



LAKE TOXAWAY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
P.O. BOX 83  
LAKE TOXAWAY, NC 28747

**ORDER OF WORSHIP  
CHRISTMAS EVE COMMUNION & CANDLELIGHT SERVICE 2023**

**7:00 PM Livestream is available on the LTUMC YouTube channel:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgtuJe20i8DN7S\\_Cfg1sWCg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgtuJe20i8DN7S_Cfg1sWCg)**

**ENTRANCE**

**RINGING OF THE BELL – *Please observe silence as we prepare for the service.***

**ORGAN PRELUDE**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel     Dallas Blair

**GREETING**

*Come, faithful watchers, and behold, your salvation is here!*

***We greet the Wondrous Light, our Messiah, Christ the Lord.***

*We have waited and watched, longing for God to show up and save us from the suffering and pain in our world.*

***We greet the Wondrous Light, the fulfillment of our hope.***

*We have waited and watched, longing for peace to reign among us, a peace that removes unjust barriers, frees us from sin, and binds us together as neighbors, family, and friends.*

***We greet the Wondrous Light, the bringer of our peace.***

*We have waited and watched, longing for joy that is persistent in the face of the grief, lament, chaos, and oppression that weigh on us day in and day out.*

***We greet the Wondrous Light, the source of our fierce joy.***

*We have waited and watched, longing to encounter the love that transforms us, the Love that is now here among us, first as a babe in a manger, then as a teacher, a friend, and our Savior.*

***We greet the Wondrous Light, Love Incarnate who has come to save us and transform us. Amen.***

**HYMN #234**

O Come, All Ye Faithful     (Stanzas 1-4)

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE (*Dodson Family*)**

***Reader 1:*** *To a people longing for hope and yearning for deliverance, the prophet Isaiah declared,*

*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined...For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:2, 6)*

***Reader 2:*** *Tonight, we come seeking hope, peace, joy, and love, and we find these things in a child. God made flesh as a baby in a manger. A baby who is both the beginning and the end of our salvation, who dwells with us even now, our Emmanuel, God with us.*

***Congregation:*** *We live as people in the in-between who celebrate the arrival of the Light that shines in lost and broken places as we wait for the day when we will live in the fullness of God's kingdom.*

**Reader 3:** *We light these candles as signs of our hope, our peace, our fierce joy, the love that transforms us, and Jesus Christ, our wondrous Light. May the Light burning in our hearts guide us, comfort us, protect us, and tend us in all seasons and circumstances, reminding us that day and night, in the light and in the darkness, God is with us. Our salvation has come! Amen.*

**OPENING PRAYER** *(Please be seated)*

***Emmanuel, God-with-us most of all tonight, your light lifts up our hearts, our spirits, and our voices. We give you thanks for your birth long ago and presence with us always. Your hope is more trustworthy than our promises. Your peace is deeper than our prayers. Your joy teaches us to sing even when we want to cry. Your love is wider than the chorus of the galaxies, and yet your Star shines on us now in this church which has become a manger. Amen.***

**THE LORD'S PRAYER #895**

**HYMN # 230**

Oh, Little Town of Bethlehem

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Isaiah 9:2-7**

- 9:2 The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness on them light has shined.
- 9:3 You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.
- 9:4 For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.
- 9:5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.
- 9:6 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 9:7 His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**Psalms 96 (Psalter Lesson ~ Please read the bold text)**

- 96:1 O sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
- 96:2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day.
- 96:3 Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.**
- 96:4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be revered above all gods.
- 96:5 For all the gods of the peoples are idols, but the LORD made the heavens.**
- 96:6 Honor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.
- 96:7 Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.**

- 96:8 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts.
- 96:9 Worship the LORD in holy splendor; tremble before him, all the earth.**
- 96:10 Say among the nations, "The LORD is king! The world is firmly established; it shall never be moved. He will judge the peoples with equity."
- 96:11 Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it;**
- 96:12 let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy
- 96:13 before the LORD; for he is coming, for he is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness, and the peoples with his truth.**

**Titus 2:11-14 (Epistle Reading)**

- 2:11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all,
- 2:12 training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions, and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly,
- 2:13 while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- 2:14 He it is who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

