

Dear Lake Toxaway UMC family and friends,

As I write this pastoral letter, I have finished my dinner and listened to the latest snow accumulation prediction for the approaching storm. It sounds like a significant winter event; I confess I am ready for the gifts that a snow day brings, one of which is abundant awe, stillness, and quietness.

I and several church leaders decided a pastoral letter is a wonderful way to connect with more of you than we might through a pre-recording of a worship service (some of us could be without electricity in our homes on Sunday morning). I hope you use some of the bulletin for a private worship that will connect you to your church family and bring glory and praise to God and only God. So, whether you are here in Western North Carolina or at your winter home, I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ: to whom be glory, majesty, power and authority now and forever.

The apostle Paul addresses this concept of being the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12. He specifically focuses on spiritual gifts and how our unique spiritual gifts are from God and are to be used for the purpose of serving God and bringing unity in the body of Christ! I encourage you to name your spiritual gifts and to ask yourself how you are exercising your gifts for the unity of the body of Christ. If ever the world needs to see Christian unity, now is the time.

We encounter Jesus, the head of the body, in this wonderful Gospel story of Jesus as he performs his first miracle: turning water into wine. There are so many things to mine from this Scripture lesson. It is the first of seven signs in the Gospel of John that point to Christ as the revelation of God and to bring first century Jews and us to believe Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and the bearer of the new and eternal life. This miracle occurs soon after his baptism by John the Baptist and is prompted by his mother's request. Jesus expresses some hesitancy, but He begins his public ministry by claiming His unique giftedness as the Son of God.

Wine, in the Bible, was a powerful symbol of sustenance and life. Wine carries a message of transformation: grapes transformed by the process of fermentation into wine, a message of recreation, refreshment, and eternal life. The Old Testament lesson reminds us of God's promise of abundance using the image of marriage. Read Isaiah 62:4 in the bulletin.

The wedding at Cana points us to the new life spoken by the prophet Isaiah. The miracle of turning water into wine expands the promise of new life in Christ, all life infused with the Holy Spirit. This miracle is a sign on the road to a new way of being, a revelation of the Kingdom of God.

And please note the best wine comes last rather than the expected order of serving the best first. I know many Christians fear the best has passed and are tempted to lose hope. The Gospel lesson invites us to trust the signs, to believe that life in Christ as a unified body is exciting and renewing. We can believe the best is yet to come in our lives, our church, and our service.

I believe Christ is working among us as the body of Christ at Lake Toxaway UMC. I believe God in Christ is calling us to continue to exceed our wonderful work of outreach; we gave more than 50% of our undesignated tithes and offerings to outreach in 2021. We will be an even brighter light in 2022! We faced challenges of how to worship together in an ongoing pandemic. We will continue to find ways to worship and glorify God as a community in 2022. We need to find ways to create a closer community among us and ways to meet safely and respectfully. We need to invite our new neighbors to worship with us. We need to invite people to formally connect with our church as we allow the Holy Spirit to use us as instruments of God's transformative light in the salvation of Jesus. The new wine is not for us to hoard for ourselves but to share as we trust God to bring the abundance!

And whether we have an abundance of snow here in Lake Toxaway this weekend or not, we all gather as the Church to give witness to the goodness of Christ who redeems us, transforms us, and uses us as His new wine to carry His light! Please allow the Holy Spirit to work in you to direct you as to how you will be used as a bearer of Light and an extender of hospitality to others to join in the abundant grace giver, Jesus our Lord! Claim your spiritual gifts and use them in Christ's service to bring others to the true Light. **TRUST GOD'S ABUNDANT PROVISIONS!**

I joyfully serve and live among you as your pastor. I count it as a holy privilege. I pray for you regularly, especially those who are sick and discouraged.

Faithfully,

Marcus



Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Sunday, January 16th, 2022

Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church
Community Worship Service
Second Sunday after the Epiphany, January 16th

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

Partita on "St. Denio" Austin C. Lovelace

GREETING

L: Jesus surprised the people at the wedding.

P: They were sure they would be disappointed.

L: They thought that their host wasn't prepared for their needs.

P: We aren't much different. We aren't sure God is prepared for our needs.

L: Lord, change our whining in to praising!

P: Change our moaning and complaining into celebrations of joy! AMEN.

HYMN #103

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

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

OPENING PRAYER *(Please be seated)*

O God,

you spoke your word

and revealed your good news in Jesus, the Christ.

Fill all creation with that word again,

so that by proclaiming your joyful promises to all nations

and singing of your glorious hope to all peoples,

we may become one living body,

your incarnate presence on the earth. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 62:1-5

- 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.
- 62:4 You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married; for the LORD delights in you, and your land shall be married.
- 62:5 For as a young man marries a young woman, so shall your builder marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

Psalm 36:5-10 (Please read the bold text)

- 36:5 Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds.
- 36:6 Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains, your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O LORD.**
- 36:7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
- 36:8 They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights.**
- 36:9 For with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light.
- 36:10 O continue your steadfast love to those who know you, and your salvation to the upright of heart!**

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

- 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.
- 12:2 You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak.
- 12:3 Therefore, I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.
- 12:4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;
- 12:5 and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord;
- 12:6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.
- 12:7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

- 12:8 To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,
12:9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,
12:10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.
12:11 All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

John 2:1-11 (Please stand for the Gospel)

- 2:1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.
2:2 Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.
2:3 When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."
2:4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come."
2:5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."
2:6 Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.
2:7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim.
2:8 He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So, they took it.
2:9 When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom
2:10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now."
2:11 Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

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

P: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Lord, how we must try your patience! We often doubt when we should place our faith in your abiding presence. We think we have to have all the answers, and judge others who fail to live up to our expectations. We think that we are the one thing that matters most in life, so we place ourselves at the center of our own universe. Forgive us when we show how shallow our faith is. Help us to really understand the miraculous ways in which you have

already worked in our lives and will continue to work as we journey in faith. Bring to us the Light of Joy, and let it flood through our whole beings, that we may be transformed into people of joyful service and faith. In Jesus' Name, we pray. AMEN.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Pastor: God's love is continually poured out for us. Drink from the cup of forgiveness and compassion, dear ones. In Jesus' Name, we are forgiven! AMEN.

