

ADVENT 3 | JOY

*Use the small candle to transfer the flame from the taper to the candles to be lit.
Blow out both the small candle and the taper when the three red candles have been lit.*

We come together in the midst of a busy season to take a breath.

To breathe in together the life that God gives us.

To listen to the beat of God's heart and the blessings and lessons this season brings to us.

Last Sunday we lit the candle of **Hope**, remembering the hope which comes in Christ,
and we lit the candle of **Peace**, remembering God's dream of a peaceful world.

(Light 2 Candles).

Today we light the third candle of Advent, the candle of **Joy**.

With it's light we are reminded of the **joy** that Jesus brings into this world and his presence with us.

Jesus said *"Until now you have not asked for anything in my name.
Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete."*

Let's listen for a moment to the **joy** that Jesus has given us this week.

When have you tasted the gift of **joy** this week?

When have you known God's provision, bringing happiness into your life or life around you –
in the big things or the small?

In Advent, we are in a time of waiting.

Like the Israelites who wandered through the Wilderness, waiting to come into the Promised Land,
we wait for the coming of the **Joy** of Ages.

We wait for the day where we can join our voices with the angels to sing "**Joy** to the World, the Lord is come!"

We wait for the day when everlasting **joy** will be on each of us.

We light this candle in **Joy**.

(Light 3rd Candle)

On this day, we remember the Spirit who breathes **joy** into our lives.

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 this season of 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.

When we look at this third candle, we remember God's promise of **joy**.

God promised to send a Savior to the people.

This morning, we read from the Gospel of John.

Read **John 1:6-8**

There was a man sent from God whose name was John.

He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe.

He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

In the Scripture, we read that John was sent by God not to be the light, but to testify to the light.

This reminds us that Jesus brings light to the world.

And where there is light, there is **hope** and **peace** and **joy**.

When the world seems dark, scary, and frightening, we are reminded that Jesus brings light, and that brings **joy**.

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.