

# SEEKING THE KINGDOM

CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

ADVENT READINGS, REFLECTIONS  
AND ACTIONS ON HOPE, PEACE, JOY  
AND LOVE

WEEK THREE, **JOY**  
DECEMBER 13 - 19

CREATED BY:

Judith Cooke, Kim Williams and Marion Stephens

Advent Week 3: Joy

**Sunday December 13 – Light your joy candle**

PRAYER

Reading: Luke 1:46-55

God our Father,  
the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary  
that she was to be the mother of your Son.  
Though Mary was afraid,  
she responded to your call with joy.  
Help us, whom you call to serve you,  
to share like her in your great work  
of bringing to our world your love and healing.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ,  
the light who is coming into the world.  
Amen.

Response:

Lord Jesus, light of the world,  
blessed is Gabriel, who brought good news;  
blessed is Mary, your mother and ours.  
Bless your Church preparing for Christmas;  
and bless us your children, who long for your coming.  
Amen.

**Monday December 14 – Light your joy candle**

LEARNING

THINK

What do you picture when you think of someone who is joyful?  
How would you describe joy?  
What are some people/places/things that help you experience joy?  
What do you think kids can teach adults about joy?

WATCH this video to learn about joy in the Bible

<https://youtu.be/qvOhQTuD2e0>

READ Luke 1:46-55

The Joy candle may traditionally be linked to the joy of the shepherds at the coming of Jesus, but even before Jesus was born, there were two women who experienced great joy at the promise of Jesus: Mary and Elizabeth.

Mary and Elizabeth were women of Israel. Like generations before them, they were waiting with their hope in God. They had no idea they would be asked to play such important roles in God's plan, but because they had faithfully placed their hope in God, they were ready and willing to participate.

Elizabeth had been unable to have a child before this, and God gives her the gift of a special child in her old age.

Mary was specially chosen for the job of bearing Jesus into the world. Mary's song is one of the most joyful pieces of poetry in the bible. But it's not like the wonderful news of these babies meant these women had easy lives. Their joy was in the context of the hard realities of life. Mary and Elizabeth chose joy.

The experience of joy is closely linked to our willingness to experience the hard feelings of life too. We have to be able to feel all our feelings to also feel Joy.

Making the choice for joy, as the Israelites did, is closely linked to a practice of gratitude. Being thankful for what is good, even when there's lots of sad and scary, helps us choose joy.

And a special note for kids: you might sometimes get the feeling that adults always think they know more than you, but when it comes to Joy, your ability to experience Joy in the moment has so much to teach adults!

NOTICE examples in the Bible and in life

The apostle Paul singing songs in prison

Miriam leading the israelites in song and dance after crossing the red sea

All the musicians who help us experience joy

Playing in the snow

Decorating for christmas

How we feel with a new puppy or kitten

Birthday parties

BOOK suggestions--what would you add?

Great Joy, by Kate di Camillo [https://youtu.be/1IOFs82Tq\\_c](https://youtu.be/1IOFs82Tq_c)

Joyful book, Todd Parr

## **Tuesday December 15 – Light your joy candle**

### REFLECTION

Light the joy candle. Begin by closing your eyes and taking 3 deep breaths, in through your nose and out through your mouth.

In your mind, think back to the day before. What do you remember about your discussion, about Mary and Elizabeth? Did you see joy in a different way than you have before?

Look back at some family photos of celebrations and events in your life. Choose a picture that reminds you of a joyful time. Imagine yourself back in that picture. What made that moment joyful? What happened before? What happened after? Think about that time. What other feelings were present in that moment and in the moments surrounding it? Talk about your picture with your family.

Out of joy often flows gratitude. In your family, name something or someone for which you are grateful for each letter of the alphabet. Can you make it all the way from A to Z?

Where do you see joy in the world, your community and your family? Is there joy in the midst of a pandemic where lots of things are difficult?

Where are we waiting for joy, in the world, in your community and in your family? Talk about these examples too.

As you finish, take 3 more deep breaths. Imagine breathing in the joy that God gives and as you breath out, imagine gratitude pouring out into the world around you.

## **Wednesday December 16 - Light your joy candle**

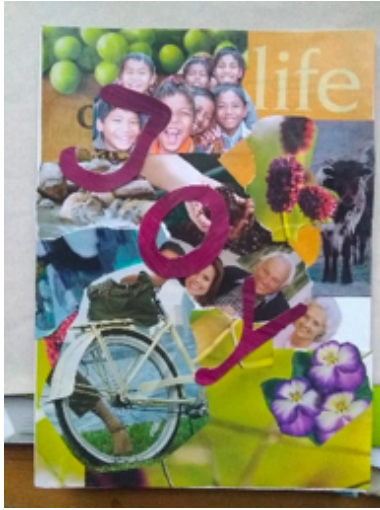
### CREATE

Joy Poster

Materials: 8 – 11" card stock. Magazines for cutting/tearing, scissors, glue, brush

Instructions

Choose magazine pictures and words that describe joy to you. Cut or tear out your choices and paste onto your card stock. You can layer and overlap your pictures. Be creative. Use your own ideas to add sparkle and colour.



One of the tasks next week will be to send cards to the First Nations community in Pikangikum. If making cards brings joy, you can start now! You can use some of your collage materials, paints or markers, whatever you like. Here is an example for some inspiration. More to come on Pikangikum next week!



### **Thursday December 17 – Light your joy candle**

#### **MEDITATION**

Join us on Zoom for a live meditation at 7.30 pm (it will only be about 15 minutes)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6590297609>

Or

Spend some time meditating on joy (you could use Mary's Song, Luke 1:46-55) on your own or with your family.

Friday December 18/ Saturday December 19

**ACTION**

Out of gratitude can come giving. Contribute to Sanctuary by giving one or more items from this list for them to distribute to their friends who live on the streets of our city.

-a cash donation <https://www.sanctuarytoronto.org/>

-a warm hat

-mittens or gloves

-socks

-scarf

Drop off your donation in a box on the porch of 268 Strathmore Blvd. and they will be passed along!