

WORSHIP

December 13

“When you recover or discover something that nourishes your soul and brings joy, care enough about yourself to make room for it in your life.”

~ Jean Shinoda Bolen

“Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day.”

~ Henri Nouwen

“Find a place inside where there’s joy, and the joy will burn out the pain.”

~ Joseph Campbell

“Joy; the kind of happiness that doesn’t depend on what happens.”

~ David Steindl-Rast

Call to Worship and the Lighting of the Advent Candles

During this advent season, as we wait for the fullness of God to be revealed in the birth of Jesus the Christ, we light the candles of the advent wreath as a sign that God’s love and light will break through the darkness of our world. Last week, we lit the candles of Hope and Peace. This Sunday, we light the candle of Joy.

Isaiah prophesied to the people of Israel: “*Once more the humble will rejoice in the Lord; the needy will rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.*”

Jesus himself proclaimed the words of the prophet: “*He has sent me to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to liberate the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.*” God turns things upside down by promising that those who are last shall be first, that the servant will become the greatest, and that the Christ-child, born in a cattle stall, would become a King. We can join the Christmas angels in proclaiming that the birth of Jesus is good news of justice and joy for all people!

We may be willing to wait for a lot of things, but we can no longer wait for joy. In a world where suffering and violence plague the news, we will

choose to delight in that which is good. If we follow and live in the light of God, we will be sustained through the darkest night and the deepest sorrow and pain, and we will know that joy can defeat despair. This week, we light the candle of joy to remind us that darkness does not have the last word. May this light guide and inspire us as we work to spread God's joy and delight through this world.

Songs

Time for Kids

Scripture Lesson

Isaiah 9:1-4

Message

A Journey of Joy

Offering Prayer

Holy One, this Advent season we wait in joy,

And we give with joy.

Joy for all you have given us;

Joy because of your sacred promises.

Receive these generous offerings,

And use them to spread your joy in our world.

Amen.

Song

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Song

Sending Forth

Be people of joy.

Let joy live in your heart and share the joy of Christ with all you meet.

Share joy by seeing the good in each other.

Share joy by remembering good times and hoping for good times to come.

Share joy by praying for our world.

In this Advent season, we need to see, feel, and share joy.

As you go out into the wonder of God's creations, share joy, peace, and hope with those you meet. Amen