoice, rejoice. God is with us!

HYMN #220

Angels from the Realms of Glory

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

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Reader One: *It's a reunion, every time we go home, every time we embrace those we love, no matter how long it has been. It feels like sunrise, like the clouds are parting and the rain has ended. It is joy, nothing less than pure joy to grab hold of those who are home for us, who make home for us. Whether we wake up to them every day, or travel many miles to see them again, it is joy to go home.*

ALL: *The prophet Zephaniah tells us to rejoice at the thought of going home. The prophet tells us to imagine being set free, being unburdened, being released to live, to fully live in the grace and wonder of life itself, surrounded by those who love us like no one else. And then to live like that was our truth even now, even here. It is joy to go home.*

Reader One: *John the Baptist reminds us, however, that it takes choices to live in this joy. It doesn't just happen; we choose to make life a joy by how we love others, by how we serve and give and care for others, by how we do the job we do and how we impact the world around us. We build joy as we build a home in this world and the next.*

(Light the three candles on the Advent wreath. Today's candle is a distinct color, pink.)

OPENING PRAYER *(Please be seated)*

***Holy Source of life and hope,
as we come together this day,
open our ears to hear,
open our eyes to see,
and open our hearts to love,
that we may come to know your ways
and follow your paths.
Help us grow in love for one another,
and for all creation,
as we prepare for the coming of the one
who calls us to turn from our false gods
to you, Holy One,
the true source of our salvation. Amen.***

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Zephaniah 3:14-20

- 3:14 Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!
- 3:15 The LORD has taken away the judgments against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.
- 3:16 On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.
- 3:1 The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing
- 3:18 as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.
- 3:19 I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.
- 3:20 At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

Isaiah 12:2-6 (Please read the bold text)

12:2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

12:3 With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

12:4 And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted.

12:5 Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.

12:6 Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Philippians 4:4-7

4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

4:5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

4:6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

4:7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Luke 3:7-18 (Please stand for the Gospel)

3:7 John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

3:8 Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

3:9 Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

3:10 And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?"

3:11 In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise."

3:12 Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

3:13 He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

3:14 Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

3:15 As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,

3:16 John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

3:17 His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

3:18 So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to 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.)

It is getting more and more difficult, Lord, for us to keep our attention on the holy things. Our lives are caught up in the planning, parties, gifts, and other such things. We get side-tracked too easily and exhausted, we fall into restless sleep. The cries of those in need abound and we are overwhelmed by the need. Too often we turn a deaf ear because we feel we just can't meet all the needs that are presented to us. Heal our hearts and spirits, Lord. Help us understand that you do not ask us to heal everything but rather to find a simple way in which we might lighten someone else's burden, as you have lightened our lives. You have brought hope and peace to us. Now cause us to rejoice in the wondrous things that you have done. Teach us to use our gifts for the common good, and that in helping, we find great and abundant joy. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The messenger has been sent to you, proclaiming that there is One who is Coming who will heal and lead you. Know that this is a great gift from God, who has always and will always love you. AMEN

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

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH #883 (United Church of Canada)

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

**who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

We are called to be the church:

**to celebrate God's presence,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,**

our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
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. Amen.

HYMN #230

O Little Town of Bethlehem
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY

What is This Lovely Fragrance Paul Manz
(French Carol)

DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God who gives all gifts, in this season, we focus so much on giving gifts to one another. Help us, we pray, to remember what John the Baptist tells us is on your wish list: that we might bear fruit worthy of the repentance that is the very heart of this season: fruit of compassion, fruit of sharing, fruit by denying ourselves so that others who have little will have enough. In response to you, we give that our fruit might please you. In the Savior's name, we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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 #224

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice
Located in the back of the bulletin - (printed w/permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo Robert J. Powell

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flowers on the Altar

Flowers on the altar are given by Barb & Jerry Kline and Marcus & Kim Dodson & family in loving memory of Ruth Cech.

