

Third Sunday of Advent: Rejoice

As the family comes forward to light the wreath, everyone please sing together:

Advent Song # 2090 (*Sing the Faith*) - Verse 3

Family:

Watch and wait for Christ's coming!
Light candles of hope, peace, joy, and love,
remembering the promises of God with prayer.

We light this candle in hope.	<i>[light the first candle]</i>
We light this candle for peace.	<i>[light the second candle]</i>
We light this candle in joy!	<i>[light the third (pink) candle]</i>

Rejoice! For our Lord is coming into the darkness of oppression's exile to lead us home, as we hear in Isaiah 35:1-10:

Reader 1:

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.

Reader 2:

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."

Reader 1:

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

(continued)

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

Reader 2:

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Let us pray:

(in unison)

**O Lord, our redeemer,
you lead us from languishing in sorrow's shadows
into laughter's joy over your abundant restoration.
Thank you that you are coming for us
to lead us home along your Way, Jesus Christ.
Amen.**