



Sunday Wonderings for December 15th

Written by Rev. Linda

Dearly Beloved,

On Sunday, we gather to celebrate Advent Three, also known as Joy Sunday. We light the pink candle in our advent wreath. You might recall when this Sunday was known as “Gaudete Sunday” representing a Sunday set aside to rejoice. Gaudete, derived from the Latin word ‘gudete’ which means to rejoice. Gaudete Sunday was a set-aside Sunday in the season of Advent for rejoicing. It came about when Advent was more penitential than it is today. It’s why some churches use purple candles in their advent wreath, similar to the purple in the season of Lent. I think it was in the mid-60s or perhaps early 70s – I’m not certain - when we began using blue as the liturgical colour for Advent. Blue is used to symbolize Mother Mary, hope, and expectation. In ancient times, blue was reserved as a royal colour. And on Joy Sunday, alongside the blue candles of hope and peace, we light the one pink candle. It represents joy!

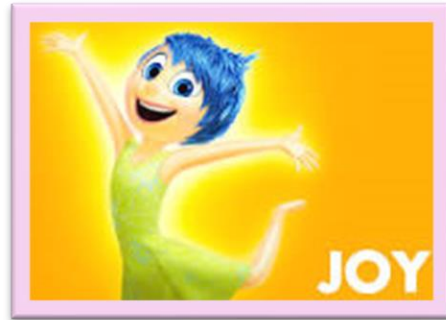
On the third Sunday of Advent, we celebrate joy. The pink candle invites us to rejoice remembering Mary’s joy, the joy that the shepherds experienced so long ago and our faithful rejoicing in the story of Jesus as we anticipate the fulfillment of God’s love born this day.

Joy is not happiness; Joy is a much deeper feeling. Joy is grace given. As Grace Ji-Sun Kim, Presbyterian minister (PCUSA), and Professor of Theology shares, “Joy is not dependent on who we are, joy is dependent on who Jesus is.”¹ It is not dependent on what is going on around us. Joy, through Christ, is already here with us. She offers that it’s not us who find joy but joy that seeks out us. Joy finds us! No seeking is required. We need only open our eyes and give witness to it. The world asks for proof of things to be real. Joy is made real by and with us, it does not demand proof but comes to us. When everything around us wants to convince us there is no joy, joy says otherwise. It does not depend on us, it is grace deeply abiding within, without and through us. We need only open our hearts to see.

And we have good news to bring us much joy. On Christmas Eve we will gather with St. Mary and St. George Anglican church in an ESM Christmas worship service at 7:00 pm at Alpine

¹ Grace Ji-Sun Kim speaking on Joy in Diana Butler Bass The Cottage, daily Advent reflections

Summit here in Jasper. We gather to celebrate the Good News born on Christmas Day. A Zoom link will be available for those who wish to join online. There is much to be joyful for.



This is Joy, the Disney character in the movie Inside Out – a movie about feelings. Joy is annoyingly peppy and bright, she is defiant against sadness, grief and loss even while she learns how to live alongside sadness, grief and loss.
Because that's what joy does, Joy rejoices.

This Sunday, come join us as we celebrate Gaudete Sunday Advent Three. Share the good news and invite a friend to come along. We gather in person at Alpine Summit Lodge in the education room that is located on the second floor to your left as you exit the elevator. For any not familiar, Alpine Summit is located at 509 Turret Street. We gather from **1000 to 1100**. As we await the renewal of our whole community, for those who are unable to join in person you are invited to join virtually via Zoom using this weekly link. We gather as a community.

Here's our Zoom Link:

Jasper United Church is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting on **Sundays at 1000**.

Topic: Jasper United Church Worship Service

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83883676566?pwd=i2wsHSyqrujkBgWhhyZRz1sxMIZlcG.1>

Meeting ID: 838 8367 6566

Passcode: 287075

We are not alone,

We live in God's world.

In Advent we wait, knowing God has already come and God will come again and is with us in this present gift of time. Breathe and give thanks to God. This is Kairos time. How might you celebrate this wonderful advent promise this year?

Blessings

Rev. Linda McLaren