



*Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church*  
*Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> 2022*

**Lake Toxaway United Methodist Church**  
**Community Worship Service**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 18th**

**9:30 A.M. Livestream is available on the LTUMC YouTube channel:**  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgtuJe20i8DN7S\\_Cfg1sWCg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgtuJe20i8DN7S_Cfg1sWCg)

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

**PRELUDE**

What is This Lovely Fragrance (Old French Carol) arr. Paul Manz

**GREETING**

*The prophet foretold it, the psalmist longed for it,*

*Joseph dreamed of it, Paul proclaimed it.*

*God is come to us, to be with us, to restore us, to save us.*

*Let us come in awe and wonder,*

*to worship the God who makes it all so.*

**HYMN #240**

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

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

**Lighting the Advent Wreath**

**Reader One:** Isaiah said that the Lord spoke to the king and said, "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven" (Isaiah 7:11 NRSV). But when the king refused, God would not be stopped. "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14 NRSV).

**Reader Two:** God wants us to know, even when we aren't sure ourselves. God wants us to experience God's presence, even when we think we can handle life on our own. God sends us signs of God's presence with us; all we need to do is keep our eyes open and look.

**Reader One:** "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, 'God is with us.'" When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus (Matthew 1:23-25 NRSV).

**Reader Two:** We light these candles, the candle of joyous hope, of proclaimed peace, of deep everlasting joy, and today of presence that speaks of love, as a sign that no matter our circumstance, we know we are not alone.

(Light all four candles in the Advent wreath.)

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

*O God,  
in this time of worship,  
may we be open to your promises, your love,  
and your transformation.  
May we vision and dream.  
May we be surprised.  
May we receive the life you give us.  
May we encounter Emmanuel—God with us.  
And may we never be the same. Amen.*

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Isaiah 7:10-16**

- 7:10 Again, the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying,  
7:11 Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.  
7:12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test.  
7:13 Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also?  
7:14 Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.  
7:15 He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.  
7:16 For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.

**Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19** *(Psalter Lesson ~ Please read the bold text)*

- 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock! You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth  
**80:2 before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh. Stir up your might, and come to save us!**  
80:3 Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.  
**80:4 O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?**  
80:5 You have fed them with the bread of tears, and given them tears to drink in full measure.  
**80:6 You make us the scorn of our neighbors; our enemies laugh among themselves.**  
80:7 Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

**80:17 But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself.**

80:18 Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.

**80:19 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

**Romans 1:1-7 (Epistle Reading)**

1:1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

1:2 which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures,

1:3 the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

1:4 and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord,

1:5 through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name,

1:6 including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

1:7 To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Matthew 1:18-25 (Please stand for the Gospel)**

1:18 Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

1:19 Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly.

1:20 But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

1:21 She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

1:22 All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

1:23 "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."

1:24 When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife,

1:25 but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

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

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

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

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

*(Let us offer our silent confessions.)*

***O God,***

***we are easily distracted and slightly jaded,  
and cannot believe Christ is almost here.***

***There are still presents to be bought—  
never mind wrapped.***

***There are parties to attend, cookies to be baked,  
trees to be trimmed.***

***Sometimes we cannot wait  
until all this hubbub is over.***

***Where is the time to sit, to sleep—  
never mind to dream?***

***We can get so caught up in the busyness of the season  
that we miss the gift the season is meant to be.***

***We have heard the scriptures and stories so often  
that they have become white noise.***

***For our frenetic pace, for our exhaustion,  
for our tunnel vision, for our missing the wonder  
and awe of a baby born to fulfill promises  
made long ago, forgive us.***

***Restore to us the sense of surprise  
that you came to us as a little baby,  
unexpected, yet longed for.***

***God of the visioners and dreamers,  
may we always be ready  
to receive your gifts. Amen.***

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

*God comes to us in dreams and visions,  
in prophecies and affirmations,  
in longing and in hope,  
in salvation through a little child.  
Claim this promise for yourself,  
and let God's healing love fill you.*

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

## **HOMILY**

### **STATEMENT OF FAITH #887 (Romans 8:35, 37-29)**

*Leader:*

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?  
Shall tribulation or distress,  
or persecution or famine,  
or nakedness or peril or sword?*

***People:***

***No,***

***In all things we are more than conquerors  
Through the One who loved us.***

***We are sure that neither  
death nor life,  
nor angels, nor principalities,  
nor things present, nor things to come,  
nor powers, nor height, nor depth,  
nor anything else in all creation,  
will be able to separate us from the love of God  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.***

