

ORDER OF SERVICE
Sunday, December 13, 2020 – 3rd Sunday of Advent – Gaudete Sunday
St. Martin’s Episcopal Church, Lebanon, OR 97355
Kay and Doug Young, Worship Leaders

A Greeting

Leader: Last Sunday we lit the candle of Peace, and we will light it and the candle of Hope again as we remember that Jesus, born in Bethlehem, will come again to fulfill all of God's promises and bring us everlasting peace and joy.

A person lights the first and then the second purple candles as the Leader continues.

Today we light the third Candle of Advent, the Candle of Joy. When the angel Gabriel told Mary that a special child would be born to her she was filled with joy. She sang a song that began with the words: "My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Just as the birth of Jesus gave great joy to his mother, so his presence in the world gave joy to those who had none before. He healed them and gave them hope and peace when they believed in him. From hope and peace grows joy. We light the Candle of Joy to remind us that when Jesus is born in us we have joy and that through him there will be everlasting joy on earth.

A person lights the pink candle as the Leader continues.

Joy is like a light shining in a dark place. As we look at this candle we celebrate the joy we find in Jesus Christ. Let us pray.

All: Thank you God for the joy you give us. We ask that as we wait for all your promises to come true, and for Christ to come again, that you would remain present with us. Help us today, and every day to worship you, to hear your word, and to do your will by sharing your joy with each other. We ask it in the name of the one who was born in Bethlehem.
Amen.

Say in Unison Verse 3 of 'O come, o come, Emmanuel' Hymn 56

O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times did give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.

Acclamation

- ❖ Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ❖ And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Trisagion (say in unison)

- ❖ **Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, Have Mercy Upon Us**
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Collect for Third Sunday in Advent

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

First Lesson

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.
They shall build up the ancient ruins,
they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities,
the devastations of many generations.
For I the LORD love justice,
I hate robbery and wrongdoing;
I will faithfully give them their recompense,
and I will make an everlasting covenant with them.
Their descendants shall be known among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
all who see them shall acknowledge
that they are a people whom the LORD has blessed.
I will greatly rejoice in the LORD,
my whole being shall exult in my God;
for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation,
he has covered me with the robe of righteousness,
as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
For as the earth brings forth its shoots,
and as a garden causes what is sown in it to spring up,
so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise
to spring up before all the nations.
✦ Hear what the spirit is saying to God's People
✦ Thanks be to God.

Canticle 15: The Song of Mary *Magnificat* (Luke 1:46-55)

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.
He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.
He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.
He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. *Amen.*

The Epistle

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil. May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

- ✦ Hear what the spirit is saying to God's People
- ✦ Thanks be to God.

The Gospel

John 1:6-8,19-28

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.

This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,'" as the prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me;

I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing.

- ✦ This is the Gospel of the Lord
- ✦ Thanks be to God

Sermon “Rejoice” S. Kay Young

Today is Gaudete Sunday. The color of the candle and of the priest’s vestments is pink. Gaudete means rejoice; but it doesn’t make sense. How can we rejoice with sickness and worries surrounding us? Usually, we worry about too much hustle and bustle, and not enough time for contemplation and prayer. This year there’s less rush, and seemingly more time but are we contemplating? Some of us have just focused on the children and grandchildren, some of us are contacting loved ones of all ages as touchstones of our own lives. Most everyone feels somehow unsettled and stuck in the middle. Where’s the expectant joy? We imagine a better time: “When the election is over, I’ll be happy,” or “When work settles down (or picks up) I’ll be happy”. If Happiness is a destination, then Joy is the journey... appreciating little beauties that surround us, noticing your faith at work, practicing gratitude: these are process words, and we all can do things to make the journey more joyous, even if we aren’t AT our happy destination.

A sense of calling and purpose could help tremendously with that. If we had a calling, we might find reasons to look for joy along the way. Being in the desert eating locusts (even dipped in honey) doesn’t sound like a happy life, but John was a man sent by God. I’m thinking his was a joyous life.

