

“How Much is Enough? (Joy)”
Third Sunday of Advent
December 12, 2021
Golden Ears United Church

Prelude

Land Acknowledgement

One: Long ago, all of this land was covered by ice

All: Clothed in a winter without end

One: But God our Creator brought back the warmth

All: Pulling back the ice and revealing this land

One: Plants and animals returned to the land

All: And it was good

One: Then God gave to the land many peoples

All: And many peoples to the land

One: To care for one another

All: To live together

One: And in this time, we celebrate the gifts of the
Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations.

**All: We celebrate all who make this place
a home today**

One: We celebrate together with joy

All: This land of joy where justice makes its home

One: We eagerly await yet more joyful days in this land

All: Where all will share its abundance together

One: We work and wait for that day,
when all will live together

All: in hope, peace, joy and love. Amen.

Greetings and Announcements

We Open the Door *(Threshold Moment)*

Leader: As John baptized new converts, he invited them to live with “changed hearts and lives.” When asked how to do that, his answers all point to making sure no one is cheated or left without the basic necessities of life, including the right to not be harassed. A full life of joy, which the prophet Isaiah describes as an ever-flowing spring, is the birthright of all children of God. May we act to make it so.

**Joy waits for us at Advent
Joy waits for us to sing.
Joy waits for our amazement
at the grace in everything.
In this time of preparation
for the work of co-creation,
for the birthing of a world
where wonder is restored.
Joy is born in us once more!**

Reader(s):

Today we offer the Light of Joy to illumine the Door of Welcome. May this light shine in our hearts, in our lives, and in our church. May Joy awaken us to possibilities and lead us to greater hospitality. There *IS* room in this Inn, a House for the Holy.

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The Peace

**The Joy of Christ be with you!
And also with you!**

As we rise in body or spirit for our opening hymn, I invite you to pass a “wave” of peace to the people around you (and the people worshiping at home)!

Hymn: MV 40 Never Ending Joy

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Refrain:
Never ending joy (repeat 6 times)

**God of every tribe, every language,
God of every river and sea,
God of every mountain and island,
you bring joy to me.**

God of every hill, every valley,

**God of every leaf, every tree,
God of every cloud, every raindrop,
you bring joy to me.**

**God of every song, every story,
God of every captive set free,
God of every dance, every footstep,
you bring joy to me.**

Children's Time

Lesley Fairley

First Reading

Isaiah 12: 2-6 (CEB)

*God is indeed my salvation;
I will trust and won't be afraid.
Yah, the Lord, is my strength and my shield;
he has become my salvation."
You will draw water with joy from the springs of salvation.
And you will say on that day:
"Thank the Lord; call on God's name;
proclaim God's deeds among the peoples;
declare that God's name is exalted.
Sing to the Lord, who has done glorious things;
proclaim this throughout all the earth."
Shout and sing for joy, city of Zion,
because the holy one of Israel is great among you.*

Anthem

Joyful, Joyful

Second Reading

Luke 3: 7-18 (CEB)

Then John said to the crowds who came to be baptized by him, "You children of snakes! Who warned you to escape from the angry judgment that is coming soon? Produce fruit that shows you have changed your hearts and lives. And don't even think about saying to yourselves, Abraham is our father. I tell you that God is able to raise up Abraham's children from these stones. The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be chopped down and tossed into the fire."

The crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" He answered, "Whoever has two shirts must share with the one who has none, and whoever has food must do the same." Even tax collectors came to be baptized. They said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He replied, "Collect no more than you are authorized to collect." Soldiers asked, "What about us? What should we do?" He answered, "Don't cheat or harass anyone, and be satisfied with your pay."

The people were filled with expectation, and everyone wondered whether John might be the Christ. John replied to them all, "I baptize you with water, but the one who is more powerful than me is coming. I'm not worthy to loosen the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy

Spirit and fire. The shovel he uses to sift the wheat from the husks is in his hands. He will clean out his threshing area and bring the wheat into his barn. But he will burn the husks with a fire that can't be put out.” With many other words John appealed to them, proclaiming good news to the people.

Sermon

Prayers of the People

**Make of my heart a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place
for joy to live and grow.**

In this moment we open the doors of our hearts to honesty before God about what we've done and left undone that created less joy in a hurting world.

Let us release this regret...

and receive in the life-giving, for-giving Spirit of God...

**Make of my life a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place
for joy to live and grow.**

In this moment we open the doors of our lives to the call of the Spirit, inviting us to become more than we can ask or imagine.

Let us release our fear...

and receive the courage of the Spirit of God... the Peace of Christ...

**Make of our church a stable,
a house for the holy,
a warm and sturdy place
for joy to live and grow.**

We pray this in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray:

Sung Lord's Prayer

The Lords Prayer (music: Lines/Ellington)

**Ever present God
hallowed be your name,
your kindom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts
as we forgive,
as we forgive our debtors.
Save us from our trials
and deliver us from evil
for the kindom, and the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for evermore.
Now and forever. Amen.**

A Story of Innkeeping: Offering

Closing Carol

VU 74 “What Child is This?”

Words: William Chatterton Dix 1865
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**What child is this, who laid to rest,
on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
while shepherds watch are keeping?
 This, this is Christ the King,
 whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
 haste, haste to bring him laud,
 the Babe, the Son of Mary!**

**Why lies he in such mean estate
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading. R**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, one and all, to own him.
The King of Kings salvation brings;
let loving hearts enthrone him. R**

Benediction

May God’s Door of Welcome
swing open in your heart and in your life.

May Christ's humble first dwelling
remind you of the plenty you already know.

And may the Spirit lead you into
more possibility and hospitality than you can imagine,
making room in The Inn for all.

May it be so for you.
May it be so for us.
May it be so for this church.
Amen.

Go in Peace

Words and Music: Brian Tate 2012
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♪ Go in peace.
Go in love.
Go in grace from above
Go in light.
Let it shine.
Go in Spirit Divine.

Postlude