



*Mt Vernon UMC*

*Third Sunday of Advent*

*Philippians 4:4 ~ Rejoice in the Lord  
always; again I will say, rejoice.*

## ENTRANCE

GREETINGS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING PRAYER

PRELUDE & CANDLE LIGHTING

246. Joy to the World, v1

*Isaiah 12:6 - Shout aloud and sing  
for joy, people of Zion, for great is  
the Holy One of Israel among you."*

## PROCLAMATION & RESPONSE

### ADVENT CANDLE<sup>1</sup>

*Reader One:* No matter what troubles overwhelm us today, Isaiah reminds us that in all of our preparation and passionate pursuit of God's coming kingdom, we must not forget that God's salvation has come and is coming. "With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3). With joy you will remember that God's salvation is already present among us.

**Joy, joy, joy, may Earth be filled with joy.  
The joy that fills our hearts with singing,  
praising the One our God is sending.  
Joy, joy, joy, may Earth be filled with joy.**

*Reader Two:* We light this candle of joy as a sign of our commitment to be present to ourselves, our friends, our families, and our neighbors that in sharing our

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<sup>1</sup> Text by Dr. Lisa Hancock. Copyright Discipleship Ministries.  
Lyrics and cover art by John Stuart. <https://stushieart.com>

vulnerable lives we might share in the glorious joy of  
God's salvation together.

*Light the third (pink/rose) candle  
of the Advent wreath.*

## HYMN

3052. God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

217. Away in a Manger

*James 1:2 ~ Count it all joy, my brothers,  
when you meet trials of various kinds,*

## CHRISTMAS STORY

Luke 2:13-15 (NIV)

234. O Come, All Ye Faithful

*Refrain:*

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,**

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared  
with the angel, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven,

and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

*Refrain:*

**O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.**

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the  
shepherds said to one another, “Let's go to Bethlehem  
and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has  
told us about.”

*Refrain:*

**Come and behold him, born the King of angels;**

**O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,**

**O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.**

## NOISY OFFERING

## CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

# INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

## LORD'S PRAYER

### RESPONSE

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

Hear our prayer, O Lord.

Incline Thine ear to us,

and grant us Thy peace. Amen.

**[Note - we will not read all three. I'll decide later which ones to read. –Pastor Rob]**

### SCRIPTURE

Zephaniah 3:14-20

*Rejoice in God*

3:14

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem!

3:15

The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more.

3:16

On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak.

3:17

The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing

3:18

as on a day of festival." I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it.

3:19

I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

3:20

At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD.

## SCRIPTURE

## Philippians 4:4-7

*Rejoice, the Lord is near*

4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

4:5

Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near.

4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

## GOSPEL

## Luke 3:7-18

*One more powerful is coming*

3:7

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath?"

3:8

Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

3:9

Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

3:10

And the crowds asked him, "What, then, should we do?"

3:11

In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise."

3:12

Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?"

3:13

He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you."

3:14

Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?"

He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

3:15

As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,

3:16

John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

3:17

His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

3:18

So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people.

## MESSAGE

## PEACE & OFFERING

## DOXOLOGY - #95

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God for all that love has done;  
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One.**

*Luke 15:7 - I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.*

## THANKSGIVING & COMMUNION

## HOLY COMMUNION

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

**Eternal God, we give you thanks  
for this holy mystery  
in which you have given yourself to us.  
Grant that we may go into the world  
in the strength of your Spirit,  
to give ourselves for others,  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

*Proverbs 17:22 ~ A joyful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.*

## SENDING FORTH

### BLESSING

Go! ~~‘Prepare the way of the Lord;  
make his paths straight.’~~

May God’s grace

~~fill every valley in your life, lay every mountain low;  
make every crooked way straight, and bring you peace.~~

Go in peace.

