

First Parish Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
P.O. Box 114, 47 East Derry Road
East Derry, New Hampshire 03041
Tel. (603) 434 – 0628

December 16, 2018
Third Sunday of Advent



Share how you celebrate JOY

Sing to the Lord, for God has done glorious things;
let this be known to all the world.

Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion,
for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.

Isaiah 12:5-6

The United Church of Christ: What We Believe

We believe in the triune God: A Creator, the resurrected Christ, the sole Head of the church, and the Holy Spirit, who guides and brings about the creative and redemptive work of God in the world.

We believe that each person is unique and valuable. It is the will of God that every person belong to a family of faith where they have a strong sense of being valued and loved.

We believe that each person is on a spiritual journey and that each of us is at a different stage of that journey.

We believe that the persistent search for God produces an authentic relationship with God, engendering love, strengthening faith, dissolving guilt, and giving life purpose and direction.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

WE GATHER INTO THE PRESENCE OF GOD

WELCOME THE CHRIST LIGHT

INTROIT:

HANDCHIME CHOIR "Good Christian Friends Rejoice"
arranged by Kevin McChesney.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS & JOYS AND CONCERNS

Lighting of the Advent Candle for the Third Sunday of Advent: **Joy**

One: Hope is a light given by God to every Child of God.

All: We light the candle of Hope as we remember Christ's gift.
(Light the candle of Hope)

One: The flame of Peace, just as the Peace of Christ, is the true order of life.

All: We light the candle of Peace as we remember to live in Christ's Peace. *(Light the candle of Peace)*

One: Joy is the celebration given by God through the light of the world.

All: Joy is the celebration given by God at the birth of the Christ Child.

One: Joy is the celebration when the angels sang "Glory to God in the highest!"

All: Let us dance and sing and shout for joy. Christ is coming again!
(Light the candle of Joy)

*HYMN # 107- Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Moon

*CALL TO WORSHIP RESPONSE

One: Rejoice, give thanks; call on God's name;

Many: How good is it to come home to God's house!

One: Sing aloud! Exult with all your heart;

Many: Let us offer up our anxieties, seeking God's peace.

One: Share your praise! Express your joy!

**Many: God's love is renewing us in these moments;
God's strength is becoming our song!**

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (in unison)

God of our baptism, renew in us today the gifts of your Holy Spirit. We have come together, eager for good news. We are here for instructions, ready to do the work you call us to do in the world. Equip us in this time of worship to draw deeply from the waters of salvation. Fill us with your love that we may pass it on. Call us once again to truth, excellence and justice in all we say and do. Amen.

***SONG OF PRAISE There's a song of Joy**

There's a song of joy in my heart,
Joy is a gift from Jesus.
There's a song of joy in my heart,
Joy is a gift from God.

There's a song of peace in my heart,
Peace is a gift from Jesus.
There's a song of peace in my heart,
Peace is a gift from God.

There's a song of hope in my heart,
Hope is a gift from Jesus.
There's a song of hope in my heart,
Hope is a gift from God.

ANTHEM: God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen

WE INVITE FORWARD GOD'S YOUNGER DISCIPLES

At this time, all children are invited to come forward for the children's offering, and children's time. An offering is not required for participation. All are welcome, especially first time visitors.

CHILDREN'S OFFERING and PRAYER OF DEDICATION

In our hearts these gifts we bring; for you give us everything. Teach us how to follow you; in all we say and all we do. Amen.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Christine Lehoullier

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

Children are excused as we sing: **"Go now in peace. Go now in peace. May the love of God surround you everywhere, everywhere you may go."** Words & Music: Natalie Sleeth, © 1976 Hinshaw Music, Inc.; All rights reserved. Reprinted under ONE LICENSE #A-708716.

MISSION MOMENT: Pinkerton Homeless – Melanie Van Steensburg

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD FOR US

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 12:2-6

NEW TESTAMENT: Luke 1:39-45

SERMON: When did you last leap for joy?

WE RESPOND WITH PRAYER

PASTORAL PRAYER

HYMN: #127- Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming

WE RESPOND WITH OUR FINANCIAL GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION

Whether we face plenty or hunger, abundance or want, we are in debt to God for all we have and all we are. In these moments of thankfulness, we remember how God has blessed us. We give with joy because we trust the God of our salvation.

OFFERTORY MUSIC

***DOXOLOGY Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise God all creatures here below; Praise God above you heavenly host: Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost.**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

We rejoice, O God of peace, in the privilege of giving without fear. You come to us daily with blessings too numerous to count. You are the Holy One whose presence relieves our anxieties, feeds our hungers, and stirs our compassion. Through our offerings, we express our gratitude. As we give of ourselves, we respond to your call to bear fruit and to make your name known among the nations. Thank you for accepting all we offer. Amen.

WE GO OUT TO LOVE AND SERVE A LOVING, SERVING GOD

*HYMN: # 131 – It Came Upon A Midnight Clear

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE (Please remain seated during the Postlude)

**Indicates all that are able may stand.*

MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH

Members of the Congregation

DEACONS OF THE MONTH

Sue Lindemann, Ryan Lehoullier

LAY READER

Dee Deranian

USHERS

Stanley & Holly Gorgol, Tom & Andrea Cooper, Michael Bryan

GREETER

Tom & Andrea Cooper

SENIOR PASTOR AND TEACHER

The Rev. Dr. Deborah Roof

INTERIM DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY

Debbie Gline Allen

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Christine Lehoullier

ACCOMPANIST/ORGANIST

Chris Ferrin

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Michelle Guerrin

We welcome Kaitlyn Leahy this morning as guest conductor and we thank her for sharing her gifts.

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 12:2-6

² Surely God is my salvation I will trust, and will not be afraid, for the Lord God is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.

³ With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. ⁴ And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known his deeds among the nations; proclaim that his name is exalted. ⁵ Sing praises to the Lord, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth. ⁶ Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

NEW TESTAMENT: Luke 1:39-45

³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."



Here are ways you can embody the JOY during the third week of the Season of Advent:



Monday: CELEBRATE – This time of year is a great time to remember there is good in the world, especially when seen through the eyes of a child. Have your children or the children of the church make a list of things to celebrate and share with those around you. [#loveofchildren](#)

Tuesday: ANTICIPATE – Food banks and direct service centers receive an abundance of donations during this season. However, need extends well beyond this season to all year round. Plan ways to care for the needs of others in your community in January, February, and even next summer. [#loveofneighbor](#)

Wednesday: RENEW – Renew your community to care for creation. What actions can you take in the New Year to continue to care for the Earth and all of God's creation? Start with something simple and enlist others in your church to join you. [#loveofcreation](#)

Thursday: ATTEND – Encourage children to care for others during the holiday season, and all year round. Ask them to think of ways they can share God's love with others, especially other children. Have them make a list and then create a plan to do those things in the weeks and year ahead. [#loveofchildren](#)

Friday: CENTER – December 21st marks the longest night of the year. Pause from the busyness of the season and enjoy a moment outside tonight or sitting in the still darkness and focus on the coming of God's light. [#loveofcreation](#)

Saturday: SHARE – Give an alternative gift and change a life by sponsoring a child through UCC Global Ministries, or by giving an animal through an organization like Heifer International. These alternative gifts help share God's love with lasting impact. [#loveofneighbor](#)

~The Rev. Dave Sigmund, 3 Great Loves Ambassador, United Church of Christ