**Luke 2:1-14, 15-20 (Please stand for the Gospel)**

- 2:1 In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered.
- 2:2 This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.
- 2:3 All went to their own towns to be registered.
- 2:4 Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David.
- 2:5 He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child.
- 2:6 While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child.
- 2:7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
- 2:8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.
- 2:9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.
- 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people:
- 2:11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

- 2:12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger."
- 2:13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,
- 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"
- 2:15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."
- 2:16 So, they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.
- 2:17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child;
- 2:18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them.
- 2:19 But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.
- 2:20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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

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

## **HOMILY**

### **THE APOSTLES' CREED # 883**

### **HYMN OF PREPARATION #250**

Once in Royal David's City

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

***God of Light,***

***we confess that we have gone astray and have left Your light.***

***We follow the dim lights of the world of success and fortune.***

***We follow the dim lights that call us  
to be more religious by following rules.***

***We follow the fading light of personal salvation.***

***Forgive us for not seeking the true Light  
of Your love for all the world.***

***Forgive us for not following the ways of Jesus,  
who commanded us to love one another.***

***Call us to be light-bearers of love, compassion, and justice,  
in which the Mystery of Your Love is revealed.***

***In the name of Jesus, the Messiah, we pray. Amen.***

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

*Jesus is our blessed hope,  
bringing grace and salvation to all.  
On this night of nights,  
we are loved and made whole.*

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

## **THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

### **INVITATION TO THE TABLE**

*The Lord be with you.*

***And also with you.***

*Lift up your hearts.*

***We lift them up to the Lord.***

*Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

*(The pastor gives thanks and remembers God's acts of salvation, and concludes): ... and so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.***

*(The pastor continues the thanksgiving. The institution of the Lord's Supper is recalled.) The pastor concludes: ... and so in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:*

***Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again.***

*(The pastor invokes the present work of the Holy Spirit and then praises the Trinity, concluding): ... all honor and glory is yours, almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen***

## **GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP**

### **COMMUNION PRAYER**

***Most gracious God, source of all blessing, we give You thanks for inviting us to share this meal as your family; strengthen us to be a blessing to all the world, glorifying you in all things; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.***

## SENDING FORTH

### LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES AND HYMN #239

"Silent Night" (all verses)

*(Candles will be lit at this time. The ushers will bring the light to you. Please keep burning wicks upright. Tip only the unlighted candles. Enjoy the symbolism and bask in the glow of candlelight, but please be careful and respectful of the church's furnishings.)*

### WITNESS TO THE LIGHT

*L: Arise, shine, dear people, for our Light has come!*

***P: Christ is the World's true Light, on our paths and in our lives.***

*L: Receive the light and let its warmth and glow be in your hearts this night.*

***P: The glory of the Lord shines around us on this night.***

*L: May the light that began at creation, continued through the witness of the prophets, and has come to fullness at the Birth of Jesus Christ, be in your hearts and minds this evening. As you go from this place may your spirits be filled with joy and hope; for God's precious Light has been given for you. Go in Peace and know that God's peace always goes with you. AMEN.*

### CLOSING HYMN #246

Joy to the World

### BENEDICTION

### CHORAL CLOSING HYMN #251

Go Tell It on the Mountain

### POSTLUDE *(Please be seated for the Postlude)*

He is Born (French Carol) John A. Behnke

*(Please extinguish your candle during the Postlude)*

---

### WELCOME ALL

***Welcome to this service of candlelight and communion on this holy night. Whether small or large in number, we believe that God in Christ is the focus of our worship. Please use the time prior to the start of the service to reflect quietly.***

***In the United Methodist tradition, all people are welcome at the communion rail. We observe communion by the coming to the rails at the altar. The ushers will direct you to use the center aisle to come to the communion rail. You are invited to kneel or to stand at the altar rail. You will be offered a piece of bread which you can dip in the communion cup. Consume the bread that you have dipped and then remain at the altar until the Pastor offers a blessing to each group. Children are welcome to receive communion. If you do not wish to receive the elements, cross your arms at the rail and receive the gift of coming to the altar.***

### **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 Admin.: Saunders Grommesh, 469-569-2314, [administrator@laketoxawayumc.org](mailto:administrator@laketoxawayumc.org)

