

The Gifts of Christmas: A Guide for Advent at Bethel

Week Two: Joy

“...Christ is all, and is in all...” Colossians 3:11

We enter into the second week of advent with our hearts focused on the gift of joy. Christians have always recognized joy as the central mark of the Christmas season. The prophets spoke of anticipated joy when the day of fulfillment would come. The angels spoke of joy when Christ was born. The church is called to proclaim the joy to the world.

The gift image: collage of *fingerprints* of the body of believers, reminding us of the gift of the church and the joy we have in being in community with each other.

Scripture Readings: Colossians 3:11
Isaiah 12:2-6
Psalm 100
Luke 2:10-11
Isaiah 60:1-3

Questions for reflection:

Where does the Bible tell us joy comes from?

What is bringing you joy this advent season?

How can we experience joy together and share the joy of Christ with others?

Sing or listen to:

O Come all Ye Faithful

Joy to the World

Use this prayer as a guide for your prayers of joy this week:

Lord Jesus Christ, your first coming brought joy to your waiting people. Like expectant children, we wait now for you to return once again in glory. Holy Father, we rejoice that you have adopted us as your very own children. Holy Spirit, guide us in faith as we share the joy of salvation with all those whom we encounter.

Advent Candle: (Pink)

This week we spend time thinking about joy, the joy that came through the arrival of Jesus. This candle is meant to offer light. It is also known as the Shepherd Candle to highlight the joy the shepherds experienced when they received the good news about Christ's birth.

Say together: *“We light this candle as a symbol of joy. Help us to grow in the joy that God has given us”*