Thank you!

Marcus, Charlie and Saunders are grateful for the Christmas bonus from all of you. Thank you for your generosity, prayers and support year-round.

A Special Guest Violinist

On Sunday, December 19, we will have special music provided at our worship service by violinist, Kristine Candler. Kristine is a graduate of the prestigious Eastman School of Music and serves as concert mistress of the Brevard Philharmonic Orchestra. Thank you, Charlie Steele, for this wonderful suggestion and making this happen.

Our Daily Bread Devotionals

The next quarter: December – February of Our Daily Bread devotionals are available. They are located at both entrances of the sanctuary and in the Fellowship Hall.

Christmas Eve Service

*Our Christmas Eve candlelight service will be **December 24th at 7:00 PM***

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Please pray for Jack Jeter, Renee Alexander, Keith and Jackie Skivington, John & Sue Thomas, Donna Parker, Chad & Anne Zimmerman, Marty Young, Cathie Fussell's brother, Lonnie Taylor and nephew, Jeff Tilley, Judy Lefler's friend Barbara Cline-Sanibel, Bobbi Moore's sister, Nancy Schubert and Frank Hardin.

Please pray for those having or had surgery for recovery, those who have had the death of a loved one recently.

Please pray for our student scholars as they conclude their first semester and prepare for a new semester.

NEW LTUMC MEMBERS

Matt and Saunders Grommesh are joining the LTUMC family as Associate members. They live in Lake Toxaway near the post office.

STAFF & LAY VOLUNTEERS

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

Organist: Charlie Steele: cwsorgan@comporium.net

Church Administrator: Saunders Grommesh, 469-569-2314, administrator@laketoxawayumc.org

Lay Leaders: Barbara Kline: 828-862-5585 and Paula Markert: 828-553-9434

Audio/Visual for Livestream Chair: Andy Harvill

Liturgist: John Lefler

220 Angels from the Realms of Glory

1. An - gels from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er
 2. Shep-herds, in the field a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your
 3. Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions
 4. Saints, be - fore the al - tar bend - ing, watch - ing long in

all the earth; ye who sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry
 flocks by night, God with us is now re - sid - ing;
 beam a - far; seek the great De - sire of na - tions;
 hope and fear, sud - den - ly the Lord, de - scend - ing,

Refrain

now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:
 yon - der shines the in - fant light: Come and wor - ship,
 ye have seen his na - tal star:
 in his tem - ple shall ap - pear:

come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born King.

WORDS: James Montgomery, 1816 (Lk. 2:8-20; Mt. 2:1-12; Mal. 3:1)
 MUSIC: Henry T. Smart, 1867

REGENT SQUARE
 87.87.87

230 O Little Town of Bethlehem

1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie;
 2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry, and gath - ered all a - bove,
 3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given;
 4. O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

a - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 so God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin, and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars to - geth - er, pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

WORDS: Phillips Brooks, ca. 1868
 MUSIC: Lewis H. Redner, 1868

ST. LOUIS
 86.86.76.86

Alt. tune: FOREST GREEN

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice 224

1., 2., 3. Good Christian friends, re - joice with heart and soul and

voice; give ye heed to what we say: News, news!
 voice; now ye hear of end - less bliss: News, news!
 voice; now ye need not fear the grave: News, news!

Je - sus Christ is born to - day! Ox and ass be -
 Je - sus Christ was born for this! He hath o - pened
 Je - sus Christ was born to save! Calls you one and

fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.
 heav - en's door, and ye are blest for - ev - er - more.
 calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall.

Christ is born to - day, Christ is born to - day!
 Christ was born for this, Christ was born for this!
 Christ was born to save, Christ was born to save!

WORDS: 14th cent. Latin; trans. by John Mason Neale, 1855
 MUSIC: German melody; harm. by Gary Alan Smith, 1988

IN DULCI JUBILO
 66.727.78.55