

The Journey to Joy

Pastor's message: Luke 2:15-32, 36-38

Message Notes:

Wednesday

Read: Luke 2:25-27 *Simeon's hope*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *What was Simeon's great hope?*
2. *How are you patient with God's time?*

Prayer Focus Simeon waited decades for a sign that your promise was fulfilled. We don't have to wait for you, Jesus, but we do need patience and eyes to see your work, to live out what you began, with the courage of faith that looks for hope, always.

Thursday

Read: Luke 2:25-29 *Simeon's witness*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *What does it mean that salvation was "in the presence of all peoples?"*
2. *How can we share the consolation and the light in our lives this week?*

Prayer Focus We still long for the consolation and redemption of our world, Holy One. Teach us again to look to you as Simeon did, with eyes that see you as the answer to our needs.

Friday

Read: Luke 2:36-38 *Anna's witness*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Anna, Simeon, and the shepherds were all "outsiders," yet they were among the first apostles. How is that important to you?*
2. *What signs of hope and redemption do you see around you today? How can you pass them along?*

Prayer Focus We treasure the stories and signs you sent to make way for Jesus to enter our world. In Advent, we stand ready to share our own stories of help and hope with others in the coming year.

Small Group Format



Welcome

- Introductions/getting acquainted
- Mutual Invitation question: *What Advent/Christmas tradition—personal or otherwise— do you treasure most? Why?*

Opening Prayer

Song (optional)

Reflection on Scripture

Have someone read: **Luke 2:15-32, 36-38**

- Discuss observations about the text
 - *What word or phrase strikes you the most?*
 - *What do you think is the most important point of the text?*

Application of Scripture (The central transformative questions)

- What did you hear God say to you through this week's Scriptures?
- What are you doing about it?
- How can we support you?

Share your faith (in groups of 3)

- *How have you experienced God recently in your life?* (This is a weekly question - it may be difficult to answer at first, but if you ask it each week you may start to notice God more in your life.)

Pray for each other

Refreshments (optional)

THE JOURNEY TO JOY December 17, 2023

Monday

Read: Luke 2:15-20 *The shepherds' witness*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Why do you think the Good News came to shepherds first?*
2. *The shepherds went home in deep praise to the one who brought all this wonder. Take time to reflect and praise God for the birth of Jesus.*

Prayer Focus We're eager to begin a new story of how you're still coming, Jesus, how you are still here with us, and how we will live in you, now and always. Let us share the news with all creation.

Tuesday

Read: Luke 2:21-24 *The dedication rite*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. *Why was circumcision a sacred rite?*
2. *What is the significance of Jesus' dedication? What did it mean to him, his parents, his ministry?*

Prayer Focus You came to us as fully human, born into our world, our traditions, our rituals. You participated in our lives, even as you remained divine. Thank you for showing us how to live in community, and make faithful commitments to God's way.