



We Have Come to Worship Him

Advent 2025 Devotional by Rev. Lauren Green Yates

Austin Global Methodist Church

Advent Memory Verse- “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.” (Matthew 2:2 NLT)

Advent Week Three- Joy

December 14- Luke 2:29-32

This week, we will light the candle of joy. You may have noticed the joy candle is different than the others. Traditionally the other candles of advent are purple, but this one is pink, representing the joy of the Lord. Why? Because the joy of the Lord makes you different.

Simeon and Anna understood this. They play a small role in the Christmas story, but they are two of my favorite characters of the New Testament. They are both elderly, filled with the Holy Spirit, completely dedicated to the Lord, and are waiting. This makes them stand out in the Christmas story. They were waiting to see for themselves the joy of their salvation.

One day it came. They saw it in the form of a little baby, born to parents of lowly estate. Simeon even held the child in his arms and proclaimed, “My eyes have seen your Yeshua (salvation).” Both Simeon and Anna worshiped the Lord for the blessing of seeing their Savior face to face. Anna the Prophet then went around telling those who were waiting their Redeemer had come. They worshipped and witnessed. The joy of the Lord made them act differently. It moved them to action.

The joy of the Christmas story should cause you to do the same. It should inspire you to passionately worship your Savior and boldly tell all who are waiting for their Redeemer who Jesus is. This Christmas, let the joy of Jesus change you. Allow his joy to make you different.

Daily Question: Do I feel joy when I read the Christmas story?

Prayer: Dear Lord, Thank you for the story of Simeon and Anna. Thank you for the joy that makes us different. Help my passionate worship and bold witness to bring the joy of Jesus to those around me. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.

December 15- Psalm 146

Hallelujah! This word is the same in every language all over the world. It means “Praise the LORD”. It is a command, not a suggestion.



Sometimes we need to be reminded why God is worthy of our joyful praise. He is our helper and maker. He is faithful forever. He is just. He reigns eternally. He is worthy of our praise.

Today I want to draw your attention to verse 2. “I will praise the Lord all my life. I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.” This should be our goal, not just at Christmas, but all year long. We should want to pass from life to death with praise on our lips.

On this joyful week of Advent, set a goal to have a time of praise and worship each day. Turn off secular music and put on praise music this week, especially Christmas music. Set a tone of joy in your house. Remember who God is and praise him. Hallelujah!

Daily Question: How will I make a purposeful effort to praise the Lord this week?

Prayer: Dear Lord, You are worthy of praise. Thank you for being my maker, helper, faithful judge, and eternal King. Help me to worship you this week and all the days of my life. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.

December 16- Luke 1:46-55

Today we revisit Mary’s Song, also known as the Magnificat. Mary sang this song of praise after visiting her elder pregnant cousin Elizabeth. The baby inside Elizabeth’s womb had just leapt for joy as Mary approached. He recognized the Lord. Elizabeth recognized him too. Then Mary praised the Lord.

“My soul MAGNIFIES the Lord.” What did she mean by this? To magnify means to enlarge, expand, exalt, and esteem. By singing joyfully about the miracle growing inside her, she was pointing all the glory to the Lord. She was lifting him high. She did not exalt herself. She exalted the Lord who was working within her.

Each of us has something God has done for us that we can rejoice about. What miracles has he done in your life? Have you told anyone about it? I challenge you to share your Magnificat this week with someone.

Daily Question: What has the Lord done for you that you need to magnify? Who will you share it with?

Prayer: Dear Lord, My soul magnifies you. Thank you for who you are and all that you have done. Thank you for sending your son Jesus so that the world might know true joy. Help me this week to magnify your name and share your miracles with others. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.



December 17- James 5:7-10

When I was finishing my courses at Baylor University's Truett Seminary, Dr. Kevin Watson shared a story with us about his time in Oklahoma. Farms were dependent on good weather patterns throughout the year. He told of a very bad year and the worried farmers in his small congregation. All they could do was pray. They desperately needed moisture to help their crops.

After almost all hope had been lost, David walked outside and it was snowing. It was too early for snow and no one had predicted it, but it was exactly what the farmers needed. The Lord answered their prayers in the most unexpected way.