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

HOMILY

STATEMENT OF FAITH (United Church of Australia)

***We believe in one God,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
We proclaim Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen One,
confessing him as Lord to the glory of God the Father.
In the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
we acclaim Jesus as the Lord of the Church,
the Head over all things, the beginning of a new creation.
We acknowledge that we live and work
between the time of Christ's death and resurrection
and the final consummation of all things which he will bring.
We are a pilgrim people,
always on the way towards a promised goal;
on the way Christ feeds us with word and sacraments,
and we have the gift of the Spirit
in order that we may not lose the way.
We will live and work within the faith and unity
of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church,
bearing witness to that unity which is both Christ's gift and his will.
We affirm that every member of the Church
is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified.
Together with all the people of God,
we will serve the world for which Christ died.
And we await with hope the day of the Lord Jesus. 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 #451

Be Thou My Vision
Located in the back of the bulletin - (Printed w/ permission)

OFFERING

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

OFFERTORY

Dearest Jesus, We are Here Robert J. Powell

DOXOLOGY

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Generous God, we are reminded through scripture of the spiritual gifts that you give. We know that these are not for us to hold onto but are gifts for us to share – gifts from you meant for giving. As we offer our tithes and offerings, prompt us to commit more than dollars, but to see the gifts you have written on our hearts and to share generously of these as well! We pray these words in the name of Jesus, in whose way we follow, for whose love we are eternally grateful. 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 #384

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Located in the back of the bulletin - (printed w/permission)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Trumpet Voluntary John Travers

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Flowers on the Altar

Today's flowers on the altar are in loving memory of our cherished Ruth Cech from Char and John Holbrook.

Administrative Council Meeting

The Administrative Council will meet on Friday, February 11th at 9:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Please let Tom know if you are attending at Tom.Blackstock@gmail.com.

LTUMC App for your Smart Phone

The LTUMC app is available to download it from either the App Store or the Play Store. Search for "Lake Toxaway UMC". You do not need to be a registered member of the church to download and use the app.

PRAYER CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

Please pray for Janet & Ed English, Dee Seropian, Dave Wilkes, 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 starting a new semester.

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 and Scott Walter: 314-374-2969

Audio/Visual for Livestream Chair: Andy Harvill

Liturgist: Scott Walter

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise 103

1. Im - mor - tal, in - vis - i - ble, God on - ly wise,
 2. Un - rest - ing, un - hast - ing, and si - lent as light,
 3. To all, life thou giv - est, to both great and small;
 4. Thou reign - est in glo - ry; thou dwell - est in light;

in light in - ac - ces - si - ble hid from our eyes,
 nor want - ing, nor wast - ing, thou rul - est in might;
 in all life thou liv - est, the true life of all;
 thine an - gels a - dore thee, all veil - ing their sight;

most bless - ed, most glo - rious, the An - cient of Days,
 thy jus - tice like moun - tains high soar - ing a - bove
 we blos - som and flour - ish as leaves on the tree,
 all laud we would ren - der: O help us to see

al - might - y, vic - to - rious, thy great name we praise.
 thy clouds which are foun - tains of good - ness and love.
 and with - er and per - ish, but naught chang - eth thee.
 'tis on - ly the splen - dor of light hid - eth thee.

WORDS: Walter Chalmers Smith, 1867 (1 Tim. 1:17)
 MUSIC: Welsh melody from *Canaidau y Cyssegr*, 1839; adapt. by John Roberts

ST. DENIO
 11 11.11 11

Be Thou My Vision

451

Unison

1. Be thou my vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;
 2. Be thou my wis - dom, and thou my true word;
 3. Great God of heav - en, my vic - to - ry won,

naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
 I ev - er with thee and thou with me, Lord;
 may I reach heav - en's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!

Thou my best thought, by day or by night,
 thou and thou on - ly, first in my heart,
 Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy pres - ence my light.
 great God of heav - en, my trea - sure thou art.
 still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

WORDS: Ancient Irish; trans. by Mary E. Byrne, 1905; versed by Eleanor H. Hull, 1912, alt.
 MUSIC: Trad. Irish melody; harm. by Carlton R. Young, 1963

SLANE
 10 10.9 10

Alt. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House; harm. © 1964 Abingdon Press

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1. Love di - vine, all loves ex - cell - ing, joy of heaven, to
 2. Breathe, O breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - ery
 3. Come, Al - might - y to de - liv - er, let us all thy
 4. Fin - ish, then, thy new cre - a - tion; pure and spot - less

earth come down; fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing;
 trou - bled breast! Let us all in thee in - her - it;
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn and nev - er,
 let us be. Let us see thy great sal - va - tion

all thy faith - ful mer - cies crown! Je - sus, thou art
 let us find that sec - ond rest. Take a - way our
 nev - er - more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be
 per - fect - ly re - stored in thee; changed from glo - ry

all com - pas - sion, pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it
 bent to sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of
 al - ways bless - ing, serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray and
 in - to glo - ry, till in heaven we take our place, till we

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1747
 MUSIC: John Zundel, 1870

BEECHER
 87.87 D

Alt. tune: HYFRYDOL