



There are some gifts that everyone needs but no one gets too excited about. Instead of the gift that you had been hoping for, you find socks and underwear – a gift that you really need, but not necessarily the one you were hoping for.

We hope you and your family will be able to join us at one of our Christmas Eve services for a fun and meaningful reflection on the greatest Gift ever given.

DECEMBER 24TH SERVICES AT 11AM, 2PM & 3:30PM

25416 S HWY 633
(ON VILLENUEVE RD.
WEST OF WALMART)

ST. ALBERT
ALLIANCE
CHURCH



Unspeakable Joy

Dan MacGillivray
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Luke 1:39-55 ESV

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

And Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

2 Themes We Believe

1. My life could be better.
2. My life is getting worse.

These things rob us of our joy.

False Narrative

Joy can be bought.

Jesus Narrative

Joy has been bought for you in the person and work of Jesus Christ!

What stirs my heart for Jesus?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE: Joy

They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!”

Luke 2:9b-11 NLT

Joy is an elusive feeling that we search for, longing for it, trying anything we can to create it, even if just for a moment. What we are often trying to find is happiness. It is an emotion that is fleeting, dictated by our situations or circumstances.

Joy is a steadfastness, that is built on the unchanging nature of God. That in him we have the promise of life abundant. That in his kingdom he will make all things new and although for a time we live in this tension between the already and the not yet- we look ahead with great Joy.

Joy isn't emotionally or spiritually or intellectually dishonest.

Christian joy doesn't mean that we are sticking our heads in the sand and saying, "*it's fine, we're fine, everything's fine*" while running past the gutter of broken dreams, eyes averted.

Joy isn't denial of grief or pretending happiness. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said "The **joy** of God goes through the poverty of the manger and the agony of the cross; that is why it is invincible, irrefutable. It does not deny the anguish, when it is there, but finds God in the midst of it, in fact precisely there."

Joy is born, not from pretending everything is fine, but from holding both hope and truth together. Joy is born out of trust and hope and gratitude and faith in that coming Kingdom. We have a reason to rejoice. And it's not denial or innocence or naivety or stupidity. **Joy is the affirmation of the truest thing of all: redemption, restoration, reconciliation,** all made possible in and through Jesus.

This advent season how would you describe Joy? In the past year where have you experienced Joy? Are there things that have hindered your experience of Joy? Take some time and ask God to restore to you the Joy of your salvation that you may experience the work of the good news of great Joy that Jesus has come.