***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.***

### **HYMN #219**

What Child is This

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

### **OFFERING**

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

### **OFFERTORY**

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming. arr. Michael Burkhardt

## DOXOLOGY

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*Holy God of hope and promise: when the children were in deep despair, you promised them a sign, the indication of a Savior coming into their midst. As we bring you our tithes and offerings this day, so many of us are discouraged, trying to find our way. We need your sign, we need Jesus, not as simply a reminder of history, but as a new direction, a gift of love that starts in our hearts, a resurrection of compassion that looks beyond self and the accumulation of more and more things that don't satisfy. We need what only a Savior can give us. Guide us by your signs on this day and as we begin the journey to Bethlehem once again. In the Savior's name, we pray. 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 #238

Angels We Have Heard on High  
Located in the back of the bulletin - (printed w/permission)

## BENEDICTION

## POSTLUDE

He is Born Robert J. Powell

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Flowers on the Altar**

*Flowers on the altar are given by Barb & Jerry Kline and Marcus & Kim Dodson & family to the Glory of God.*

### **Christmas Eve Service**

*Our Christmas Eve Communion & Candlelight service will be **Saturday, December 24th at 7:30 PM***

### **Administration Council Meeting**

*The next Administration Council will be on **Friday, December 30th at 9:00 AM via Zoom.***

### **January Potluck/Cover Dish**

*Our next potluck will be **Tuesday, January 10th at 6:00 PM.***

**Kenneth Smith "Smitty" Dogs need a new home**

*Kenneth Wayne Smith died unexpectedly on 12-15-22 leaving behind 3 dogs: a Doberman and 2 Yorkies. They are all very sweet and the family wants to keep the dogs together. If you have room in your home or know of anyone interested in having these dogs please reach out to Brad Baker at (828) 553-7104.*

**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.***

***We lift up those who are actively searching for employment and pray for perseverance for them.***

***Our heartfelt prayers for all who have experienced the recent passing of a loved one. Especially for Kenneth Wayne Smith "Smitty" who passed on 12/15/22. Please pray for his family and for Brad Baker who were best friends. Smitty's funeral will be on Monday, 12/19 at Oak Grove Baptist Church on Kim Miller Rd. The visitation will be at 1:00 PM and the burial will be at 2:00 PM.***

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

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

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

Liturgist: John Lefler

## 240 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King;  
 2. Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord;  
 3. Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!

peace on earth, and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on-ciled!"  
 late in time be - hold him come, off-spring of a vir-gin's womb.  
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na-tions rise, join the tri-umph of the skies;  
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail th'in-car-nate De - i - ty,  
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with th'an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!"  
 pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el.  
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

*Refrain*

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!"

WORDS: Charles Wesley, 1739; alt. by George Whitefield, 1753, and others (Lk. 2:8-14) MENDELSSOHN  
 MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn, 1840; arr. by William H. Cummings, 1856 77.77 D with Refrain

## What Child Is This

219

1. What child is this who, laid to rest, on Ma - ry's  
 2. Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and  
 3. So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come, peas - ant,

lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with  
 ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tians, fear, for  
 king, to own him; the King of kings sal -

an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?  
 sin - ners here the si - lent Word is plead - ing.  
 va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

*Refrain*

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;

haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

WORDS: William C. Dix, 1865 (Lk. 2:6-20; Mt. 2:1-12)  
 MUSIC: 16th cent. English melody

GREENSLEEVES  
 87.87 with Refrain

238 Angels We Have Heard on High

1. An-gels we have heard on high sweet-ly sing-ing o'er the plains,  
 2. Shep-herds, why this ju-bi-lee? Why your joy-ous strains pro-long?  
 3. Come to Beth-le-hem and see Christ whose birth the an-gels sing;  
 4. See him in a man-ger laid, whom the choirs of an-gels praise;

and the moun-tains in re-ply ech-o-ing their joy-ous strains.  
 What the glad-some tid-ings be which in-spire your heav-en-ly song?  
 come, a-dore on bend-ed knee, Christ the Lord, the new-born King,  
 Ma-ry, Jo-seph, lend your aid, while our hearts in love we raise.

*Refrain*

Glo - - - - - ri - a,

in ex-cel-sis De-ol Glo - - -

ri - a, in ex-cel-sis De - ol

WORDS: Trad. French carol; trans. *Crown of Jesus*, 1862, alt. (l.k. 2:6-20)  
 MUSIC: French carol melody; arr. by Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937;  
 harm. by Austin C. Lovelace, 1964  
 Ham. © 1964 Abingdon Press

GLORIA  
 77,77 with Refrain