

# advent

CELEBRATE JESUS

joy

*The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people: for today, in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” – Luke 2:10-11*

**Daily Readings for the Family:** (12/9-12/15/2018)

Monday – Luke 2:1-3

Tuesday – Luke 2:4-5

Wednesday – Luke 2:6-7

Thursday – Romans 15:13

Friday – 2 Corinthians 9:15

Saturday – Psalm 29:11

**Family Thought and Candlelighting:** (light the last two week’s candles and the next purple candle)

Joy is one of the hardest human experiences to explain or describe, because it’s sometimes misunderstood as a feeling of happiness. Happiness is usually determined by the things that happen to us or around us, but joy is determined by something inside of us. It’s an emotion that goes beyond life’s day-to-day circumstances; and since joy comes from within, we can find joy in both good and difficult situations. Did you know that joy is a fruit of the Spirit? (Galatians 5:22-23) This means that the Holy Spirit produces joy within us. It’s a gift. As the Holy Spirit reveals in our hearts how much Jesus loves us, how He wants to share His life with us, and how we can completely trust in Him; we begin to experience deep and abiding joy. In Luke chapter two, the angel announced, “I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people...” Jesus is God’s gift to us, and He is our source of joy.

**Joy for Today:**

Yes, happiness and joy are very different. Have you ever had a toy or a friend that made you happy? Your toy is fun when you’re playing with it; and your friend makes you laugh when you’re together, so you feel happy. But what happens if you lose your toy, or if your friend says something mean to you? Are you still happy? Happiness can come and go. But, joy is a feeling deep inside of you that doesn’t leave. People who believe in Jesus can experience true joy. Joy is knowing that Jesus loves you and that you can always depend on Him. Jesus has always been and will always be the true source of joy; and the world needs joy. The world needs Jesus. Let’s share the gift of joy this Christmas.

**Family Activity:**

Experience joy by talking as a family about all the ways Jesus has shown love to you. Parents, share your experiences of Jesus’ loving-care for you and your family. Help your children to discover specific ways that Jesus has loved or blessed them.

Experience joy through giving: Prepare a gift basket of some snacks to give to one of your neighbors. Take a trip to a local grocery store and pick out some snack foods (e.g. popcorn, candy, hot chocolate, etc.) and a basket.

Experience joy through singing: Sing “Joy to the World” with your family.

**Connection Questions:**

What’s the difference between happiness and joy?

What are things that make you happy? What are things that make you joyful?

How can we, as a family, show the joy we have in Jesus to others this Christmas season?