

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

“God of Joy” 12/7/22

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and
Peace in believing, so you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13)*

We are in the season of Advent, watching the story of the coming of the Christ Child unfold.

This is a time to prepare, a time to anticipate, a time to remember, a season of joy. Advent, the nights are long and dark, but they will be getting shorter. There are storms, but we hold on to the promise of a glorious sunrise. Of a new day. Of a new light, one which will shine on us, will show us the way, will be The Way.

We see His star and with hope we step out into the dark and seek the joy God brings into our storms. Added to our hope and peace during the advent of Christ, we are filled with joy, especially at this time when Hallmark movies reminds us of the true meaning of Christmas. Which seems to pale in comparison to the real story.

What gives us joy? Is it hot chocolate or knowing in whom we believe? Is it decorating the tree with a loved one or holding on to the promise of peace? Is it lifting a glass of eggnog or helping a friend? Is it making snow angels or giving thanks for the babe born in a manger? Is it finding and wrapping the perfect gift and putting it under the tree? Or is it realizing God has given the perfect gift and we are forgiven, accepted and loved, we have worth and are free to love and serve our neighbors.

There is a lot happening during this season which brings happiness, there is also much which brings joy. Some intertwine, some are completely different. Joy comes in realizing our hope lies in the promises of God, and God is faithful. Even while it is still dark, we can have hope for the coming morn. It is in finding peace, peace which passes all understanding, which defies public opinion. Joy comes from God, joy fills us with light and strengthens us to keep moving forward, even when we are not sure where we are going.

God's promises are better than a feel good TV movie, more real than sparkly lights, more lasting than glittery paper and fancy bows. The joy of Advent is life changing, it re-creates who we are and how we see the world. Holding on to God's promises, there is nothing we dismay, for during this time of Advent, we are given God's gift of joy and it will sustain us through this season and on into the rest of our journey, no matter where it leads.

Please pray with me, God of joy, we hold on to Your promises, there is nothing we dismay. During this time of Advent, we await for what we have. Help us to recognize You in all You do and in all we have. May we be filled with joy and abounding in hope by power of the Holy Spirit. We rest in what we hope for, the joy and peace of believing in God. Amen

God's blessings on your Season of Advent.