Lay Leaders: Paula Markert: 828-553-9434 & Scott Walter: 314-374-2969

Audio/Visual for Livestream Chair: Andy Harvill: 828-884-3548

Liturgists: The Dodson Family

***Hymns are located on the next few pages and used with permission via One License #737113-A***



## O Come, All Ye Faithful

1. O come, all ye faith-ful, joy-ful and tri-um-phant, O  
 1. *A - des - te, fi - de - les, lae - ti tri - um - phan - tes; ve -*  
 2. True God of true God, Light from Light E - ter - nal,  
 3. Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; O  
 \* 4. See how the shep-herds, sum-moned to his cra - dle,

come ye, O come ye, to Beth - le - hem.  
*ni - te, ve - ni - te in Beth - le - hem.*  
 lo, he shuns not the Vir - gin's womb;  
 sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove!  
 leav - ing their flocks, draw nigh to gaze;

Come and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;  
*Na - tum vi - de - te Re - gem an - ge - lor - um.*  
 Son of the Fa - ther, be - got - ten, not cre - at - ed;  
 Glo - ry to God, all glo - ry in the high - est;  
 we too will thith - er bend our joy - ful foot - steps;

*Refrain*  
 O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,  
*Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,*

O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.  
*ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, Do - mi - num.*

## 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

## 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.

# Silent Night, Holy Night

239



1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm, all is bright  
 1. *Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft, ein - sam wacht*  
 2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, shep - herds quake at the sight;  
 3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light;  
 4. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, won - drous star, lend thy light;



round yon vir - gin moth - er and child. Ho - ly in - fant, so ten - der and mild,  
*nur das trau - te hoch - hei - li - ge Paar, Hold - er Kna - be mit lock - i - gem Haar,*  
 glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far, heav - en - ly hosts sing Al - le - lu - ia!  
 ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,  
 with the an - gels let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia to our King;



sleep in heav - en - ly peace,	sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
<i>schlaf im himm - li - scher Ruh,</i>	<i>schlaf im himm - li - scher Ruh.</i>
Christ the Sav - ior is born,	Christ the Sav - ior is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth,	Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.
Christ the Sav - ior is born,	Christ the Sav - ior is born!



WORDS: Joseph Mohr, 1818, alt.; sts. 1, 2, 3 trans. by John F. Young;  
 st. 4 trans. anon. (Lk. 2:6-20)  
 MUSIC: Franz Gruber, 1818

STILLE NACHT  
 Irr.

Joy to the World

1. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
 2. Joy to the world, the Sav - ior reigns!  
 3. No more let sins and sor - rows grow,  
 4. He rules the world with truth and grace,

Let earth re - ceive her King; let  
 Let all their songs em - ploy; while  
 nor thorns in - fest the ground; he  
 and makes the na - tions prove the

ev - ery heart pre - pare him room,  
 fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 comes to make his bless - ings flow  
 glo - ries of his righ - teous - ness,

WORDS: Issac Watts, 1719 (Ps. 98:4-9)  
 MUSIC: Arr. from G. F. Handel, 1741, by Lowell Mason, 1848

ANTIOCH  
 CM with Repeat



BIRTH AND BAPTISM

and heaven and na - ture sing, and  
 re - peat the sound - ing joy, re -  
 far as the curse is found, far  
 and won - ders of his love, and

and heaven and na - ture  
 re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his

heaven and na - ture sing, and  
 peat the sound - ing joy, re -  
 as the curse is found, far  
 won - ders of his love, and

sing,  
 joy,  
 found,  
 love,

and re - peat the sound - ing  
 far as the curse is  
 and won - ders of his

heaven, and heaven, and na - ture sing.  
 peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 as, far as the curse is found.  
 won - ders, won - ders of his love.

sing,  
 joy,  
 found,  
 love,

# Go, Tell It on the Mountain

251

*Refrain*

Go, tell it on the moun - tain, o - ver the hills, and ev - 'ry - where;

go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born.

1 While shep - herds kept their watch - ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,  
 2 The shep - herds feared and trem - bled when lo, a - bove the earth  
 3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,

*Refrain*

be - hold, through - out the heav - ens there shone a ho - ly light.  
 rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.  
 and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ - mas morn.

Text: African-American spiritual, refrain; John W. Work II, 1873-1925, verses, alt.

Tune: African-American spiritual; setting: Hugh Porter, 1897-1960

Text and music: public domain

GO, TELL IT  
 76 76 WITH REFRAIN

LA 22-20, HA 409-91