

Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, "See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

At the conclusion of the Gospel, the Deacon says,

The Gospel of Christ.

People Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Preparation Hymn CP 117 *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*



Today the Wine, Host, and Bulletin are offered in loving memory of Said & Sharon Awad who would have celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary on December 11th. From their children, Brian & Michelle

Hymn During Communion *Mary, Did You Know?*
[Duet with instruments]

Closing Hymn [See Insert] *Canticle of the Turning*

Postlude: *Etude no. 7 (7 Etudes for Solo Piano)*
- Don Byron

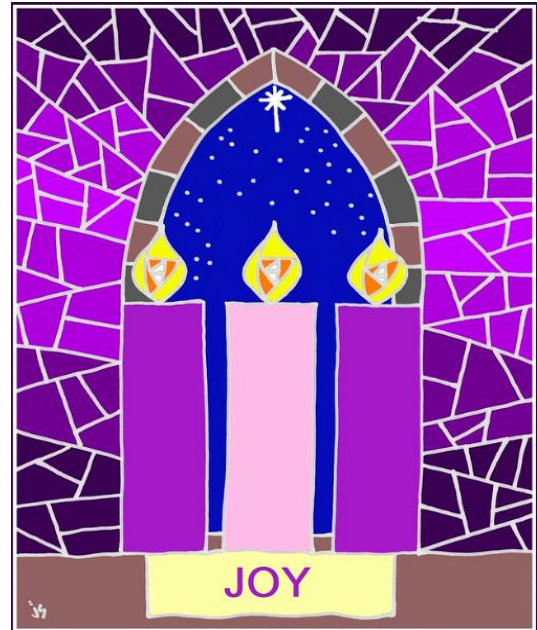
JOY

Traditionally, the third week of Advent takes "**Joy**" as its central theme. It's sometimes called, "*Gaudete Sunday*" (*gaudete* means "rejoice" in Latin), and its candle in Advent wreaths is often rose-colored. The overall idea here is that while Advent is a time of longing and waiting in the shadows for Christ to come, there's also room for taking some "anticipatory joy" in his arrival.

Is it really possible to be joyful in the midst of the shadows of sorrow? Henri Nouwen puts it this way: while happiness usually depends on circumstances, joy runs deeper. "Joy," he writes, "is the experience of knowing that you are unconditionally loved and that nothing — sickness, failure, emotional distress, oppression, war, or even death — can take that love away." Thus joy and sorrow can not only coexist; joy can even be found in the midst of sorrowful circumstances. By all outward appearances, John's situation in prison was difficult and vulnerable, but Jesus calls on him — and calls on us! — to draw on a wellspring deeper than the surface of things. *Be strong, do not fear — and rejoice!*

<https://www.saltproject.org/>

The Cathedral Church of All Saints



December 14, 2025

Prelude Music: *Nocturne in G minor, Op. 37 no. 1* - Frédéric Chopin

Welcome – Territorial Acknowledgement

Advent Candle Lighting - Week Three: Joy

Reader: "Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God". With these words the prophet Isaiah calls us to celebrate. Even in difficult times, God does not forget us. "They shall obtain **joy** and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Reader: Jesus says; "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them." There is Good News to be shared!

Reader: Today we light the Pink candle on our Advent wreath to symbolize our **Joy** in this season of waiting. **[The pink candle is lit]**. The flame of this light joins with our candles of **Hope** and **Peace**, each week the light grows stronger and brighter as we await Christ's coming. **[2 purple candles are lit]**

People: Let us lift up our hearts in joy and thanksgiving to our God!

Song: CP 89 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (verses 5-6)

Children's Message



Opening Hymn CP 102

Prepare the Way, O Zion

Collect

**God, for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist
to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Common Worship: Additional Collects (2004) alt.

The First Reading

Reader: Let us prepare ourselves for the Word of God as it comes to us in the reading of Holy Scripture.

All: **Our hearts and minds are open.**

Reader A reading from the prophet Isaiah [35:1-10]

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus 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. Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. 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.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; 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; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. 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. 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. 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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 146:4-9

Lutheran Chant 1



Happy are they who have the God of Jacob / for their help,* whose hope is in the / Lord their God;

who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that / is in them;*

who keeps his pro-/mise forever;

who gives justice to those who / are oppressed,*
and food to / those who hunger.

The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes / of the blind;*

the Lord lifts up those who / are bowed down.

The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares / for the stranger;*

**he sustains the orphan and widow,
but frustrates the way / of the wicked.**

The Lord shall / reign forever,*

**your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. /
Hallelujah!**

The Gospel

All stand, as able, for the proclamation of the Gospel.

Gospel Chant *Prepare Ye (Godspell)* Stephen Schwartz



Deacon The Lord be with you

People **And also with you.**

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew [11:2-11]

People **Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.' As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet?