



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
First Sunday after Christmas December 31st, 2023*

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
First Sunday after Christmas, December 31st

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

Ding Dong! Merrily on High arr, Jack Young

CALL TO WORSHIP (*Please stand as you are able*)

We have welcomed the Christ child and declared the glory of God's salvation that comes to live among us. And yet, still, we wait.

We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

We prepare to welcome a new year, thankful for how God has brought us through the past year and anxious to discover what the new year might bring.

We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

We join generations of Simeons and Annas who learned and taught us how to listen, notice, and discern divine love at work in the world.

We watch and work for God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

Come, let us worship God, whose love endures from generation to generation, guiding us from one year to the next.

Come, let us worship as we live in anticipation of God's kingdom on earth as it is heaven. Amen.

HYMN #224

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

OPENING PRAYER (*Please be seated*)

I am no longer my own, but thine.

Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

***Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.***

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

***I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.***

***And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.***

***And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.***

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

- 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my whole being shall exult in my God; for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- 61:11 For as the earth brings forth its shoots, and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up, so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.
- 62:1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication shines out like the dawn, and her salvation like a burning torch.
- 62:2 The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will give.
- 62:3 You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Psalm 148 (Psalter Lesson ~ Please read the bold text)

- 148:1 Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!
- 148:2 Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!**
- 148:3 Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!
- 148:4 Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!**
- 148:5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.
- 148:6 He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.**
- 148:7 Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,
- 148:8 fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!**
- 148:9 Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
- 148:10 Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!**
- 148:11 Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
- 148:12 Young men and women alike, old and young together!**
- 148:13 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.
- 148:14 He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the LORD!**

Galatians 4:4-7 (Epistle Reading)

- 4:4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,
- 4:5 in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.
- 4:6 And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
- 4:7 So, you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Luke 2:22-40 (Please stand for the Gospel)

- 2:22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord
- 2:23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"),
- 2:24 and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."
- 2:25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him.
- 2:26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah.
- 2:27 Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law,
- 2:28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,
- 2:29 "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word;
- 2:30 for my eyes have seen your salvation,
- 2:31 which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
- 2:32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."
- 2:33 And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him.
- 2:34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed
- 2:35 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed--and a sword will pierce your own soul too."
- 2:36 There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage,
- 2:37 then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day.
- 2:38 At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

- 2:39 When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.
- 2:40 The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(Please be seated)*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

(Let us offer our silent confessions.)

God of stars and angels, God of sheep and lambs,

God of abundance and grace:

You know us well, better than we know ourselves.

You hear us cry "Gloria!" and "Praise!"

And you watch us tear things apart with our words and deeds.

You hear us say "Thy will be done" and "Use me, O God"

And you watch us do nothing in response to cries for help.

You know us, and you love us, and you forgive.

Hear us now say, "Help us to change; turn us around,

Make us more loving and courageous and hopeful."

This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Though the world swirls around you and exhaustion threatens to overtake you, rest your spirits in the great God of all creation who is with you now and forever. God will give you strength, restore your spirits, and guide you in His dreams.

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

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH #881 *(The Apostles' Creed - Please stand as able)*

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.

HYMN #229

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY

I Wonder as I Wander arr. Robert Lau

DOXOLOGY #95 *(Please stand as you are able)*

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Him, all creatures here below
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost***

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING *(Please continue standing)*

God of hope and joy, the gifts we offer to you pale when our minds try to grasp all we have been given in this season: wholeness in our woundedness, hope in our despair, peace in our turmoil, forgiveness in our rebellion. Like Simeon, we have listened with our ears that we might not miss you, and our eyes have seen your salvation! You gave us light in our darkness and hope in our discouragement. Help us embrace your extravagant generosity as we give ourselves to others. In our Savior's holy name, we pray. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS *(Please be seated)*

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 #246 *(Please stand as you are able)*

Joy to the World
Located in the back of the bulletin - (printed w/permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *(Please be seated)*

Carol of the Bells arr. John S. Dixon

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flowers on the Altar

*The flowers on the altar are given by the **Klines and Dodsons in loving memory of Ruth Cech & to the Glory of God.***

Administrative Council Meeting - Friday, January 19th 10-12. Details to follow.

Outreach Update

Thank you notes have been received from SAFE, North Toxaway Food Bank and The Family Place for our financial contributions.

The Outreach committee received a thank you note from The Bread of Life for a lead gift of \$10,000. This is a lead gift for their capital campaign to expand their facility to reach more people. The Bread of Life is an agency who provides meals for those in need. Thank you LTUMC parishioners for making this happen!

Have you recently moved?

If you moved during 2023 and your winter address has changed, please provide your new address to Saunders by e-mail at administrator@laketoxawayumc.org. This will help with getting your giving statement for 2023. The statements will be mailed to you in early 2024.

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Please pray for those who have long-term illness, health concerns and special intentions.

Please pray for those having or had a surgery and their recovery.

Our heartfelt prayers for all who have experienced the recent passing of a loved one.

Please continue to pray for our student scholars, our local students, teachers and staff.

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

Audio/Visual for Livestream Chair: Andy Harvill

Audio/Visual Scheduler: Fred Markert: 828-553-3303

Liturgist: Carole Guffey

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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
 Jē - 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

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

229

Unison

1. In-fant ho - ly, in-fant low - ly, for his bed a cat-tle
2. Flocks were sleep-ing, shep-herds keep-ing vig-il till the morn-ing

stall; ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know-ing, Christ the babe is Lord of
new saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid-ings of a gos-pel

all. Swift are wing-ing an-gels sing-ing, no-els ring-ing, tid-ings
true. Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais-es voic-ing, greet the

Interlude, Ending

bring-ing: Christ the babe is Lord of all.
mor-row: Christ the babe was born for you.

WORDS: Polish carol; trans. by Edith M. G. Reed, 1925 (Lk. 2:6-20)

MUSIC: Polish carol; arr. by Edith M. G. Reed, 1926; harm. by Austin C. Lovelace, 1964

W ZLOBIE LEZY
447.447.44447

Harm. © 1965 Abingdon Press

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,

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

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.