

There's a Psalm for This

One of my favorite Sundays in the church year is “pink candle day”, more officially known as Gaudete Sunday. Not unlike the 4th Sunday of Lent (Laetare Sunday), the 3rd Sunday of Advent stands a bit apart from the rest – and not just because of the color of its candle! While in general Advent is about preparation for the various arrivals of Jesus, Gaudete Sunday offers a break from our time of repentant preparation and reminds us of the joy we find in the Lord. It's name comes from the first word of the Latin version of the introit song for this Sunday, which itself comes from Philippians 4 and Psalm 85. (I hope you'll forgive me for both using another passage than a Psalm and reusing a Psalm we've already had a devotion on!)

Philippians 4:4-6; Psalm 85:1 (CEB)

Be glad in the Lord always! Again I say, be glad!
Let your gentleness show in your treatment of all people. The Lord is near.
Don't be anxious about anything; rather, bring up all of your requests to God in your prayers and petitions, along with giving thanks.

Lord, you've been kind to your land;
you've changed Jacob's circumstances for the better.

This Sunday reminds us of the joy we find in Christ – the gladness that comes from knowing the love of God that no one and nothing can take away. It reminds us of the joy we have even when in the midst of a pandemic. It reminds us of the surpassing happiness that lingers in us even when we go without seeing our loved ones for Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner. It reminds us of the contentment we find in God even when we've lost so much this year.

It's important to give ourselves permission to be glad in the Lord, especially in times when it seems like there is just less to be glad for. But even as we do that, this gladness we're talking about can be present even while we feel sad about the family, friends, and things we've lost – losses temporary and losses permanent. After all, Paul doesn't say, “Be glad in the Lord when things are going great and there's nothing to worry about;” no, he says, “Be glad in the Lord always!”

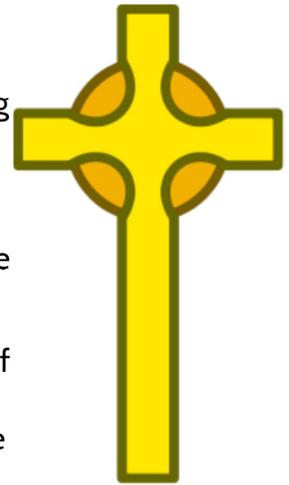
I hope that on this year's Gaudete Sunday, you may find gladness in the Lord that surpasses the weight the world seeks to throw on us.

Pastor Mike Galica

(PS – The reason for the pink, or more correctly 'rose', candle is: in celebration of this rejoice-y Sunday, white was mixed into the purple dye when making the candle to remind us of the joy that comes from God even in the midst of the penitential purple of Advent. The resulting color is the rosy pink we know today.)

Holy Cross Announcements

We are now in the **Season of Advent**, a time which reflects our symbolic waiting for the birth of Jesus in humility at Christmas but also our waiting for the return of Jesus in glory. This Advent seems particularly pertinent, as we also wait for the end of the ongoing pandemic. During this season we wait in hope for all these things. Our paraments are purple to remind us of the hope that sustains us.



Even as we continue to worship together apart, we're still celebrating the birth of Jesus. Our **Christmas Eve Worship** will be live-streamed December 24 at 7 PM to YouTube and on the church website. Please join us as we rejoice at the incarnation of the Savior of the world.

Katie Kihlstadius has started a **"Marco Polo" Prayer Group**. If you'd like to join an online group devoted to praying for our churches, communities, and world, reach out to her at 801-675-6279 for more info!

In lieu of collecting coats, **Box Elder Interfaith Council** is collecting money to purchase new coats during spring sales to donate to schools in the fall. If you'd like to donate to the coat drive, send it to the church marked "Interfaith Council Coat Drive".

Because of our county's "High" Transmission Level, **we will be meeting online-only until that Transmission Level changes**. We feel this is our best path forward to show love to all our neighbors, especially as our hospitals and medical works are overwhelmed.

Our state and local health departments' COVID-19 Transmission Level for our county is "High". This means social gatherings are limited and mask-wearing is required in public spaces. This is in addition to all the regular recommendations of practicing physical distancing, good hygiene practices, and staying home when sick. For more information visit coronavirus.utah.gov.

If you're a Thrivent member, you may have **Thrivent Choice Dollars** to distribute! Visit thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 800-847-4836 to find out if you are eligible.

If, while we can't meet together, you want to still give an offering to the church, you can mail it to PO Box 732, Brigham City UT, 84302. The post office box gets checked regularly and your giving will be secure.

Sunday School for children is recessed. Adult Sunday is posted to YouTube on Sunday mornings.

Holy Cross Quilters will continue refraining from meeting.

This Week's Readings:

3rd Sunday of Advent – *Spirit of the Lord upon Me* – Isaiah 61:1-11; Luke 4:16-21

Next Week's Readings:

4th Sunday of Advent – *Jesus' Birth Announced* – Psalm 113; Luke 1:26-56

Prayer List

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." — Phil 4:6

Keep the following in your prayers

Robert Quick, for healing from ulcers.

Jared, Robert Quick's son, for healing from COVID-19.

Family and friends of Sheryl, Walter Quick's sister-in-law, who passed away last week.

Family and friends of Hayden Eccles, a friend of Andrea's, who passed away.

Ryan, Kendra, and family, friends of Lexa. Prayers for comfort and peace after **Brooks** passed away.

Bobby Morstadt, for healing from severe acid reflux.

Jeff & Darlene Hoedt, for safe travels and for staying healthy over the holiday.

Elias, Pastor Mike's friend's son, is in the hospital. Prayers for wisdom for doctors and healing for him.

Mary, daughter-in-law of Pastor Mike's friends, prayers for healing.

Lisa Weaver, friend of Kosbabs, is home but still has a long recovery ahead.

Sherri Rackham recovering after a dog bite.

Chris, Ashley, and family, Jeff Hoedt's son and daughter-in-law, for health and safety during pregnancy.

Our vulnerable populations, especially those with underlying health conditions, the homeless, and those lacking access to proper medical care in this time.

Nora Greer, for healing.

Trudee Klein, friend of Deborah Kay, for healing from cancer.

Tom & Jeanette Croft, friend of Kosbabs, for healing.

Abby Rasmussen and family, friends of Kosbabs, as she struggles with cystic fibrosis.

John Buist, our custodian, for continued health problems.

Lynne, Robert Quick's wife, with health issues.

Aleasa, Robert Quick's daughter, with health issues.

Mark Sparkman, Quick's son-in-law, recurring health problems.

Gloria Perry, for healing from health problems.

Box Elder County Jail Ministry, that the inmates may respond to the Gospel.

Deborah Kay Hansen, prayers for healing from recurring health problems.

Give thanks to God

Pastor Neil Arnold & Noah, are recovering well but still have some lingering effects.

Bob Morstadt, is doing well after his surgery but still would like prayers as he continues to recover.

Claudia Long, Andrea's mom, is doing much better but still needs prayer for strength and health.

Tripp, newborn son of Lexa and Kyler, is off oxygen and doing much better.

Keep those in prayer who are in harm's way

Medical professionals and all who are continuing to work during this pandemic.

Braxton Jeppsen, serving in the US Navy.

Let Pastor Mike know if there are any petitions you wish to add to our Prayer List. If you added someone to the prayer list, please update us on how they are doing! We love to celebrate praises as well as petitions. Out of concern for people's privacy, we haven't been adding specific prayers to our church live-stream, but we continue to pray for all those needs and concerns.