

“TAKE 10”- Worship While Away! (Sunday, December 17, 2017)

Share: In a world where we often seek personal happiness, Advent calls us to a deeper expression of our faith and joy in Christ.
For the Lord our God is with us both now and forevermore.
Advent calls us to remember God’s unconditional love, even when we stumble.
Advent calls us to remember God’s invitation to the human heart to be still in the face of strife.
Advent calls us to remember we always have hope, even when it seems as if our world is caving in around us.
For the Lord our God is with us both now and forevermore.

Advent Candle Reading:

This morning we light three candles. The first candle reminds us of the marvelous hope revealed through the Savior’s birth. In a time of despair, God shattered the darkness with the hope of a new future.

The second candle reminds of us the peace that only Christ can instill in the human heart. In a world that abounds with hostility, Christ alone is the One who speaks, “Peace, be still.”

The third candle reminds us that our joy abides in God who gently whispers to each human heart, “Come follow me, for I have come that you might have life and have it to the fullest measure!”

Read these words from a hymn today: *Joy to the World!*

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;

Let every heart, prepare him room,

And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,

And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

He rules the world, with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove

The glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love

And wonders of his love,

And wonders, wonders of his love.

Read this scripture from worship: Luke 1:26-38 (*The Message*)

²⁶⁻²⁸ In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to the Galilean village of Nazareth to a virgin engaged to be married to a man descended from David. His name was Joseph, and the virgin’s name, Mary. Upon entering, Gabriel greeted her: “Good morning! You’re beautiful with God’s beauty, beautiful inside and out! God be with you.”

²⁹⁻³³ She was thoroughly shaken, wondering what was behind a greeting like that. But the angel assured her, “Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus. He will be great, and be called ‘Son of the Highest.’ The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David; He will rule Jacob’s house forever—no end, ever, to his kingdom.”

³⁴ Mary said to the angel, “But how? I’ve never slept with a man.”

³⁵ The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, the power of the Highest hover over you; therefore, the child you bring to birth will be called Holy, Son of God. ³⁶⁻

³⁸ And did you know that your cousin Elizabeth conceived a son, old as she is? Everyone called her barren, and here she is six months pregnant! Nothing, you see, is impossible with God.”

And Mary said, “Yes, I see it all now: I’m the Lord’s maid, ready to serve. Let it be with me just as you say.”

Then the angel left her.

Talk together, responding to these questions:

- How would I respond if an angel appeared to me?
- When do I need to be reminded, “Nothing is impossible with God”?
- How do I respond to God’s call to serve?
- What do I do with the joy God brings to me?

Pray together:

Expectant God, Mary sings because she has new life in her, the promise of your salvation. Fill me with hope and joy this day as I lift my life to you and seek to do your will. Look with favor on our world and all who are in need, that your love may be magnified as I follow humbly in your way. Through Christ our Savior. Amen.

Bless one another:

Take each person's hand and say. "God's grace is for you, God's love is upon you, God's call is within you. Be kind to yourself and others this week as a child of God."

Resources Used: *Glory to God*, The Presbyterian Hymnal
Feasting on the Word, Year A, A Worship Companion