



Rev. Melvin E. Wilson, Pastor/Teacher

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The Third Week of Advent: Joy

Tuesday, December 16, 2025

Online Bible Study

6:30 pm

Streaming at stmatthewame.org/streaming

YouTube - [@stmatthew336](https://www.youtube.com/@stmatthew336) Facebook Live - [@stmatthewamechurch](https://www.facebook.com/stmatthewamechurch)

Zoom Meeting ID 973 678 1217, Passcode 6781293

Call-In 929-205-6099, Meeting ID 973 678 1217

I. Reviewing Last Week's Self-Directed Study: "Living in God's Peace"

A. Did you do it?

B. Questions:

1. When you hear the word **peace**, what's the first image, word, or feeling that comes to mind?
2. What is Biblical Peace?
3. How is Jesus' peace different from the world's peace?
4. Why do we need peace with God?
5. What were we invited to do with our anxiety?
6. What does it look like in everyday life to "**cast**" your cares on God (1 Peter 5:7)?
7. What most often steals your peace? Is it your thoughts, your schedule, news, money, health, relationships, something else?
8. What is **our responsibility** in pursuing peace with others?
9. Read aloud: Colossians 3:12–15. How does forgiveness relate to peace?
10. How could unforgiveness disturb the "**peace of Christ**" ruling in our hearts and in the church?
11. Is there a relationship or situation where you sense God might be nudging you toward peacemaking or forgiveness?

"This week, with God's help, I will _____."
(No explanations needed—just the commitment.)

II. This Week's Focus – The Joy of Advent

A. What is joy?

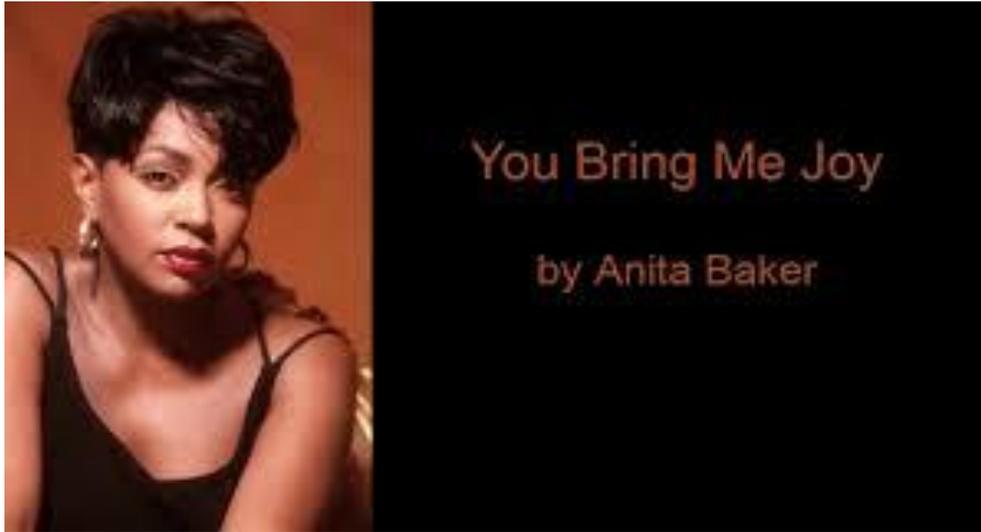
"The Bible defines biblical joy as an inner, deep-seated gladness and strength, distinct from fleeting happiness, that comes as a gift from God through the Holy Spirit, rooted in hope in His promises, presence, and grace, allowing believers to find contentment and rejoice even amidst suffering and trials. It's an enduring attitude or state of being, a choice of faith in Christ's overcoming love, not dependent on favorable external circumstances, but on a heavenly perspective and God's unchanging character."

B. Joy is:

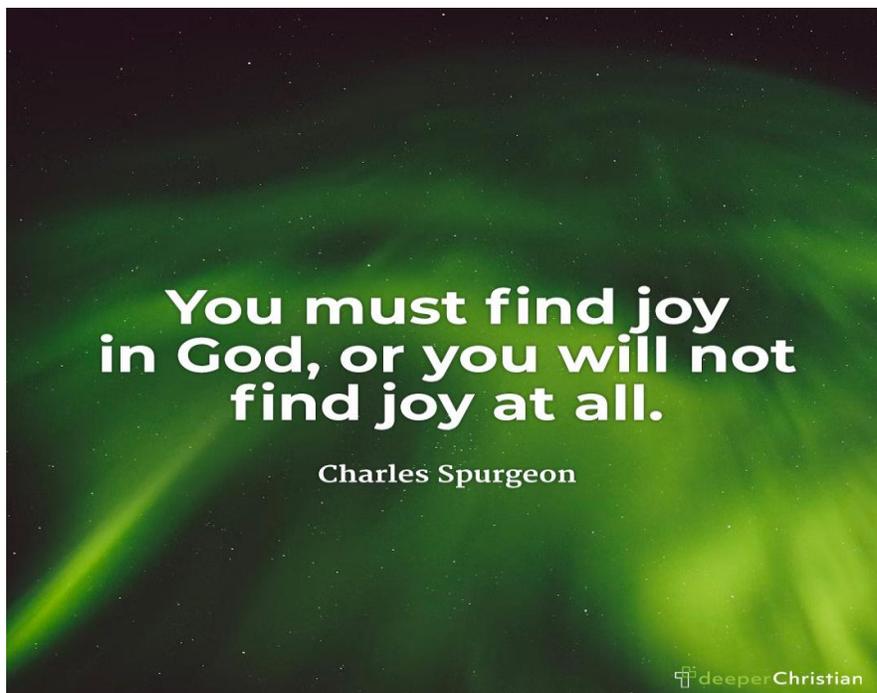
1. Inner, deep-seated gladness
2. Strength
3. Distinct from fleeting happiness
4. A gift from God through the Holy Spirit (one of the fruit of the Spirit)
5. Rooted in hope in His promises, presence, and grace
6. A pathway to contentment
7. The ability to rejoice even amidst suffering and trials

8. An enduring attitude of state of being
9. A choice of faith in Christ's overcoming love
10. ***Not dependent on favorable external circumstances***
11. Having a heavenly perspective
12. Based on God's unchanging character

MOST OF US KNOW ABOUT THIS:



BUT HOW MANY OF US KNOW ABOUT THIS:



III. Why is there joy surrounding the birth of Christ, and why should we have joy about it every year?

Luke 2:8-15 NIV

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." ¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

A. Jesus' birth is a fulfillment of a messianic promise

Isaiah 9:6-9 NIV

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

B. Jesus' birth provides hope for a dark world

Isaiah 9:2 NIV

² The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

C. Jesus' birth ushers in salvation and forgiveness for humankind.

John 1:29-34 NIV

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ³¹ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

³² Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven

as a dove and remain on him. ³³ And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'³⁴ I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One."^[f]

Acts 4:12 NIV

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

D. Jesus' birth is the personification that God is with us (Immanuel, Emmanuel).

Isaiah 7:14-17 NIV

¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also?"

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. ¹⁵ He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, ¹⁶ for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

¹⁷ The Lord will bring on you and on your people and on the house of your father a time unlike any since Ephraim broke away from Judah—he will bring the king of Assyria."

Matthew 1:18-25 NIV

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet^[e] did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

IV. Do you have joy about anything?

V. