

Weekly E-News December 18, 2020

**FROM PASTOR JOEL**

Joy? This Sunday we will light the last Advent candle as we move towards Christmas week, 2020. I spent time on a couple of uncomfortable calls this morning that kind of took the Christmas joy out of me. I saw dangerous traffic and a bad truck accident on I-35 as I was driving early this morning. I regularly am hearing from families who have a member who is struggling through COVID, or a surgery, or are near to death. You probably are having some similar experiences. It's hard to have much joy when there is so much around us that sabotages that very joy.

I had to commit it to prayer and think about how I could experience joy, when the world just keeps on going, and bad and tragic things are happening each and every day to snuff out your joy and mine.

Can we experience joy? Obviously, prayer helps. That pause to seek out God is maybe the most important thing to do on joy-less days. I re-read the Christmas story in Matthew this morning. That helps, too. Because when I remember the story of how Mary and Joseph certainly had many reasons not to be joy-filled about this birth, but they didn't cave to the pressure. They rejoiced and adapted to the new reality of their lives.

Those things helped me to remember that on my own, I can't find joy, or satisfaction, or wholeness or anything else. But when I give it to God and ask Him, through Jesus Christ, to come into my life – then things start to get better – or at least, my reaction and my attitude get better – even if I can't change anything, or take away the hurt and sorrow in the world. I can still be joyful amidst all that because I know God is always with me and gives me joy to see the day from a better angle.

So, those of you, like me, that are looking for the joy – its here – through God, who gave us Jesus so that we might find our joy again.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Joel".

Pastor Joel

**Wedding Bells!**

Congratulations to Audrey Jensen (Rick and Laurie's daughter) who married Luke Rice on October 10th.

And to Children's Ministry Leader, Greta DeWitt who married Mike Franklin on December 4th.

ADVENT SUSPENDS IN-PERSON WORSHIP/EVENTS

All worship, Bible study and meetings are being held online for the immediate future. All community events are postponed. Abut Ministry continues! The Food Pantry is feeding our neighbors and Christmas Ministry team will be giving gifts and food to several families. Any questions, please contact Pastor Joel at prjoel@alctx.org or call at 817.881.0719.

ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES - "Advent Angels"

Children's Ministry, the worship team, and Pastor Joel will team up to provide online worship during the Sundays of Advent, led by the children presenting a little play-let each Sunday. Pastor Joel will give his short message from the same Bible passages. Please join us for worship at 8:30 and 11am on Sundays and at 7:00pm on Wednesday nights for mid-week online worship.

20 December
Christmas Eve

"Joy.....of a Heavenly Host"
"Light...to Show the Way"

Luke 2
Matthew 2:1-12

FROM LUTHERAN BRAILLE WORKERS...



ADVENT CANDLES: STILL AVAILABLE

Though we are not together in person we can still connect through worship. Stop by the church and pickup your Advent candles that we will light together each Sunday during online worship. Candle bags can be found in a bin outside the church office entrance (large gray



FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT: Thank you to those who are keeping up with their giving. Mail in your check, use online giving on alctx.org, use the Give+Plus or VANCO Mobile app.

GENERAL OFFERING 12/10 - 12/16	YTD THRU NOVEMBER 30, 2020
BUDGET: \$ 11,742	INCOME: \$ 233,383
ACTUAL: \$ 8,636	EXPENSES: \$ 277,980
DIFFERENCE: \$ (3,106)	DEFICIT \$ (44,597)

Total Giving
Received so far:

\$ 77,129!!!

