

SERMON NOTES FOR KIDS - December 13, 2020

(For ideas for how to set up church at home for young families, refer to "Growing your Faith Garden" at <http://eastminster.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Growing-Your-Faith-Garden.pdf>)



Good morning! Happy Third Sunday of Advent! Are you ready to set some time aside for growing your faith this morning? Find a cozy and comfy spot to sit with your family to watch the online service together, and get out your Sunday basket! Just a note though, if you haven't really 'done' church at home before, be sure to check out the link above so you can set up a Sunday routine to go along with the online service. Push "pause" and read these sermon notes (or have an adult read to you). And then you can colour and think about the lesson, while "your adults" un-pause and listen to the sermon for today. We are really

happy that you are joining us!

In the last couple of weeks we have talked about where we are right now in the "Church Calendar". We are in the time of ADVENT. Advent is the four weeks before Christmas, when we are looking forward to Christmas and the celebration of Jesus birth. And as Christians we are also looking forward to the time when Jesus will come again. During Advent at church we light a candle each week and we think about the Christmas story. Are you looking forward to Christmas?

In the first week of advent we talked about HOPE, and last week we talked about PEACE and we lit a candle for each week. This week's candle is the candle of JOY, and it is a different colour! It is pink! Why is it pink? Well, pink symbolizes joy, the joy that Jesus is almost here!

The Christmas story has a lot of people in it and they must have felt a lot of emotions. There was Mary and Joseph, who were visited by angels who told them not to be afraid, and that they were going to have a very special baby, God's son Jesus! And then they went on a long journey to Bethlehem because the government wanted everyone to return to their original homes to be counted, and Bethlehem was Joseph's birth home. But while they were there, Jesus was born! Surprise! As they sat in that stinky little stable, they were visited by a bunch of shepherds who also had been visited by angels, and later they were visited by some really smart scientists who followed a star to find Baby Jesus! Can you imagine, who felt JOY on that first Christmas?

I think Mary, Jesus mother, must have had so many emotions. What kind of emotions do you think she felt? That was a pretty stinky and dirty place to give birth to a baby. It wasn't clean like a hospital! And Jesus was born at kind of a messy time, not at home with their families, but while they were on a journey! Mary didn't know what would happen next!

But I have a feeling, knowing how mothers are, that the biggest emotion she must have felt was JOY when she looked at her Baby Boy. And Joseph, he must have felt so much joy in his heart to see this beautiful baby that he had been thinking about and hoping for. And what about the angels? The Bible tells us the angels were singing and that there was a "whole host" of them! That means there were many angels in the sky singing! Singing is one way to show big joy. The shepherds were full of joy, because they couldn't even wait—they had to go to Bethlehem to tell people what they had seen and to find Baby! And the Wise men, those really smart scientists? How exciting would it have been for them to find out what the star they had been following really meant?

One of the carols we sing at this time of the year is JOY TO THE WORLD, and another is GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN. Both of these songs talk about the big joy people felt when they learned about Jesus birth, such big joy that they wanted to share it with everyone! Maybe you can sing these songs with your family!

What brings you joy at this time of year? Maybe you like to make cookies or watch a Christmas movie! Maybe there are times when you don't feel joy, and you can remember that those emotions you feel are ok too. Sometimes we can choose joy, even in difficult times. I am sure Mary and Joseph had to choose to look past the hard parts of their journey and the place where they were (stinky, and dirty) to really appreciate the joy of the birth of Jesus.

Also, how can you bring JOY to someone who is alone or sad right now? Maybe you and your family can give a gift to someone to let them know they are not alone. That could bring joy to someone's heart!

Below is a link to the craft that you have been working on every week. The link is below if you haven't done it yet. You can have an adult print this to make your own advent wreath and candles. Every week you can colour the next candle. Don't forget that today's candle is PINK for joy, you can attach it to this wreath with the first two purple candles! You can colour the wreath green and attach the candles to the wreath. Save the last two candles for later. Maybe you could also draw a picture of a part of the Christmas story when there was JOY!

https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/2020-10/au_activity-advent-wreath-craft.pdf

While your adults listen to the sermon, you can work on this project! And at some point in the online service you will see Pastor David light the candle for JOY!

Have a very JOYFUL week everyone!