

DECEMBER 13, 2020
THIRD SUNDAY
OF ADVENT



Jesus brings good news.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

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

Sunday	John 1:6-8, 19-28	John's witness to the light
Monday	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Good news of deliverance
Tuesday	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	A call to rejoice
Wednesday	Romans 10:14-17	Those who bring good news
Thursday	1 Thessalonians 3:6-13	Timothy's encouraging report
Friday	Genesis 18:1-18	A son for Abraham and Sarah
Saturday	Psalm 126	A people who dream
Sunday	Luke 1:26-38	The birth of Jesus foretold

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*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. **Isaiah 61:1 (NRSV)***

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of power and might, help us to be aware of the needs of people and be prepared to bring joy and good news to people through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

May this gift of food fill our hearts with laughter and make us shout with joy. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the God of peace make you holy in spirit and soul and body. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)



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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:

- Think or talk about a time when you felt sad or brokenhearted.
- When you feel discouraged, who do you talk to or what do you do to feel better?
- Jesus comes to change our lives. How does Jesus make a difference for your life and the lives of others?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11.

An American emailed his friend in Zimbabwe and asked if he was well. The response was "I am well if you are well." That response comes with a communal understanding of wellness. We can't be well on our own. Neither can we truly feel okay about ourselves if we feel safe and protected while our neighbor does not feel okay. Isaiah 61:1-2 brings good news for all, including—and especially—the oppressed, the brokenhearted, captives, prisoners, those who mourn and those who owe debts (The year of the Lord's favor was a time to forgive debts). God's work of justice and mercy that brings joy will be seen in all the nations (v. 11) and is for all, not just a select and privileged few. How do you see the wellbeing of others as important to your own wellbeing?

Pray: **God of justice, we give you thanks that your goodness and mercy is for us and for all the world through Christ our Lord. Amen. (Isaiah 61:11)**

SERVICE

There is a theme of joy in our readings this week. This joy includes God's promise to overcome pain, disappointment, and fear. Think of someone currently experiencing difficulties. How can you be the hands and voice of God's good news to that person this week?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Place the wise men further away from the nativity set for now. Wait to place Jesus in the manger until Christmas Eve. On your Advent wreath, light the first candle of hope, the second one of peace, and the third one of joy. Pause for a moment to sit in silence and look upon the nativity set and think about the good news and joy the coming of Jesus brings us. *Say this Bible verse: **Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*** (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)
*Pray: **Lord God, thank you for being with us in times of sadness and times of joy. Give us hope, peace and joy as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Amen.***



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org