



Advent Three - Joy - Sunday Dec 13th, 2020 Shearwater Worship Resource



Gathering & Lighting the Advent Candles



Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

1Thessalonians 5: 16-24

Let us light the candle of JOY. May it burn in strongly in our hearts through this coming week.

Gather in, one and all.

We come to this welcoming space.

A place for you here.

Christ calls us in and greets us by name.

Call to worship

Good News, the Lord lifts up the lowly.

Good News, the Lord holds tight the hurting.

Good News, God's mercy is sure.

Good News, the hungry will be filled with good things.

Our Spirits rejoice at Lady Wisdom's favour. We await with Mary the coming of Christ into our lives anew.

Acknowledging

Ordained as we all are to speak freedom and liberty, we walk with our First Peoples as they seek justice and respect. We in Shearwater, meet on the lands of the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung people and we pay them our respects, in particular their elders past, present and emerging.



Uniting Aboriginal and Islander
Christian Congress

Looking and Breathing

The word 'Behold!' features in the Christmas stories. Say the word out loud with JOY! Slowly look around you and see what you behold. Take slow breaths and look up. (We can get very caught up seeing the cobwebs and not truly see them as webs of intricate belonging and home making). Behold, God makes all things new.

Singing TIS 161

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings,
give my spirit voice;
tender to me the
promise of his word;
in God my Saviour
shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of his name!
Make known his might,

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the deeds his arm has done;
his mercy sure,
from age to age the same;
his holy name -
the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions
lay their glory by.
Proud hearts and stubborn wills
are put to flight,
the hungry fed,
the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul,
the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise,
and his mercy sure.
Tell out, my soul,
the greatness of the Lord
to children's children
and for evermore!

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Dudley-Smith 1926- based on Luke 1:46:55 in The
New English Bible Words © 1962, renewal 1 .k
WOODLANDS



Prayer

We come to confess that we are not
always good news to others. Let us put
aside judgement and harsh attitudes and
proclaim liberty and healing. Let us tell
God in this space, those things which
trouble our hearts and separate us from
one another and from God.

Your Spirit leads us into pathways of care
for others. Comfort, gladness, joy and
thanksgiving. These are your way, O
God. Draw us ever onward to plant,
build up, raise and enrich. Deck us with
garlands of joy and with jewels of justice
and righteousness for your name's sake.
Amen

Listening

- Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11
- Luke 1: 46b-55

For these words of faith
& Jesus the Word: **Thanks be to God.**

Reflecting - Rev. Ian Turnnidge

Joy!
The candle is pink!
Love changes us. God is love.

Mary's song, the one she sings after the
fear of the annunciation has gone: the
song she sings after she so plainly asks
"how can this be?": the song she sings
after she so humbly accepts her place in
the mysterious scheme of Divine Will,
"Be it with me according to your Word",
is a song worth singing ourselves.

Mary sings her song with her cousin.

She visits Elizabeth, and together these
women experience that kind of shared
knowing that one can hear in the tone of
voice of somebody calling at your door:
in the leap of the belly in the joy of
meeting: in the coming together after
major events have intervened in our lives.

Mary's is a song of joy!
A song of wonder, blessing and strange
revelation.

I keep in touch with an old work friend.
She has just had her first child! Her
husband has just left her. She is a
woman, middle years, in circumstances
she never had foreseen. And yet JOY!
Joy in the birth of new life: Joy in the
birth of a little girl: Joy amidst the
profound sadness and betrayal.

Mary sings to this new mother.

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In her song are words of hope and courage for my friend:
For surely the proud has scattered
The powerful has been brought down
The 'rich' has walked away empty
Because the world has been made new-
Mercy has a chubby pink face!

Today's reading from Isaiah echoes the same strange themes:
Good News to Oppressed
Liberty to captives
Release for the imprisoned
Comfort to those who mourn
The oil of gladness
The mantle of gladness.

The Kingdom to be born will bring with it Joy! Unexpected delight from all that restricts life.

This Christmas, like no other, brings challenges from the unexpected year we have all experienced. As restrictions have relaxed, I have noticed within myself discomfort in entering back into the world out of my front door! I also note my sense of safety being challenged as life more fully takes on the appearance of 'normal'. Christmas celebrations, where family gatherings will be smaller; where we need to be far more attentive to keeping one another safe and where our natural impulse to embrace will need to be moderated will remind us of all that the year has brought.

Many of the carols we will sing in a few days' time, on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, will bring a lump to my throat; *"The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight..."*. Maybe it will awaken the fear that lies in the exhaustion of the year: maybe the hopes we dare hold will seem so fragile this year: or perhaps it is that our ability to

even imagine our future after the impact of this pandemic has been so severely damaged that this season will all collide like that moment the Angel brings tidings to Mary.

Can we, filled with fear and perplexity reply to the hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: "Be it with me according to your word"?

This day of Joy in our advent journey, dares us sing along with Mary. Her song reminds us of the beatitudes Jesus will preach and the Prophet Isaiah calls into the wilderness. Calling into being the incarnational reality we know: the lowly lifted up and the hungry are filled with good things.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances! May it be so.

