



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church*  
*Sunday, April 25th, 2021*

Dear Lake Toxaway family and friends,

The symbol/image of Jesus as a Good Shepherd has become a favorite for individuals in the Church. We have stained glass windows that depict this image and other images of Jesus as a Shepherd in our churches and cathedrals.

I admit I don't always like thinking of myself as a sheep; I much prefer the image of being one of God's children and a co-heir with Jesus. I need the reminder of this story in John's Gospel which reminds us we need access to acceptance as one of God's sheep or as a co-heir with Jesus. Remember: Jesus is the door, the entrance, the way into an experience of love and transformation. We need guidance. Jesus is the one who leads us.

Our culture struggles with the notion of guidance. We have developed a phrase that exemplifies our sense of self-reliance, "I got this"! Rather than a guide or leader, we have the Internet and the vast amount of information available in a simple search. We often approach our living as if we are independent of others and more tragically, God in Christ. If we express our interdependence on God and His community, some will tell us we rely on "a crutch."

I have decided when someone makes a statement like this to me, I will respond by a simple correction and acknowledge I live by the grace of God and am guided by a simple staff, the rod or shepherd's staff of God in Jesus. I remember stating this truth to someone and it disarmed their disagreement to such an extent they found themselves asking me to explain. We don't "pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps." Rather we follow the Shepherd.

We may follow more easily when it comes to making difficult decisions about the living of our lives, especially during times of crisis. We want to follow wherever He leads and do whatever He tells us to do in those times. During the routine periods of life, the truth is we all struggle to follow the Shepherd. The prophet Isaiah stated it in this way: "all we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to our own way." Isaiah also reminds us there is a Shepherd to come: "And the LORD has laid on Him the failure/sin of us all (Isaiah 53:6). This is the Good News.

I have one additional point: John's Gospel refers to sheep of other folds, not the ones in front of the Good Shepherd. Others are included. Who are these others? Scholars do not have an adequate answer and neither do I. Jesus often reminds his followers judgment or determining who is "in" and who is "out" is not really our job. You and I are to invite and include as widely as possible.

Maybe, we all need to pause and listen to The Voice of the Good Shepherd. We trust God to be God. We trust Jesus, the Good Shepherd to call all of us. We trust the work of the Holy Spirit. And God creates the one flock that is more expansive than I can conceive.

I unabashedly invite us to claim our place among the flock and to unabashedly live in the comfort of the great hymn from Psalm 23 which we read today. Truthfully, as our cups run over (what an image), God's goodness and mercy are extended to others who find God's invitation to the door that is Jesus!

Faithfully,

Marcus

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church  
Community Worship Service  
Fourth Sunday of Easter, April 25th**

**9:30 A.M. Livestream link: <https://youtu.be/0WMqBI-V--U>**

**PRELUDE**

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us      arr. Dale Wood

**GREETING**

*L: The God of all shepherds has called us here.*

***P: We come today, celebrating God's love for us.***

*L: The Good Shepherd has given his life for us.*

***P: We come today, thanking Jesus for his witness and his teaching.***

*L: The Shepherding Spirit moves through us, bringing us new hope.*

***P: We come today ready to celebrate and to praise God. AMEN.***

**HYMN #327**

Crown Him with Many Crowns

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

**OPENING PRAYER**

***Thank you, loving God, for bringing us to this time of worship. Refresh us and heal us again. Remind us of the many ways in which you have blessed our lives with your abundant love and your presence. Guide our hearts and our spirits that we may hear your words and our souls may be stirred into active service to your people. In the name of the Good Shepherd, who leads us to life, we pray. AMEN.***

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### **\* Acts 4:5-12**

*\* During Eastertide a reading from Acts is often substituted for the lesson from the Hebrew Bible.*

- 4:5 The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem,
- 4:6 with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.
- 4:7 When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"
- 4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders,
- 4:9 if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed,
- 4:10 let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.
- 4:11 This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.'
- 4:12 There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

### **Psalm 23 (Please read responsively, the text in bold.)**

- 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.
- 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;**
- 23:3 he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.
- 23:4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff-- they comfort me.**

23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

**23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.**

### **1 John 3:16-24**

3:16 We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us--and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.

3:17 How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

3:18 Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action.

3:19 And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him

3:20 whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

3:21 Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God;

3:22 and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

3:23 And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.

3:24 All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

### **John 10:11-18**

10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

10:12 The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away--and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

- 10:13 The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep.
- 10:14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,
- 10:15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep.
- 10:16 I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So, there will be one flock, one shepherd.
- 10:17 For this reason, the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again.
- 10:18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

*L: This is the word of the Lord for the people of Christ.*

***P: Thanks be to God.***

**SOLO:** The Shepherd Psalm John Carter

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

***Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.***

*(Let us offer our silent confessions.)*

***Gentle Shepherd: You guide us in right paths, You lead us in the ways of righteousness, but we have allowed our anger, our rage, our greed, and at times even hate, to direct our paths. We have overreacted, we have taken more than our share, we have despised others that seem to have it all. Forgive us, God, for not following Your ways. Forgive us for not remembering that we are Your sheep, and You are our Shepherd. Forgive us when we have not listened for Your voice and instead have acted in the ways of the world. Guide us back to Your path, to loving You and loving our neighbors. Help us to unclench our fists and lend out our hands in hope and healing, forgiveness and love. In the name of Christ our Shepherd we pray. Amen.***

