



Joy



West Richmond Church of the Brethren

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December 12, 2021

Third Sunday of Advent

Welcome and Announcements

Organ Prelude

Joy to the World

G.F. Handel

Joy To The World by Dennis Eliot, George Frideric Handel, © 1987 The Lorenz Corporation
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GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

Lighting the Advent Wreath

Scripture

Isaiah 35:1-2, 4-7a, 8-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus ² it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

⁴ Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶ then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷ the burning sand shall become a pool.

⁸ A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. ⁹ No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Meditation

This is the first word of Isaiah's vision for the people of Israel. In this vision of the future when God redeems God's people again, the wilderness sings! Where there has been barrenness there are blooms, where there has been mere dust, there is flowing water. Those who have been weak and infirmed are now strong and whole. God's arrival transforms every inability into ability and every lack into miraculous abundance. And in response there is great joy.

And that is not all. There is one more miracle -- the road home. In this place that was once a wilderness, there is now a raised road. On it there is no danger, no wandering, everyone who finds it shall know the way. As the people walk on this road, there is singing and joy and great gladness.

Today's candle is lit for all of us who know loneliness, who live with limitations or disabilities, and who long in some way for a better life. The candle of joy is our affirmation of God's promise of redemption – real redemption, someday in our experience, when all that causes us sadness or worry or despair, is miraculously redeemed. God comes. God is here. And together, in this life and the next, we sing for joy as we walk together on the road home.

The Candle of Joy

One: We light the candle of Joy, affirming our belief that in whatever wilderness we experience, God redeems. We sing and worship in gratitude for the promise made flesh in Jesus and the promise in the future we will someday know.

All: In this season of Advent, we claim the Joy of Jesus and wait for God's full redemption of the creation and ourselves.

* **Opening Carol** *While we are waiting, come* # 1 0 3 2

(lighting the first 3 advent candles representing hope, peace and joy)

While We Are Waiting, Come by Claire Cloninger, Don Cason. © 1986 Curb Word Music (Admin. by WC Music Corp.).
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1. While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

2. Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.
3. With pow'r and glory, come; with pow'r and glory, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.

CELEBRATE GOD'S FAMILY

Time with Our Children

Congregational Prayer

* Carol

Hark! the herald angels sing

201

1. Hark! The herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
 God and sinners reconciled."
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
 join the triumph of the skies,
With th'angelic host proclaim
 "Christ is born in Bethlehem."
Hark! The herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the newborn King!"
2. Christ, by highest heav'n adored;
 Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
 offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veil'd in flesh the Godhead see,
 hail th'incarnate deity;
please'd with us in flesh to dwell;
 Jesus, our Immanuel!
Hark! The herald angels sing,
 "Glory to the newborn King!"
3. Hail the heav'n-born Prince of peace!
 Hail, the Son of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
 ris'n with healing in his wings.

Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King!”

WORSHIP IN GIVING

Thoughts on Giving

Give Cheerfully

Tithe.ly

What do you love more—opening a present for yourself or watching someone you love open a gift from you? As parents, we look forward to watching the joy on our children’s faces as they open presents. We love our children and want them to experience the excitement and wonder that comes from opening a much-anticipated gift. Those are moments we cherish and remember for years to come.

That’s what came to mind as I considered what Paul meant when he wrote that “God loves a cheerful giver.” We give to bless others and out of obedience to God.

“Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver”

(2 Corinthians 9:7)

Give out of love for God and a desire to help those in need. Give to see the look on someone’s face who receives groceries from your food pantry or who receives help to break an addiction.

As we prepare to receive the offering today, let’s pray and ask God to help us give with cheerful hearts.

LISTEN FOR GOD’S WORD PROCLAIMED

Special Music

I Wonder As I Wander

John Jacob Niles

Scripture

Isaiah 55:6-13 (NRSV)

⁶ Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; ⁷ let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on

them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. ⁸ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. ⁹ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹ so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

¹² For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. ¹³ Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

* Carol

Angels we have heard on high

197

1. Angels we have heard on high,
singing sweetly through the night,
and the mountains in reply
echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

2. Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see?
What glad tidings did you hear? [Refrain]
3. Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. [Refrain]

4. See him in a manger laid
 whom the angels praise above.
 Mary, Joseph, mend your aid,
 while we raise our hearts in love. [Refrain]

Sermon

“Sorrow/Joy”

GO IN GOD’S NAME

*** Closing Song**

You shall go out with joy

4 2 7

The Trees Of The Field by Steffi Geiser Rubin, Stuart Dauermann, © 1975 Lillenas Publishing Company (Admin. by Music Services, Inc.)
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You shall go out with joy and be led forthwith peace.
 The mountains and the hills will break forth before you.
 There'll be shouts of joy and all the trees of the field
 will clap, will clap, their hands.

And all the tress of the field will clap their hands,
 the tress of the field will clap their hands.
 The trees of the field will clap their hands,
 while you go out with joy.

*** Benediction**

Postlude

Angels From The Realms Of Glory

David Schwabel

* Please stand as able and led



Ministers	All Members
Pastor	David Whitten
Worship Leader	June Diehl
Advent Readers	Brian & Chelsea Skillen
Special Music and Song Leader	Bob Gangwer
Flautist	Sarah Hartman
Guitarist	David Whitten
Organist/Pianist	Bob Phillips
Media & Technology Director.	Kevin Beers