

DECEMBER 15, 2024
THIRD SUNDAY
OF ADVENT



Living a life of repentance brings joy.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 3:7-18	One more powerful is coming
Monday	Zephaniah 3:14-20	A song of joy
Tuesday	Philippians 4:4-7	The Lord is near
Wednesday	Isaiah 9:1-7	A child is born
Thursday	Hebrews 13:7-17	Service that pleases God
Friday	Luke 15:1-7	The parable of the lost sheep
Saturday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Thanksgiving and praise
Sunday	Luke 1:39-55	Mary visits Elizabeth

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

So with many other exhortations, [John the Baptist] proclaimed the good news to the people. Luke 3:18 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Lord Jesus, may the good news of your coming fill our hearts with joy and lead us to love you and have compassion for others. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, bless our homes with joy this Advent. As we enjoy your gifts of food, make us ready for Jesus, the one who is to come. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May God bless you with joy.



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DECEMBER 15, 2024
HYMN OF THE WEEK
Joy to the World



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is some good news you have heard recently?
- A life of repentance brings joy and loving actions. How is that good news for us?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 3:7-18.

John the Baptist gets people's attention with words of condemnation, warning, and confrontation. And it works, or at least the crowd is riveted for a while. The people wonder what to do to get their lives in order. Simple: don't abuse your power and wealth; share; be generous. They are to show a life of repentance, which means living life differently because of God's ways and power. However, John's suggestions aren't the "how-to steps" to achieving a successful life. They are examples of behaviors of a life that trusts the good news. A life of repentance brings joy and loving actions. The good news of Jesus changes everything with the power of grace, mercy, and peace. John the Baptist describes it as the life that bears "*fruits worthy of repentance*" (v. 8).

Discuss: How would you describe the good news of Jesus to others?

Pray: **Righteous God, we thank you that earthly powers that abuse others are condemned; we ask that your reign of peace bear the fruit of repentance in us, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme for this week, how might your actions bring joy to someone this week?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The third candle on the Advent Wreath symbolizes the theme of joy. Discuss or think about the joy that Jesus brings to the world. Light the first candle of hope, the second candle of peace, and the third candle of joy on the Advent Wreath.

Say: **In Isaiah's song, he names God as the source of our salvation and the one to trust without fear. Isaiah cries out, "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation." Let us give thanks for the joy that Jesus brings. (Isaiah 12:2-3)**

Pray: **Thank you, Lord Jesus for giving us joy. Fill our lives with joy this Advent. Amen.**



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