

JOY: THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

LEADER: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, and to proclaim liberty to the captives."

RESPONSE: Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy.

LEADER: The Lord gives a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. For the Lord loves justice, and makes an everlasting covenant with us.

RESPONSE: We will greatly rejoice in the Lord; our whole being exults in our God.

LEADER: Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances. John was not the light, but he came to testify to the light, and so may we.

RESPONSE: We will rejoice always, and we will bear witness to the light.

Light two purple candles and the pink candle.

ALL: We light a candle of joy today, a joy that does not ignore the tears we have shed. It is the joy our ancestors carried through the fields and the fire, and sang their way into freedom. Our joy is planted in the soil of God's justice, and it grows wherever the brokenhearted are healed, the captives go free, and the ruined cities are raised up. And our joy is strength. We rejoice always, not because all is well, but because the One who makes all things well is coming. Amen.