



Virtual Service 12 December 2021

Welcome and Introduction

(Larry Robbins)

We welcome you to this service today, as we gather in our homes, or meet together in the church building.

In this third Sunday of Advent, it is our prayer that something that is prayed, read, or some of the music, may be a real blessing to each and every one of you. May your hearts be filled with JOY!

Call to Worship [Psalm 67:1–7]

(Brian Lima)

“Let us prepare our hearts to worship our God! Let us allow God’s Spirit to make these words our own.”

¹ *May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us,*

² *that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.*

³ *Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!*

⁴ *Let the nations be glad and **sing for joy**,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth.*

⁵ *Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!*

⁶ *The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.*

⁷ *God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear him!*

“Let our hearts be filled with the joy only You can provide.”

Carol: Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

(Jo & Brian Lima)

“Today is the third Sunday of Advent with the focus on JOY. May God fill us with joy as we worship Him through our first song.”

[Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee](#)

Prayer

(Eileen Warth)

Dear loving heavenly Father,

What a privilege it is to gather and worship You, to praise You, and magnify Your name! We love You Lord, we worship and adore You, and this morning, we open our hearts and minds to worship You in truth because of what You have done for us. Thank you, Lord, for the joyous gift of Your precious and only begotten Son, Jesus, who understands our human-ness. As Mary did, may the joy of Jesus' presence in our lives be magnified in our souls as we rejoice in God, our Saviour, this Christmas season. Thank you too, for the ever-present guidance and support of the Holy Spirit. It seems inadequate to say a simple 'thank you', but it is offered with deeper feelings than words can express.

Lord, You assure us that we need not be anxious about anything, and by prayer with thanksgiving, You invite us to present our requests to You, which we now do, in simplicity and Godly sincerity.

We uphold all those in authority in our land, especially those who make decisions and govern us. In this regard, we thank you for the prayer which is our National Anthem. May the precepts and principles in it be magnified as we "gather in the bonds of love." From the second verse, may our parliamentarians be ever aware of the need to ask for your guidance to guard New Zealand from dissension, envy, hate and corruption. Embolden our Christian politicians Lord, just as you did for Your apostle Peter in his time of need. Thank you, Lord, for their witness.

Our joy of You, Lord, is our strength. So embolden us also, Father, to let Your light shine so that we may be in the right place at the right time to be brothers and sisters, ready and willing to hold the Christ-light clearly in our community, in our families and our neighbourhoods. Help us to be ever sensitive to the needs of others.

Father, we all know people who are having a difficult time right now – anxiety caused by the pandemic, loneliness, illness, and feeling misunderstood. O Lord, please bring reassurance, fellowship, relief from anxiety and pain to all those in need. We ask this Lord, in simplicity and sincerity. Thank you for Your Word, the Bible, which is our constant help at these times. Thank you for Your reassurance in the book of Romans, that our times of tribulation produce perseverance, that perseverance produces character, and that character produces hope. Our hope is in You, and our joy is in You.

Thank you, Lord, for the privilege of being called Children of God. What an honour! May our trust, hope and joy be ever magnified, in Your name. Amen.

And now for the utilisation of our offerings, we pause and reflect on the words of King David who said, "May you be praised for ever and ever! You are great and powerful, glorious, splendid and majestic. Everything in heaven and earth is Yours, and You are King, supreme ruler over all. All riches and wealth come from You. You rule everything by Your strength and power" (1 Chron 29: 11-12). Father, our humble gifts we bring to You, acknowledging that You first gave them to us. As a small seed may grow into a plant that will feed and nourish beyond expectation, may our offerings also be used to grow and nourish Your Kingdom for Your glory and honour.

In Jesus name, Amen.

Carol: Angels We Have Heard on High

(Jo & Brian Lima)

“Let us lift our hearts to our God as we worship Him through this next song – Angels We Have Heard on High.”

Angels We Have Heard on High

Advent Reflection - Joy

(Vladimir Miskovic)

“Joy echoes through every stage of the story of the birth of Jesus, beginning with the magi. After following the star for weeks, they were *“filled with joy”* when it stopped over Bethlehem (Matthew 2:10). That star meant fulfilment: They would be brought into the presence of the great King.

An angel told Zacharias that his wife, Elizabeth, would give birth to a son (John the Baptist), saying, *“You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth”* (Luke 1:14). While Elizabeth was still pregnant, her baby *“jumped for joy”* as Mary approached them, she being pregnant with the baby Jesus (Luke 1:44).

As an angel told the shepherds about Jesus’ birth, he said, *“I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people”* (Luke 2:10).

People in the world react to the birth of Jesus in many ways—with generosity and kindness, gifts and gatherings. For believers this is a *celebration of joy*.

It is a joy that comes from worship, from a heart overwhelmed by the presence of God. This joy only can be experienced through complete surrender to His plan and will—through the kind of commitment that could drive the magi to follow a star for thousands of miles. This is the kind of joy that could fill Mary and Elizabeth, who knew that Jesus’ birth was a supernatural event. This kind of joy was experienced by the shepherds as they were overwhelmed by the glory of God and a choir of angels.

Worship transforms life. Worship can fill you with joy as you walk in the light of God’s presence!

Father, thank you for giving us Your joy. Thank you for sending Jesus into this world to be our saviour. We worship and praise You in Jesus’ name.”

Te Harinui

For Unto Us a Child is Born

Scripture Reading [2 Samuel 7:8–14]

⁸ Now, therefore, thus you shall say to my servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel. ⁹ And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great

name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. ¹⁰ And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly,¹¹ from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. ¹² When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.

Sermon – “Justice Brings Joy”

(Brian Lima)

[Watch the Sermon](#)

[Read the Sermon](#)

Carol: Joy to the World

(Jo & Brian Lima)

“Joy to the world, the Lord has come. Let earth receive her King! Let us worship together through today’s last song.”

[Joy to the World](#)

Benediction

(Brian Lima)

*Finally, brothers and sisters, **rejoice**. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.*

2 Corinthians:11