



Fourth Sunday of Advent

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Sunday, December 19th 2021

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 19th

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

The Sussex Carol (On Christmas Night) arr. Charles Callahan

GREETING

Pastor: A path to our God,

Pastor: Come, joy, lighten our spirits.

People: Come, hope, lift us from despair.

Pastor: Come, peace, ease our frantic worry.

People: Come, love, shine in all we do.

Pastor: Come, Jesus, be born in us.

People: Come, Lord, set us free.

Pastor: Come, God,

People: Rule in our hearts and teach us to sing with joy!

HYMN #238

Angels We Have Heard on High

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

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Reader One: Sometimes when we are trying something new, or when we are facing a difficult decision, or when we want to celebrate something, or when we just feel lost and alone and uncertain about life, the universe and everything, we need a blessing. We don't always think of it that way, or word it like that. We say we need advice, or support, or companions, or someone to come along beside and lift us up again so we can see more than the tops of our shoes. We seek a blessing.

Reader Two: For many of us, we go home; we ask mom; we talk to dad, or brothers and sisters, close friends, those we grew up with, those who know us best. We want them alongside; we want to be in their presence. Somehow, we know that being there, being home, will make all things better. Maybe it won't be fixed, or solved, or wished away, but at least we won't be alone. We seek a blessing.

Reader One: Mary, faced with an incomprehensible burden and gift, ran to Cousin Elizabeth's house, looking for someone who knew a little of what she was going through, looking for a place to hide until the reality of her condition could become something real. And she received a blessing. The prophet Micah spoke of a blessing coming to an unexpected place, an unassuming town. Yet by God's grace would become the means through which God would bless the whole world. Bethlehem, the little town of blessing. We seek a blessing.

Reader Two: We light these candles, the candle of hope, of peace, of joy and of today, love, as a sign that we know blessing and we know waiting for blessing to be felt and lived. We light these candles as a sign that we still seek a blessing. It's time to go home.

(Light all four candles in the Advent wreath.)

OPENING PRAYER *(Please be seated)*

***Holy God,
your prophet Micah foretold with faith
that a new ruler would come forth from Bethlehem—
today we celebrate the fulfillment of your promise;
your daughter Elizabeth proclaimed with faith
that her cousin was to be the mother of her Lord—
today we celebrate the fulfillment of your promise;
your servant Mary proclaimed with faith
that she would be called blessed by all generations—
today we celebrate the fulfillment of your promise.
Make us bold enough to proclaim with faith—
the coming of your kingdom,
the coming of your justice,
the coming of your peace.
May we sing out the good news of your salvation,
trusting in fulfillment of your promises.
All this we pray in the name of the one who comes.
Amen.***

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Micah 5:2-5a

- 5:2 But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days.
- 5:3 Therefore, he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel.
- 5:4 And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth;
- 5:5a and he shall be the one of peace.

Luke 1:46b-55 (Please read the bold text)

1:46b "My soul magnifies the Lord,

1:47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

1:48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

1:49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

1:50 His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

1:51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.

1:52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;

1:53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

1:54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

1:55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

Hebrews 10:5-10

10:5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me;

10:6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure.

10:7 Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

10:8 When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law),

10:9 then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.

10:10 And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Luke 1:39-45, (46-55) (Please stand for the Gospel)

1:39 In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country,

1:40 where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

1:41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit

1:42 and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

1:43 And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me?

1:44 For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy.
1:45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."
1:46 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
1:47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
1:48 for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
1:49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
1:50 His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
1:51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
1:52 He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly;
1:53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.
1:54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
1:55 according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

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.)

Loving God,

***even in the midst of this season of goodwill,
there is much to confess.***

***In spite of holiday cheer,
stress and anxiety rule our lives.***

***We miss the reason for the season,
focusing instead on Christmas parties, long to-do lists,
and trying to get the shopping done.***

***We fail to think about your reordered world—
a world where the lowly are lifted up
and the hungry are filled with good things.***

***Help us adjust our Christmas priorities,
that we might join with you, O God,
in preparing a world that welcomes
the one who brings us peace.***

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

The ancient promises of God are fulfilled.