### CANDLES

**Go, tell it on the mountain**

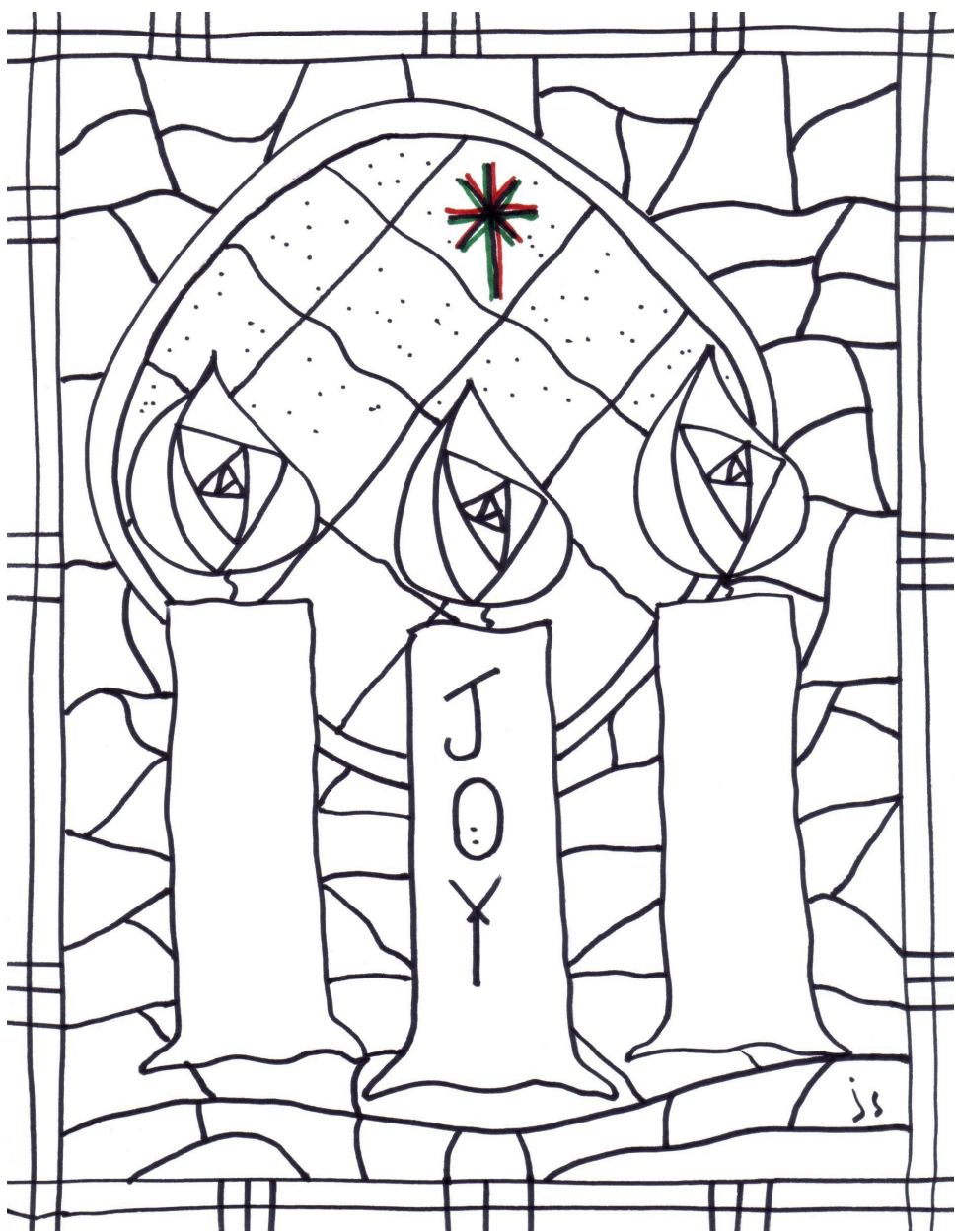
**Over the hills and everywhere**

**Go, tell it on the mountain**

**That Jesus Christ is born**

*May God fill ALL of you with joy on  
this wonderful day! - Romans 15:13*





## ***Every Day With Jesus***

This year we follow a Bible reading plan called “Every Day With Jesus”. With four short readings each day, we will have read the entire Bible by the end of the year.

12/15/24	Daniel 8:1-9:27	Psalm 139:13-18	Proverbs 30:3-4	Jude 14-25
12/16/24	Daniel 10:1-11:45	Psalm 139:19-24	Proverbs 30:5-6	Revelation 1:1-20
12/17/24	Daniel 12:1-Hosea 3:5	Psalm 140:1-5	Proverbs 30:7-9	Revelation 2:1-17
12/18/24	Hosea 4:1-7:16	Psalm 140:6-13	Proverbs 30:10-12	Revelation 2:18-3:6
12/19/24	Hosea 8:1-10:15	Psalm 141:1-6	Proverbs 30:13-14	Revelation 3:7-22
12/20/24	Hosea 11:1-14:9	Psalm 141:7-10	Proverbs 30:15-17	Revelation 4:1-5:14
12/21/24	Joel 1:1-2:32	Psalm 142:1-7	Proverbs 30:18-20	Revelation 6:1-17
12/22/24	Joel 3:1-Amos 2:16	Psalm 143:1-6	Proverbs 30:21-23	Revelation 7:1-17
12/23/24	Amos 3:1-5:27	Psalm 143:7-12	Proverbs 30:24-28	Revelation 8:1-9:12
12/24/24	Amos 6:1-8:14	Psalm 144:1-8	Proverbs 30:29-33	Revelation 9:13-10:11
12/25/24	Amos 9:1-Obadiah 21	Psalm 144:9-15	Proverbs 31:1-3	Revelation 11:1-19
12/26/24	Jonah 1:1-4:11	Psalm 145:1-7	Proverbs 31:4-7	Revelation 12:1-18
12/27/24	Micah 1:1-4:13	Psalm 145:8-13	Proverbs 31:8-9	Revelation 13:1-18
12/28/24	Micah 5:1-7:20	Psalm 145:14-21	Proverbs 31:10-12	Revelation 14:1-20

## Ministry & Discipleship Opportunities

Helping Hands: Soup, Crackers, TP, \$\$	Today!
Play practice during Sunday School and after church	Today!
Christmas Caroling	Today!
Children's Program	12/24
Christmas Eve Worship	5pm, 12/24

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## Recent and Upcoming Birthdays and Anniversaries:

Travis Sherman, Mason Drollinger, Tracy Bailen  
Tom & Cheryl Blackburn

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**For more information** about these and other activities, check your email for *This Week at Mt. Vernon*. If you don't receive *This Week at Mt. Vernon*, please let us know.

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Do you prefer using an electronic version of the bulletin? You can view this week's bulletin at <https://tinyurl.com/4h8tzuyp>. If you use the electronic version, please let Pastor Rob know.

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God calls Mt Vernon UMC to:

Love God & neighbor as Jesus taught

Learn together of God's love and grace

Serve others by using our God given gifts and talents

Be witnesses of our faith in God through Jesus Christ to all the world!.

To learn more, visit [facebook.com/MtVChamp](https://facebook.com/MtVChamp)

If you would like a prayer, a visit, a meal, to have Holy Communion brought to your home, or have any other need, please contact any church member or Pastor Rob ([217-751-4400](tel:217-751-4400), [pastor@mtvernon-umc.org](mailto:pastor@mtvernon-umc.org)).