

*Advent Week 3 Reading - JOY*

Two weeks ago we lit the candle of Hope and last week we lit the candle of Peace. Today we light the third candle of Advent. This is the candle of JOY. As the coming of Jesus, our Savior, draws nearer, our joy builds with our anticipation of his birth. From the Book of Isaiah we read the words of our Lord:

**Isaiah 65:18-19**

18 But be glad and rejoice forever  
in that which I create;  
for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy,  
and her people to be a gladness.

19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem  
and be glad in my people;  
no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping  
and the cry of distress.

The birth of God's promised savior was looked forward to with great anticipation and the news of His birth was filled with great joy. The book of Luke recounts the announcement of this birth...

**Luke 1:26-38**

8 And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. 10 And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

As we prepare our hearts and lives to celebrate the birth of our savior we are reminded his kingdom is one of joy...

**Romans 14:17**

17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Jesus is the Christ. Shepherds, Wise Men, Commoners, were all filled with Joy at the birth of Jesus and the Bible is clear that Joy is still here for us each and every day.

This Christmas season let the Joy of Jesus Christ fill you. Let His Joy be your strength so that we may know the glory of God.

*Prayer*