God does not forget us.

God's mercy extends from generation to generation.

Let our souls rejoice in God!

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

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH #887 (Romans 8:35, 37-29)

Leader:

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. Amen.

HYMN #219

What Child is This

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

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY

Gesu Bambino (The Infant Jesus) Pietro A.Yon

DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Magnificent God, as we focus on Mary, the mother of Jesus, we are reminded that you do great wonders and signs through the most humble and obedient of your children. As we give our gifts to you this day, give us ears to hear the whispers of the angels speaking to us; give us eyes to see the needy and the unloved all around us; and give us faith to offer our lives to your plan of saving love. In Christ, our redeemer, 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 #250

Once in Royal David's City
Located in the back of the bulletin - (printed w/permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

The Wexford Carol arr. Douglas E. Wagner

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.

Welcome Kristine Candler, our special guest violinist

Thank you, Kristine Candler, our guest violinist for adding a special touch to our service today. Kristine is a graduate of the prestigious Eastman School of Music. She resides in Brevard and currently serves as concert master of the Brevard Philharmonic Orchestra. Thank you, Charlie Steele, for this wonderful suggestion and making this happen.

LTUMC Tornado Relief

Due to the generous giving of our congregation throughout 2021, LTUMC has met our aggressive budget of Outreach Giving of \$155,000. As in recent years, our focus has been on local outreach partners in the area and our scholarship program. The tornadoes that ravaged our neighbors to the west have left a humanitarian disaster in their path. This week LTUMC has issued a check for \$15,000 to UMCOR, The United Methodist Church's disaster relief organization, specifically targeted for our neighbor's tornado relief. Thank you for your generosity which has enabled us to respond in such a time of need.

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.

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: Carole Guffey

238 Angels We Have Heard on High

1. An-gels we have heard on high sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,
 2. Shep-herds, why this ju-bi-lee? Why your joy-ous strains pro-long?
 3. Come to Beth-le-hem and see Christ whose birth the an-gels sing;
 4. See him in a man-ger laid, whom the choirs of an-gels praise;

and the moun-tains in re-ly ech-o-ing their joy-ous strains.
 What the glad-some tid-ings be which in-spire your heav-en-ly song?
 come, a-dore on bend-ed knee, Christ the Lord, the new-born King.
 Ma-ry, Jo-seph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.

Refrain

Glo - - - - ri - a,

in ex-cel-sis De-o! Glo - - -

- - - ri - a, in ex-cel-sis De - o!

WORDS: Trad. French carol; trans. *Crown of Jesus*, 1862, alt. (Lk. 2:6-20)
 MUSIC: French carol melody; arr. by Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937;
 harm. by Austin C. Lovelace, 1964
 Harm. © 1964 Abingdon Press

GLORIA
 77.77 with Refrain

What Child Is This

219

1. What child is this who, laid to rest, on Ma - ry's
 2. Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and
 3. So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come, peas - ant,

lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with
 ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tians, fear, for
 king, to own him; the King of kings sal -

an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

WORDS: William C. Dix, 1865 (Lk. 2:6-20; Mt. 2:1-12)
 MUSIC: 16th cent. English melody

GREENSLEEVES
 87.87 with Refrain

Once in Royal David's City

250

1. Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly cat - tle
 2. He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and Lord of
 3. Je - sus is our child - hood's pat - tern; day by day, like us he
 4. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own re - deem - ing

shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 grew; he was lit - tle, weak, and help - less, tears and
 love; for that child so dear and gen - tle is our

man - ger for his bed; Ma - ry, lov - ing moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall. With the poor, the scorned, the
 smiles like us he knew; and he feel - eth for our
 Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren

mild, Je - sus Christ, her lit - tle child.
 low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 sad - ness, and he shar - eth in our glad - ness.
 on to the place where he is gone.

WORDS: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848 (Lk. 2:7)
 MUSIC: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

IRBY
 87.87.77