

Reader Six:

For the coming of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, who brings us the deepest joy in our everyday lives and for all future generations.

All: May we keep the Lord near in JOY.

Reader Seven:

Let us find in our hearts the brightness of God's joy and share it with those around us.

All: May we keep the Lord near in JOY.

Reader Eight:

Let us be open to freely sharing our gifts and appreciating the talents and abilities that others share with us.

All: May we keep the Lord near in JOY.

Reader Nine:

Let us look to the coming of Emanuel with joyful hearts and share that joy with others. Amen.



Closing Prayer:

All:

Joyful God,
May our quiet smiles be a symbol of remembered joys.
May our delight be a sign of our elation today.
May our laughter be signs of mirthful anticipation this Advent and always.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.



December - 3rd week of Advent



The Lord is
near...
in JOY

► The Lord is near... in Joy

Reader One:

As we draw nearer to the celebrating the birth of Jesus, patience of knowing that Jesus is very near to us becomes more difficult. We worry about getting everything done in time and done well: decorating, get-togethers, and gifts



for those we love. While the decorations, gatherings and gifts help us to get ready outwardly, it is even more important to prepare spiritually. During the third week of advent, we are called to spread the joy of God's love to all around us.

Preparation

Prepare an Advent wreath with three purple (for the 1st, 2nd and 4th week of Advent) and one pink candle (for 3rd week of Advent). While the third pink candle representing JOY is being lit, read the following prayer.

Opening Prayer

Reader Two:

As we light the third Advent candle, We think of the great joy of Mary, who is awaiting the birth of her son. May we also wait in joyful anticipation as Jesus comes nearer to us. Let us follow God's light in joy, faith and hope.
Amen.

Scripture reading:

Luke 1: 46-55 Mary's Magnificat
Magnificat - the text in scripture where the Virgin Mary speaks upon the occasion of her visitation to her cousin Elizabeth.

Reader Three:

A reading from the gospel of Luke:

And Mary said,
"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God
my Savior, for he has looked
with favor on the lowliness
of his servant.

Surely, from now on all
generations will call me blessed;
for the Mighty One has done
great things for me,
And holy is his name.

His mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the
thoughts of their hearts.

He has brought down the powerful
from their thrones,

And lifted up the lowly;

he has filled the hungry with good
things, and sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made
to our ancestors, to Abraham
and to his descendants forever."

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks to be God.



Symbolic Action & Prayer:

After the Litany of Joy is read greet the person to either side of you with a handshake and a joyful verbal greeting to remind us of Jesus' coming into the world.

Litany: JOY

All: May we keep the Lord near in JOY.

Reader Four:

For a future, when all share in Christ's dream of everlasting peace for every soul on earth, no matter their station, education, age, sex, race, color or religion.

All: May we keep the Lord near in JOY.

Reader Five:

For a world tomorrow that is filled with the peace of shared self-worth, free from the worries of loneliness and exclusion.

All: May we keep the Lord near in JOY.