Sent by God. Does that imply God knew John since before he was born? YUP. Don’t look now, but you and I were sent by God, too. I truly believe that. You just never know when your purpose is fulfilled in a small way. But think on the number of tiny moments when someone convinced you of your goodness & worth. Those moments fulfilled their mission; do not doubt you are fulfilling yours. Rejoice.

John was quite clear in his mission: He is asked FIVE times in today’s Gospel Who ARE you? He must have caused a stir baptizing folks in the Jordan for a contingent of Priests and Levites to come to check him out:

Who Are you?

Are you the Messiah?

Are you Elijah? (The prophet Elijah was supposed to come back just before the Messiah)

Are you the Prophet?

Who are you? We need an answer for those who sent us!

OK, then, WHO ARE YOU TO BE BAPTIZING IF YOU’RE, um, nobody?

John told them. He was here to baptize in water. But one who comes after is worthy, not I. What does that have to do with today? With us? With rejoicing? Lots, actually.

Please believe we were each sent by God. And we can only answer for our own selves when we are asked these questions, or when we ask ourselves to justify our existence, let's think of John. Who Are you?

Are you the Messiah? No? REJOICE!

Are you Elijah? No? REJOICE!

Are you the Prophet? No? REJOICE!

Are you head of any elections board? In charge of distributing Corona Virus shots? ARE YOU GOD?

WELL, WHEW! NO! So, REJOICE!

This Gaudete Sunday, you can rest assured that you are doing what God sent you to do. Even if you haven't been spiritually present this Advent, even if you haven't made all your phone calls, there's still time. Sure, scale it back for 2020; bake a few cookies, just not an overwhelming amount. Hang some decorations; but remember to take time to keep one another company as best as you can.

Remember you are not responsible for it all. You don't have to make it happen. It's pink Sunday, saying "It's not too late! Christmas is coming!" Christ is here, NOW!
REJOICE!

Leader: Prayers of the People for Advent III

As we wait with joy for Jesus Christ, the one who is to come, let us offer prayers to God who sent his Son as the true light into the world.

Deacon or other leader

For the coming of Jesus Christ in power and glory;
For the coming of Wisdom to teach and guide us.
For the coming of Emmanuel, the hope of all the peoples.
For the peace of the world, and for our unity in Christ.
Lord, hear us.

People Lord, graciously hear us.

For this parish community of [church name], that God would guide us with his truth, fill us with his love, and provide for us from his bounty. Lord, hear us.

People Lord, graciously hear us.

For Michael our presiding bishop, Michael our bishop, Diana our Bishop-Elect and all bishops, and all who minister in Christ, and for all the holy people of God. Lord, hear us.

People Lord, graciously hear us.

For the church throughout the world and the faithful in every place. Lord, hear us.

People Lord, graciously hear us.

For the leaders of the nations and all in authority. Lord, hear us.
People Lord, graciously hear us.

For justice, peace, and freedom among peoples of the earth. Lord hear us.
People Lord, graciously hear us.

For travelers, for the sick and the suffering, for the hungry and the oppressed, and for those in prison, remembering especially those on our prayer list. Lord, hear us.
People Lord, graciously hear us.

For the faithful departed in Christ, and those whose faith is known to God alone, especially Betty Stokes, Sue Gillenwater, The Rev. Deacon Bill Mosher. Lord, hear us.
People Lord, graciously hear us.

For our deliverance from all affliction, strife, and need. Lord, hear us.
People Lord, graciously hear us.

Joining our voices with the blessed Virgin Mary and with all the saints and angels of God, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ.
To you, O Lord.

Celebrant

O Emmanuel, our king and lawgiver, desire of all nations and Savior of all peoples, come and save us, O Lord our God. Glory to you for ever. *Amen.*

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Prayer for St. Martin's

God of Love, open our eyes and ears to perceive you at work in creation, the church, and our parish. Fill our hearts with your love that we may reach out in love to others. Stir up our imagination with your Holy Spirit that we may find new ways to live into life with you. Give us a vision of your mission that we may share your love and your spirit in all the places where we work and play and worship you. In Jesus' holy name, **Amen**

Blessings
Dismissal