



# The Heart of Advent: Midweek Advent 3 December 16, 2020



## **WELCOME:**

Welcome to midweek Advent worship at Desert Cross. We are so glad that you are here with us. During the season of Advent, we are encouraged to pause, to take time to reflect and prepare ourselves for the upcoming birth of Christ. This season we will focus on four elements of our spiritual life that grow out of our relationship with God: hope, peace, joy and love. In our worship today, we will focus on joy.

*Let us begin with prayer.*

## **OPENING PRAYER:**

Let us pray:  
Stir up our hearts, O Lord,  
to prepare the way for the coming of your Son.  
Give us courage and faith to proclaim, in word and deed,  
the good news of your coming,  
even as we wait in joy  
for that day when Christ will come again.  
**Amen.**

## **ADVENT SONG: "Come, Light Our Hearts"**

### **Chorus:**

For You O Lord our souls in stillness wait  
For You O Lord our souls in stillness wait  
Truly our peace is in You  
Truly our peace is in You

### **Verse 1:**

O, Lord of life our only peace  
Your radiance shines  
On all who look to You in the dark  
Emmanuel come, come light our hearts

### **Chorus:**

For You O Lord our souls in stillness wait  
For You O Lord our souls in stillness wait  
Truly our peace is in You  
Truly our peace is in You

### **Verse 2:**

Oh, joy above all other loves  
In You we find more than enough  
We come as we are O heal and restore  
Come light our hearts

**Poem        by Ted Loder**

Gentle me,  
Holy One,  
into an unclenched moment,  
    a deep breath,  
        a letting go  
            of heavy expectancies,  
                of shriveling anxieties,  
                    of dead certainties.

That, softened by the silence,  
    surrounded by the light,  
        and open to the mystery,  
I may be found by wholeness,  
    upheld by the unfathomable,  
        entranced by the simple,  
            and filled with the joy  
                that is you.

(From the book "Guerrillas of Grace: Prayers For the Battle" by Ted Loder, © 1984 Innisfree Press, Inc. Philadelphia, PA)

**HOLY SCRIPTURES:**

**Psalm 30**

<sup>1</sup>I will extol you, O Lord, for you have drawn me up,  
    and did not let my foes rejoice over me.  
<sup>2</sup>O Lord my God, I cried to you for help,  
    and you have healed me.  
<sup>3</sup>O Lord, you brought up my soul from Sheol,  
    restored me to life from among those gone down to the Pit.  
<sup>4</sup>Sing praises to the Lord, O you his faithful ones,  
    and give thanks to his holy name.  
<sup>5</sup>For his anger is but for a moment;  
    his favor is for a lifetime.  
Weeping may linger for the night,  
    but joy comes with the morning.  
<sup>6</sup>As for me, I said in my prosperity,  
    "I shall never be moved."  
<sup>7</sup>By your favor, O Lord,  
    you had established me as a strong mountain;  
you hid your face;  
    I was dismayed.

<sup>8</sup>To you, O Lord, I cried,  
and to the Lord I made supplication:  
<sup>9</sup>“What profit is there in my death,  
if I go down to the Pit?  
Will the dust praise you?  
Will it tell of your faithfulness?  
<sup>10</sup>Hear, O Lord, and be gracious to me!  
O Lord, be my helper!”  
  
<sup>11</sup>You have turned my mourning into dancing;  
you have taken off my sackcloth  
and clothed me with joy,  
<sup>12</sup>so that my soul may praise you and not be silent.  
O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.



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## John 16: 19 -24

<sup>19</sup> Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Are you discussing among yourselves what I meant when I said, ‘A little while, and you will no longer see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’? <sup>20</sup> Very truly, I tell you, you will weep and mourn, but the world will rejoice; you will have pain, but your pain will turn into joy. <sup>21</sup> When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. <sup>22</sup> So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. <sup>23</sup> On that day you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

**MEDITATION:** Pastor Doris Nolan

**MEDITATION SONG:** ELW 836 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

- 1 Joyful, joyful we adore thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love!  
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee,  
praising thee, their sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
drive the gloom of doubt away.  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with the light of day.
- 2 All thy works with joy surround thee,  
earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,  
stars and angels sing around thee,  
center of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,  
chanting bird, and flowing fountain  
call us to rejoice in thee.
- 3 Thou art giving and forgiving,  
ever blessing, ever blest,  
wellspring of the joy of living,  
ocean-depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father, Christ our brother,  
all who live in love are thine;  
teach us how to love each other,  
lift us to the joy divine!

Text: Henry van Dyke, 1852-1922

## ADVENT PRAYER:

O God of Joy, our fears and anxiety narrow our view so that we see only what is broken and wrong and miss the signs of joy that you have woven through the fabric of our lives.

Trusting in your mercy and relying on the joy with which you fill us, we lift to you our prayers:

- ✠ we pray for healing for all those who are sick in body, mind or spirit, especially those who are ill because of Covid,
- ✠ we pray for strength for all health care workers and first responders, for all essential workers, and caretakers,
- ✠ we pray for wisdom for the leaders of nations, as they strive to protect their people from this virus as we wait for the vaccine to be made available,
- ✠ we pray for sufficient resources for all people who are homeless, poor, unemployed and food insecure,
- ✠ we pray for peace and reconciliation and an end to divisions in our nation and in our world.

We trust that you will answer our prayers according to your gracious will.

During this Advent season of holy waiting and preparation, open our hearts to the joy that is ours through the coming of Christ. Help us to remember that in times of darkness and despair, Christ came so that our joy may be complete. Amen.

## CLOSING SONG: ELW 239 Hark, the Glad Sound!

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|---|---|
| 1 Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,<br>the Savior promised long;<br>let ev'ry heart prepare a throne<br>and ev'ry voice a song. | 3 He comes the broken heart to bind,<br>the bleeding soul to cure,<br>and with the treasures of his grace<br>to enrich the humble poor. |
| 2 He comes the pris'ners to release,<br>in Satan's bondage held.<br>The gates of brass before him burst,<br>the iron fetters yield.   | 4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,<br>your welcome shall proclaim,<br>and heav'n's eternal arches ring<br>with your beloved name.    |

Text: Philip Doddridge, 1702-1751

## BENEDICTION:

The Creator of the stars bless your Advent waiting,  
the long-expected Savior fill your heart with joy,  
the unexpected Spirit guide your journey,

✠ now and forever.

Amen.