



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Sunday, February 7th, 2021*

Dear Lake Toxaway family and friends,

This story of healing in the Gospel lesson fascinates me! Peter's mother-in-law is healed. Mark records no words spoken by her and no name given. "He took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them (Mark 1: 31)." Later in the evening, people came to the door, and Jesus provided many miracles of healing!

In these days of COVID-19, I pray for such a miracle of healing. I pray we can return to the time when we can gather in community and worship. I pray for less anxiety and fear in our world.

I however, want to emphasize an easily overlooked part of this healing story. Peter's mother-in-law's first act after her healing was to begin to serve Jesus! Her witness is strong! As soon as she came to herself, she did not think of herself. She set herself aside in order to serve.

I want to celebrate service today. I do not want any of you to think of service as another call to do more, to work harder. Instead, I would like to invite us to celebrate service by saying "thank you." Can we cultivate a spirit of gratitude for the ones we have gotten used to ignoring, the persons who have become a part of the background noise of living in the world as it is?

The specific action of the mother-in-law is skimmed over in Mark's Gospel. We don't know what she did, how she served. We only know she did. (Some translate her act as preparing a meal; most scholars believe she was a significant financial supporter of Jesus' ministry.) But her act of service was worth a comment for Mark. He told us her response to this gift of healing was service. Her gratitude was not in words, but in action.

When we begin to celebrate the small and large acts of service of others, we find encouragement and an atmosphere for service for all of us. May our prayers include reference to the humble servants around us. Let our confessions be of how we have overlooked the presence of Christ in a simple act of giving and service in front of us.

I invite us to think about those who have served us recently. May we give thanks for them. When we come to the time of pastoral prayer and prayers of the people in the worship service, I want us to name some of these people and express our thankfulness to God for those who serve without being told.

Faithfully,

Marcus

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany, February 7th**

9:30 A.M. Livestream link: <https://youtu.be/4wN9zaPSs40>

PRELUDE

There is a Balm in Gilead arr. Robert J. Powell

GREETING

L: Praise God who has showered us with love.

P: Even in the dark times, God protests and guides us.

L: God has blessed us with a magnificent world

P: If strife should assail, God call us to be people of healing and action to help others.

L: Come! Let us worship God who is always with us.

P: Let us praise God that through all our trials and triumphs, God's love brings us hope. AMEN.

HYMN #101

From All That Dwell Below the Skies

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

OPENING PRAYER

God of love and healing, we gather today to hear the words of your love as you touch our hearts with holy balm. Open our hearts and spirits and let your merciful spirit dwell within us that, having heard the good news, we may bring that hope to others. AMEN.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 40:21-31

- 40:21 Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
- 40:22 It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in;
- 40:23 who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.
- 40:24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble.
- 40:25 To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One.
- 40:26 Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing.
- 40:27 Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"?
- 40:28 Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.
- 40:29 He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.
- 40:30 Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted;
- 40:31 but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Psalm 147:1-11, 20c (Please read responsively the text in bold)

- 147:1 Praise the LORD! How good it is to sing praises to our God; for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.
- 147:2 The LORD builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the outcasts of Israel.**
- 147:3 He heals the brokenhearted, and binds up their wounds.
- 147:4 He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.**
- 147:5 Great is our Lord, and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.
- 147:6 The LORD lifts up the downtrodden; he casts the wicked to the ground.**
- 147:7 Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving; make melody to our God on the lyre.

147:8 He covers the heavens with clouds, prepares rain for the earth, makes grass grow on the hills.

147:9 He gives to the animals their food, and to the young ravens when they cry.

147:10 His delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the speed of a runner;

147:11 but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear him, in those who hope in his steadfast love.

147:20c Praise the LORD!

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

9:16 If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel!

9:17 For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission.

9:18 What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

9:19 For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them.

9:20 To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though I myself am not under the law) so that I might win those under the law.

9:21 To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law) so that I might win those outside the law.

9:22 To the weak I became weak, so that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some.

9:23 I do it all for the sake of the gospel, so that I may share in its blessings.

Mark 1:29-39 (Please stand for the Gospel)

1:29 As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

1:30 Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once.

1:31 He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

1:32 That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons.

1:33 And the whole city was gathered around the door.

- 1:34 And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.
- 1:35 In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed.
- 1:36 And Simon and his companions hunted for him.
- 1:37 When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you."
- 1:38 He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do."
- 1:39 And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

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.)

How amazing it is to us, O God of love, that you look into our hearts and forgive our wayward spirits. So many times, we have succumbed to the temptations of this world, seeking comfort in its fleeting enticements. We have turned deaf ears on the cries of those in distress and walked away from opportunities to give aid and comfort. Remind us again of how Jesus reached out to the multitudes who brought their problems and ailments to him. His compassionate touch not only healed their bodies but restored and renewed their spirits. Forgive our stubbornness and our selfishness. Give us hearts of compassion and spirits willing to serve you by serving others. We offer this prayer of contrition in Jesus' name. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Hear the good news! In this very instant, God has touched our hearts and offered God's healing and forgiving love. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Hallelujah!! AMEN.

In Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH (*Alternate for Season of Epiphany*)

*We believe in God,
the creator of all things,
the giver of life and breath.*

*We believe in Jesus Christ,
born Emmanuel, God with us,
baptized and revealed the most beloved Son of God;
he sought to heal humanity by taking our brokenness upon himself,
suffering for us,
dying for us
and being raised from the dead for our sake
and for the sake of all the world.
We believe that he will come again.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit,
continually poured out refreshing our lives,
leading us into a new day,
ever birthing the church, the body of Christ in the world.
This Spirit is our constant companion and counselor of truth
reminding us
of the gift of faith,
the ever presence of God
and the promise of eternal life.
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.*

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY

Prelude on "Holy Manna" Sam Batt Owens

DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of grace and mercy, you are the source of the true healing that can make us whole. We remember this morning that Jesus' ministry was deeply involved in both healing of people's bodies and healing of relationships. As we take time now in worship to offer our gifts to you, we pray that they might be used to bring healing – of body, of spirit, of broken relationships – to people who are in desperate need. This we pray this in Jesus' holy name. 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 #375

There is a Balm in Gilead
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed with permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Voluntary on a Shape Note Tune Bradley Hunnicutt

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

Soloist/Vocalist: Jacolyn Campbell

Liturgist: George Bagwell

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WHAT A GREAT RESPONSE SO FAR! WE HAVE 23 VOLUNTEERS AND WE NEED 17 MORE FOR THE 40 DAYS OF LENT!

Nancee Salyer and Scott Walter have volunteered to coordinate this effort. Nancee will coordinate the calendar. Scott will serve as an editor and Saunders will post the devotionals on our newly designed website: laketoxawayumc.org. You can contact **Nancee at nsalyer331@aol.com** and Scott at **scotlaw@aol.com**. I hope the response is so good we might have some days with 2 devotionals!

Administrative Council Meeting

The Administrative Council will meet on ***Friday, February 12th 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 or Saunders at administrator@laketoxawayumc.org.

Ash Wednesday Service

We will have a virtual **Ash Wednesday Service on Feb. 17 at 7 pm**. **If you would like to pick up ashes that have been blessed, Barbara and Jerry Kline will be at the church on Tuesday, Feb. 16 from 10 am to 11:30 am for you to drive by and pick up.** Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the 40-day period of preparation, self-examination, discipline, self-sacrifice, and service, prior to Easter.

Scholarship Committee needs volunteers to interview students

Are you excited about education and helping future student scholars? Volunteer interviewers are needed to help identify LTUMC student scholars for 2021-2022. Please reach out to Cathie Fussell at linguafrog@gmail.com or 910-572-2167 to learn more.

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Please pray for Thos Blackstock, Marty Young, Linda & Kent Garner, Cathie Fussell's sister, Rachel, her nephews, Chad, Jeff Tilley, her cousin Roger and his wife Judy, Chad & Anne Zimmerman, Tony Austin and Frank Hardin.

Please continue to pray for those who have had the death of a loved one in the recent weeks and months. Please pray for those with illness, upcoming surgery and recovery.

From All That Dwell Below the Skies 101

1. From all that dwell be - low the skies,
 2. E - ter - nal are thy mer - cies, Lord;
 3. Your loft - y themes, ye mor - tals, bring,
 4. In ev - ery land be - gin the song;

let the Cre - a - tor's praise a - rise; let the Re - deem - er's
 e - ter - nal truth at - tends thy word. Thy praise shall sound from
 in songs of praise di - vine - ly sing; the great sal - va - tion
 to ev - ery land the strains be - long; in cheer - ful sounds all

name be sung, through ev - ery land by ev - ery tongue.
 shore to shore, till suns shall rise and set no more.
 loud pro - claim, and shout for joy the Sav - ior's name.
 voic - es raise, and fill the world with loud - est praise.

WORDS: Sts. 1-2, Isaac Watts; sts. 3-4, anon., ca. 1781 (Ps. 117)
 MUSIC: John Hatton, 1793

DUKE STREET
 LM

375 There Is a Balm in Gilead

Refrain

There is a balm in Gil - e - ad to
 make the wound-ed whole; there is a balm in
 Gil - e - ad to heal the sin - sick soul. *Fine*

1. Some - times I feel dis - cour - aged, and
 2. Don't ev - er feel dis - cour - aged, for
 3. If you can't preach like Pe - ter, if

think my work's in vain. But then the Ho - ly
 Je - sus is your friend, and if you look for
 you can't pray like Paul, just tell the love of

Spir - it re - vives my soul a - gain.
 knowl - edge he'll ne'er re - fuse to lend.
 Je - sus, and say he died for all.

WORDS: Afro-American spiritual (Jer. 8:22)
 MUSIC: Afro-American spiritual; adapt. and arr. by William Farley Smith, 1986
 Adapt. and arr. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House

BALM IN GILEAD
 Irr.