



## AT HOME SERVICE

**Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

*compiled by Dean James - Worship Leader*

Today is the third Sunday of Advent, the candle of Joy shines with warmth and celebration, like the first light of morning after a long night. Christ's light brings joy - joy that cannot be dimmed by sorrow, for it is born of life eternal.

God of joy, fill our hearts with light and happiness. Help us to rejoice in your coming and may our hearts prepare room for you: the true light who gives life to all. Amen

### Hymn

1] Rejoice, the Lord is King:  
Your Lord and King adore!  
Rejoice, give thanks and sing,  
And triumph evermore.  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

2] Jesus, the Saviour, reigns,  
The God of truth and love;  
When He has purged our stains,  
He took his seat above;  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

3] His kingdom cannot fail,  
He rules o'er earth and heav'n;  
The keys of death and hell  
Are to our Jesus giv'n:  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

4] Rejoice in glorious hope!  
Our Lord and judge shall come  
And take His servants up  
To their eternal home:  
Lift up your heart, lift up your voice!  
Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

*Charles Wesley (1707-1788)*

In the South West Peninsula District, Wellbeing Matters Newsletter, Christmas Edition, Deacon Ruth Richey wrote this:

"Christmas doesn't demand that we be cheerful. It invites us to be open and to make room – to make a space for God to enter, however small. To notice the glimmers of hope and to let joy find us, even if we're not quite ready. Undoubtedly for most of us Advent and the run up to Christmas, will be a busy time, not only with our own preparations, but maybe with events in the churches and different groups and gatherings we attend. Perhaps we might take a moment to pause and consider where our lives are feeling full, but not fulfilled; where our lives are so full of activity that we've left no place for wonder; and where we might make space for peace, joy, rest and reflection".

However we are feeling this Christmas God will come to us. If we are feeling down, Psalm 94 says this:  
Vs 18-19 'When I said, "My foot is slipping," your unfailing love, Lord, supported me.  
When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy.'

If life is on an even keel, let us say with the Psalmist from Psalm 9:  
I will give thanks to you, Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds.  
I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing the praises of your name, O Most High.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come to You today to ask for Your joy. We know You are the source of all joy, and we ask that You would fill our hearts with Your presence. Help us to see the good in our life, even when things are tough. Help us to be grateful for all that You have given us. Lord Jesus, You are the Prince of Peace and the author of Joy. Help us in finding joy in our life. We know joy does not depend on our circumstances but on our relationship with You. Help us to focus on You and Your love for us, even when things are difficult. And help us to share Your joy with others. Amen

## Reading: Isaiah 35: 1-10

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.

Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.

The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon, they will see the glory of the Lord, the splendour of our God. Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy.

Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and those the Lord has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

## Hymn

1] Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer!

Sing, O earth - His wonderful love proclaim!

Hail Him! Hail Him! highest archangels in glory;

strength and honour give to His holy name!

Like a shepherd, Jesus will guard His children;

in His arms He carries them all day long.

*Praise Him! Praise Him! Tell of His excellent greatness.*

*Praise Him! Praise Him ever in joyful song!*

2] Praise Him, praise Him! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer!

For our sins He suffered, and bled, and died.

He, our Rock, our Hope of eternal salvation—

Hail Him! Hail Him! Jesus, the Crucified!

Sound His praises! Jesus, who bore our sorrows!

Love unbounded, wonderful, deep, and strong.

3] Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer!

Heav'nly portals loud with hosannas ring!

Jesus, Savior, reigneth forever and ever.

Crown Him! Crown Him! Prophet, and Priest, and King!

Christ is coming, over the world victorious;

power and glory unto the Lord belong!

