

Each week of this Advent season, we will provide this bulletin insert that has each week's Sunday morning Advent Candle reading along with some family discussion/reflection questions for you & your family to use as an Advent family devotional if you would like...

Third Week of Advent - Joy

Third Sunday of Advent - Sunday, December 13th, 2020

Reader: This is the third Sunday in Advent. Today we light two purple candles and the pink candle. The first Sunday, we lit the candle of hope. On the second Sunday, we lit the candle of peace. Today, we light the candle of joy. One thing that sometimes happens as we get ready to celebrate Jesus' birth is we expect to be happy all the time. Joy is not the same as happy. Joy is a deeper feeling created by knowing that God cares for us. Joy is remembering that God sent Jesus so we would always know of God's care. During Advent, we pray that we may remember again God's gift of Jesus to the world and know the joy that gift brings to all people.

(Light the first, second, and third candles)

Reader: When we look at the third candle, we remember God's promise of joy. God promised to send a Savior to the people. Today we read from the Gospel of Luke. In the Scripture, we read Mary's song of praise and joy. There must have been times when Mary was frightened, worried, fearful and sad. But we have these words of joy even in a time when she was unsure of the future. Her words can guide us to look for the joy of God even when things may be uncertain for us.

Reader: Read [Luke 1:46-55](#).

Prayer:

Dear God: Thank you for your son, Jesus. Thank you for the joy remembering Jesus' birth brings to us today. Help us live in such a way that our words and our actions help others know of the joy you give. AMEN.

Sunday's Family Discussion:

How privileged we are to have this beautiful song of Mary. Can you imagine her singing the words written in Scripture? It is a testimony to her faith and joy at being chosen as God's servant. Who in our world needs God's joy?

- What are our hopes for joy in our world today?
- How do we help others know that God gives joy?

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Monday, December 14 - Today read again Luke 1:47-55. Make a list together of the things that bring joy to your lives. Write your own song of joy to God or sing a song that expresses joy to God.

Tuesday, December 15 - Is there someone you know who needs to hear words of joy? Make or select a card for that person and mail it today.

Wednesday, December 16 - Joy is something we need in our community. Think about different leaders of our community. Select one leader and pray for that leader today.

Thursday, December 17 - As we get ready to celebrate again the birth of Jesus, we sometimes get very busy. Today, take a ten-minute break. Sit quietly. If it helps you to concentrate, look at your Advent wreath. Pray, asking God's help to bring quiet and calm to a busy world.

Friday, December 18 - Think about your family. Some may live with you. Others may be far away. Who in your family needs God's joy? Pray for this family member today.

Saturday, December 19 - There are people in our neighborhoods, in our church, and in our community who need to know of God's joy. Select someone to visit today. Visit electronically or by phone or in person. Go as a family or by yourself. It doesn't necessarily have to be a visit to a home. Maybe there is someone you see in a place where you regularly go. Stop by today and talk with that person. Tell the person you visit one way he or she brings joy to you.

 Merry Christmas!!