Responding: ***Prayers for World & Community***

**We bring the hopes and fears
of all the year to you,
God who meets us where we are.**

We bring the young ones;

the babies born in troubled times
when the usual care and support
has been hard to offer,
when the grief of loss has been mixed
with delight and possibility
for their entry into the world,
the children living alone or in families
without shelter, without medical care,
without adequate food or clothing,

the young ones surrounded by violence,
war and unrest, instability and uprisings,
injustice and hatred,

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**Holy is your name,
 through all generations:
 Bring joy, bring hope, bring peace,
 Bless the young ones.**

We bring the middling ones;

those whose schooling has been
 disrupted, or was never adequate,
 or even offered,

the families that have been broken by
 economic hardship, sickness, grief or fear

the lost ones, who find themselves alone,
 without a witness to their days,
 longing for connection and meaning
 companionship and comfort

those who struggle to see a future
 where they can live in harmony
 with the earth and all her creatures

**Holy is your name,
 through all generations:
 Bring joy, bring hope, bring peace,
 Bless the middling ones.**

We bring the elder ones;

the ageing aunts who have embraced
 technology and meet weekly on zoom
 and the others who are more puzzled
 than ever
 by the changes and demands
 of a socially distanced life

those grieving the loss of friends
 and lovers
 without the dignity of a gentle death
 or the gathering of the circles of support
 to keep them strong,

the wise ones who are weary

worried about the world they leave,
 longing for release.

**Holy is your name,
 through all generations:
 Bring joy, bring hope, bring peace,
 Bless the elders.**

Joy-bringer God,
 meet us in the everyday spaces of life,
 as we open doors
 in greeting to each other,
 and do your happy-dance within us.
 Fill our being with songs of delight
 so they might spill out from us
 and bless the world around.

**Holy is your name,
 through all generations:
 Bring joy, bring hope, bring peace,
 Bless the us all,
 in the name of Jesus
 who invites us to pray saying:**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,
 as we forgive those who sin against us.
 Save us from the time of trial
 and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the
 glory are yours
 now and for ever. Amen.

Passing the peace

You have the Good News to share.
 How will you do that today?
 May the Peace of Christ rest with you:
and also with you.

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Offering

Together we offer Good News to a hurting world. What talent or gift can you use to do that?

Notices

Have you caught up with what's happening with this year's Christmas Bowl?

<https://christmasbowl.actforpeace.org.au>

Singing TiS 210

O for a thousand tongues

O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
my great Redeemer's praise
the glories of our God and King
the triumphs of his grace,
the triumphs of his grace,
the triumphs of his grace!

Jesus! the name that charms our fears
that bids our sorrows cease;
that bids our sorrows cease;
such music in the sinner's ears
is life and health and peace'
is life and health and peace,
is life and health and peace.

He breaks the power of cancelled sin
he sets the prisoner free;
he sets the prisoner free;
his blood can make the foulest clean
his blood availed for me,
his blood availed for me
his blood availed for me.

He speaks and listening to his voice
new life the dead receive,
new life the dead receive
the mournful broken hearts rejoice
the humble poor believe,
the humble poor believe,

the humble poor believe.

Hear him you deaf;
his praise you dumb,
his praise you dumb
your loosened tongues employ;
you blind behold your Saviour come;
and leap you lame for **joy**,
and leap you lame for **joy**,
and leap you lame for **joy**!

My gracious Master and my God
assist me to proclaim,
assist me to proclaim
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honours of your name,
the honours of your name,
the honours of your name.
TIS 210 Used with Permission .i Charles Wesley
1707-88 alt. .k LYNHAM

Re-Collection

Today we celebrate the joy of Advent.
Mary has a song: not so much about what
she has agreed to do, but more about the
nature of the kingdom to be born.
What song will you sing this week?

Blessing

Rejoice always. Pray continually. Give
thanks, and more thanks, and more
thanks.

May the God of Peace surround you, and
keep you blameless and sound, as God
continues to come.

Rest assured, God is faithful. The grace of
our Lord Jesus be with you all.

Shearwater Ministry Team:
Rev. Deacon Wendy Elson
Rev. Jennie Gordon
Rev. Ian Turnnidge



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Monday

Phrase: Bring Good News (Isaiah 61:1)

Wonder: Those who feel oppressed, broken hearted, captive, and in any form of prison hunger for Good News? Who are they in your life?

Meditation: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me"

You: Do one thing today to bring Good News to one who is broken hearted or captive.

Wednesday

Phrase: Proclaim liberty and release (Isaiah 61:1)

Wonder: What is my single, small voice worth in the fight for justice and human rights?

Meditation: To stand against the powers that oppress people is dangerous. Bless those who do with courage and a circle of steady companions.

You: Explore the Amnesty International website and find out what you can do:
<https://www.amnesty.org.au/10-ways-can-change-world-today/>

Friday

Phrase: Pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5 v 17)

Wonder: Prayer is our joy and our privilege. But how do we do it without ceasing?

Meditation: Draw us ever closer to you O God, so that the time we spend in prayer is deep communion.

You: Spend three minutes in silent prayer in a quiet space today.

Tuesday

Phrase: To bind up the brokenhearted (Is 61: 1)

Wonder: So often, do I wonder how to do this! We all know people who are brokenhearted. And have been so ourselves.

Meditation: Soothing and healing God, we long to end suffering and take care of the hurting. Help us be balm to the wounds of others, let it be so.

You: There will be some brokenhearted people along my path today. What does being the Good News ask of me?

Thursday

Phrase: Rejoice Always (1 Thess 5: 16)

Wonder: What if every bell, siren or car horn was a call for you to pray this day for why that sound is made?

Meditation: "Pray without ceasing: give thanks in all circumstances". Sometimes prayer is silence.

You: Hold fast to all that is good today.

Saturday

Phrase: Do not quench the Spirit (1 Thess 5:19)

Wonder: Where is the bright spring of the Spirit bubbling up in my life and the life around me?

Meditation: God of beginnings, let me say "Yes!" when you want to birth something wonderful within me and ditch the excuses that quench the flame.

You: How can you shelter the Spirit-flame of another this week, so that it might not be quenched, but be alight with God's glory?

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