*Fanny J Crosby (1820-1915)*

## Reflection

In the verses from Isaiah we hear good news of the renewal of all creation - everything that is currently dangerous or life-threatening in creation, all that is chaos will be made better. We will travel safely on the Way of Holiness, cheering one another with good news. (Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.) The day will come, Isaiah says, when that experience will characterize our everyday living. Joy - It will be tangible and sighing and sorrows will, as the prophet says, have no choice but to flee away. Sadness will get chased out of the new creation. But in verses 3-4 Isaiah addresses those who are for now weak, worried, and afraid. The fact is that in Advent, as at any time of the year, there are plenty of people for whom the dream of a New Creation is a distant dream, a dream that seems so remote that it is something that may be unhelpful even to think about. As Christians it is our responsibility to come alongside the weak and hurting ones and to point them to a better day, to the fact that our God has come to us in Christ and will come to us again. To give the reassurance that our God sees us in this distress - that's why the Son of God was made flesh: to know us quite literally from the inside out - and that the day will come when He will make all things new and well.

As Christians, we can go a step beyond anything Isaiah was able to say by reflecting on the fact that not only will the glory and splendour of our God come, it already has. Glory and splendour took on flesh and bones and lived among us already. The glory and the splendour of God's One and Only Son has already been here and was already raised to a newness of life that assures us that everything Isaiah predicts will happen because we now know that in Christ it already has happened and the Holy Spirit will testify to us about this truth. John 14:25-27, "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

Over the next couple of weeks, we will hear these words spoken to the shepherds by an angel: Luke 2:9-14. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Let us look forward to the one who came as a babe in a manger renewing the Joy and hope that He brings.

## Hymn

1] Joy to the world; the Lord is come;  
Let Earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing.

3] He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The glories of his righteousness,  
And wonders of his love.

2] Joy to the Earth, the Saviour reigns;  
Our mortal songs employ,  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,  
Repeat the sounding joy.

*Isaac Watts (1674-1748)*

## **Prayer of Intercession**

Lord, while we rejoice in the birth of Jesus Christ, we also carry in our hearts the needs of our families, friends, communities, and the world. Christmas reminds us Lord that you stepped into humanity with compassion, love, and salvation, making it the perfect moment to lift others before you in prayer.

Lord, we pray for the poor, hungry, homeless, and vulnerable. We pray for those who provide food, shelter, clothing, and warmth this Christmas. Touch hearts to give generously of time and money. Surround those in need with Your protection, hope, and provision. Comfort the hurting, and supply their needs according to Your riches in glory. Let this Christmas bring miracles of compassion and restored dignity.

Lord, we pray for peace in every nation. Silence the voice of war, violence, terrorism, and injustice. Let righteousness rise and leaders govern with wisdom and integrity. Heal lands torn by conflict and comfort grieving families. This Christmas, may the Prince of Peace reign over nations, bringing stability, unity, and healing. Let Your peace flow like a river across borders and peoples.

Lord, we pray for those who are sick physically, emotionally, or mentally. Stretch out Your healing hand this Christmas and restore strength, peace, and wellness. Comfort caregivers, grant wisdom to medical teams, and let hope rise in the heart of everyone in need.

Lord, we pray for those experiencing loneliness and grief. Surround them with Your comfort and peace. Let them feel Your nearness during this Christmas season. Heal emotional wounds, send helpers into their lives, and restore joy. Remind them they are deeply loved and never forgotten.

Lord Jesus, we pray for Your church across the nations. Strengthen pastors, leaders, and every believer. Let Your Word spread with power this Christmas, drawing hearts to salvation. Protect the persecuted church and encourage those who minister in difficult places. Revive spiritual passion, deepen unity, and empower believers to shine brightly in their communities. May Your church be a true reflection of Your love, compassion, and generosity this season.

We ask all our prayers in Jesus' name. Amen

## **Song**

You shall go out with joy  
And be led forth with peace,  
The mountains and the hills  
Will break forth before you.  
There'll be shouts of joy  
And all the trees of the field  
Will clap, will clap their hands,

And all the trees of the field  
Will clap their hands,  
The trees of the field  
Will clap their hands,  
The trees of the field  
Will clap their hands,  
While you go out with joy.

*Stuart Dauermann & Steffi Geiser Rubin*

## **Blessing: Romans 15:13**

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.