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

*The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The Good Shepherd knows the sheep, and the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep so that the sheep may live. We are part of the flock; we are part of Christ's body. In Christ we find wholeness and restoration. Go forth and share this Good News. Amen.*

***In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Amen.***

## **HOMILY**

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

***I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth;***

***And 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, dead, and buried;  
the third day he rose from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence he shall come to judge the quick 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

Meditation on "Diademata" Charles Callahan

## DOXOLOGY

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*Ever-present God who speaks in thunder and earthquakes and in the softest whisper: we long to hear your voice over all the noise of the world this day. In a world so divided and polarized, we need to hear only the voice of the Shepherd. May the gifts we offer today be our response to hearing the one who speaks in the language of love and compassion. In his 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 #381

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us  
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed with permission)

## BENEDICTION

## POSTLUDE

I Will Go in the Strength of the Lord Douglas E. Wagner  
(Psalm 71:16)

## 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: Jacolyn Campbell

Liturgist: Fred Markert



# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## ***2020 Tax Letters/Giving Statements***

The 2020 tax deadline to file has been extended to May 2021. 2020 Giving Statements were mailed in February and if you have not received yours, please reach out to Don McSwain, our Treasurer via email at [bgamedon@gmail.com](mailto:bgamedon@gmail.com).

## ***Scholarship Committee Update***

*The deadline for applications from future scholars was April 15<sup>th</sup> for LTUMC 2021-2022. If you are interested in being a mentor for a future scholar recipient, please reach out to Cathie Fussell at [linguafrog@gmail.com](mailto:linguafrog@gmail.com) or 910-572-2167 to learn more.*

## **PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY**

***Please pray for Jan Crocker, Chad & Anne Zimmerman, Thomas Blackstock, Marty Young, Mary Collins, Katherine Jeter, Marcus' nephew Steven Hudson, Cathie Fussell's nephew, Jeff Tilley, Frank Hardin, Madison Coleman & the Jeter family, Conor, Cynthia Wood's friends' two-year-old son.***

***Please pray for those with illness, upcoming surgery and recovery. Please pray for them and their recoveries.***

***Please continue to pray for those who have had the death of a loved one in the recent weeks and months; especially the family of Fred Collins for the passing of his mother, Ellen Gauze, Cathy Fussell's niece, the family of Kent Garner, and the family of Dell Rearden.***

***Please pray for all student scholars.***

***Please pray for Molly Cammack, one of our student scholars. "I am in the process of applying for a very exciting education opportunity! Please keep me in your prayers!"***

## 327 Crown Him with Many Crowns

1. Crown him with man - y crowns, the Lamb up - on his throne.  
 2. Crown him the Lord of life, who tri-umphed o'er the grave,  
 3. Crown him the Lord of peace, whose power a scep - ter sways  
 4. Crown him the Lord of love; be - hold his hands and side,

Hark! how the heaven-ly an-them drowns all mu-sic but its own.  
 and rose vic - to - rious in the strife for those he came to save.  
 from pole to pole, that wars may cease, and all be prayer and praise.  
 those wounds, yet vis - i - ble a - bove, in beau - ty glo - ri - fied.

A - wake, my soul, and sing of him who died for thee,  
 His glo - ries now we sing, who died, and rose on high,  
 His reign shall know no end, and round his pierc - ed feet  
 All hail, Re - deem - er, hail! For thou hast died for me;

and hail him as thy match-less King through all e - ter - ni - ty.  
 who died, e - ter - nal life to bring, and lives that death may die.  
 fair flowers of par - a - dise ex - tend their fra - grance ev - er sweet.  
 thy praise and glo - ry shall not fail through - out e - ter - ni - ty.

WORDS: Matthew Bridges, 1851, and Godfrey Thring, 1874 (Rev. 19:12)  
 MUSIC: George J. Elvey, 1868

DIADEMATA  
 SMD

RESURRECTION AND EXALTATION, *see further:*

636 Christian People, Raise Your Song      715, 716 Rejoice, the Lord Is King  
 177 He Is Lord

## 381 Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

1. Sav - ior, like a shep-herd lead us, much we  
 2. We are thine, thou dost be - friend us, be the  
 3. Thou hast prom-ised to re - ceive us, poor and  
 4. Ear - ly let us seek thy fa - vor, ear - ly

need thy ten - der care; in thy pleas - ant pas - tures  
 guard - ian of our way; keep thy flock, from sin de -  
 sin - ful though we be; thou hast mer - cy to re -  
 let us do thy will; bless - ed Lord and on - ly

feed us, for our use thy folds pre - pare.  
 fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.  
 lieve us, grace to cleanse and power to free.  
 Sav - ior, with thy love our bos - oms fill.

Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus! Thou hast  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus! Hear, O  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus! We will  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus! Thou hast

bought us, thine we are. Bless - ed Je - sus,  
 hear us when we pray. Bless - ed Je - sus,  
 ear - ly turn to thee. Bless - ed Je - sus,  
 loved us, love us still. Bless - ed Je - sus,

bless - ed Je - sus! Thou hast bought us, thine we are.  
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 bless - ed Je - sus! We will ear - ly turn to thee.  
 bless - ed Je - sus! Thou hast loved us, love us still.