I remember after a difficult season of transition in Dr. Watson's life, I prayed that God would send him snow. Ironically, God sent snow in the form of sending him back to Oklahoma. I'll never forget this personal lesson I was able to experience with Dr. Watson and our Wesleyan Theology class. I am happy to report that God has snowed on me many times in my ministry. Hallelujah!

When I read today's passage, I thought of this story. It's difficult to be joyful and patient in hard times. Some of you have experienced the lean years of famine and loss. Endure with joy. Snow is coming.

Daily Question: What do I need to joyfully endure this season?

Prayer: Dear Lord, Help me to endure my trials with joy. When all hope seems lost, remind me of your promises. Send snow upon my life. Restore what has been lost. Help me feel your joy again as I wait on you. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

December 18- I Peter 1:3-9

Growing up I loved singing the hymn "Joy Unspeakable". I was pleased to see it is in Our Great Redeemer's Praise hymnbook. This song is 125 years old but it has a 2000-year-old message. Because of Jesus, we have "joy unspeakable and are full of glory. The half has never yet been told!" This means we still have work to do.

Because of Jesus we can have true joy. First he was born for us. Then he birthed within us new life and resurrection. He gave us an eternal inheritance. Despite our trials and tribulations, he gives us an immeasurable amount of joy.

When people look at us Christians, they should see joy pouring out of our lives. Like a cup overflowing with too much water, joy should pour from us. We should not be able to contain it. We should tell others how they can have glorious joy from Jesus.

Daily Question: When people look at me, can they see joy?



Prayer: Dear Lord, Help me to overflow with joy. When others see me, help them to see the joy of Jesus within me. Despite any trial I may go through, fill me with your joy. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

December 19- Isaiah 35

The prophet Isaiah does a wonderful job of describing the glorious future ahead of us because of the promises of the Lord. Deserts will one day bloom. We will see the glory and splendor of the Lord. If you are feeling weak or feeble today. Let this promise strengthen you: your Savior is coming.

Jesus had a glorious healing ministry. There was not one person who came to him for healing that he turned down. The same is true for anyone who turns to the Lord for salvation. All who call upon his name will be saved.

One day there will be a Way that only the Righteous will walk upon. One day this sin-sick cursed world will be healed. There will be true peace on earth. God's people will enter into Zion singing with joy. Can you see it now? Streams in the desert? Millions of believers worshipping in the New Jerusalem?

Jesus came that we might have joy, not just in the future, but today as well. Let the joy of the Lord flow over you like a river. Offer up a song of praise to him today for his salvation. Let the joy of the Lord be your strength.

Daily Question: What areas of my life do I need the joy of the Lord to flow into?

Prayer: Dear Lord, Thank you for the promises that bring me joy. Fill my life with joy like a river. Strengthen me. Help me to praise you as I wait for your joy to flow into every area of my life. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

December 20- Psalm 92:1-8

I remember the first praise song I ever heard. I had grown up in a church that only sang hymns. They were wonderful but I'll never forget hearing Darlene Zschech sing "Shout to the Lord" in 1993. She had been inspired by Psalm 92 and wrote the beautiful praise song, "Shout to the Lord". One of the phrases says, "I sing for joy at the work of your hands." Without sounding overly dramatic, this song and this Psalm changed my life.

In my previous denomination, women were not allowed to preach or teach to children over the age of 12. But we could sing. So I did. Any chance I had, I would sing. It was the only ministry I was "allowed" to have. I felt real and true joy every time I sang. I saw myself in the Psalms lifting up my voice to the One who saw me.



Every single one of us was created for worship. That is our purpose. It is more than allowed, it is commanded. “Shout joyful to the Lord all the earth!” (Psalm 98:4). “Sing a new song of praise to him; play skillfully on the harp and sing with joy.” (Psalm 33:3) If we have breath in our body, we must use it to joyfully worship the Lord.

As we end this joyful week of advent, allow yourself to remember a time when you worshiped the Lord joyfully. Remember that favorite song that stirs within your soul. Now, go listen to it again. Sing along. Sing with joy to the God of your Salvation. He is worthy.

Daily Question: What song makes me want to sing joyfully to the Lord?

Prayer: Dear Lord, Help me to worship you joyfully. Bring to mind a song that I can offer to you in worship. Fill me again with the joy of your salvation as I praise you. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.