

WELCOME TO...  
The Presbyterian Church of  
**Saint David**  
December 13, 2015

WHAT DOES **JOY** LOOK LIKE?



Call to worship: *God comes! So don't let go of all the reasons to rejoice. We will sing a song of Advent to the One who fills our lives with joy. God comes! So don't stop lifting your prayers with thanksgiving. We will sing a song of Advent, to the One who hears our words and silence. God comes! So don't stop giving your hearts to God. We will sing a song of Advent to the One who graces us with a peace we cannot begin to understand. ~ written by Thom Shuman*

Hymn: Good Christians all Rejoice



141

Prayer: *Led by John Wamboldt*

Response to prayer: *led by Val Macdonald*

Sung Response: *Rejoice in the Lord*

421

**Zephaniah 3:14-20** Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! 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. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. 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 as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. 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. 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.

**What would happen if God interrupted us?** *(Anne Steward)*

What if God barged into the midst of our daily lives, if God made God's presence known? How would you feel? How would you respond? What change would God's presence bring? The prophet Zephaniah wrestles with these very questions. In Zephaniah's visions the presence of God brings both judgment and joy. The oracles in the majority of the book announce cosmic destruction as divine judgment for the sins of Israel and, specifically, the priesthood. With vivid and at times disturbing language, the prophet envisions the arrival of the Day

of the Lord, the time in which God will act to restore justice and to bring judgment on faithless, sinful nations. The Day of the Lord, promises the prophet, “will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness” (Zephaniah 1:15-16). The arrival of the Day of the Lord represents a calling to account that demands repentance and humility before God’s mighty judgment.

It is in this context that the final oracle of the book has such striking resonance. Its tone shifts dramatically as the arrival of God’s presence brings celebration and cause for joy. It is a grand reversal as the expected judgment instead becomes overwhelming mercy that leads to new life: “Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! 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” (Zephaniah 3:14b-15). The arrival of God’s presence dispels fear. It opens the door to a new future.

*Intercession: God of our Highest Joy, we come to you this day as your servants, gathered to worship you and you alone. As we continue this Advent journey, help us to focus on you and the coming of your son, Jesus. Amidst the commercials, the cooking, and the company, help us to remember the true meaning of this season: that you would come to us in the flesh and forever live among us.*

**Even as we share the joy we find in you with one another,  
we are mindful of those for whom joy is hard to find,  
for those who don't have enough clothes,  
for those who don't have enough food,  
for those who don't have enough (or any) shelter,  
for those who don't have enough protection and justice.**

*We pray this day for those longing for spiritual renewal. We would ask that your Holy Spirit invigorate us that we may provide for others first before expecting them to provide for us. We pray this day for the hope we have found,  
the peace we seek, and the joy we will receive in your Holy name. May we bring hope to the hopeless, peace to the restless, and joy to those who crave it. We pray this day, either out loud or in our hearts, for those dear to us... Gracious God, may the joy we find not be a commodity to be hoarded but a gift to be shared with one another.*

Hymn: I come with Joy (1-2)

530

*Jesus invites us to eat the bread and drink the wine of the new covenant, Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the many signs of the kingdom of God among us, and to lead you into ever greater participation in that kingdom. Remember, renew and be renewed.*

*Let us all partake in this feast with thankful and joyful hearts.*

Hymn: Joy to the World (1-2)

153

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise. Your joy, our God is the strength of our life...(continue in prayer)*

### **Celebrating the Sacrament**

#### **Prayer after Communion**

*Lord, you have welcomed us,*

*Healed us, restored us and given us peace, fed us and empowered us.*

**Send us out to live and work to your glory.**

*Send us out to reveal your presence.*

**Send us out to declare your love.**

*Send us out to proclaim your peace.*

**This day and always. Amen.**

*Go in peace to love and serve the Lord*

**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Hymn: Joy to the World (3-4)

153

*Sending: Rejoice in the Lord always, show gentleness to all,*

*do not be anxious, make your needs known to God by prayer, with thanksgiving;*

**May the peace of God guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.**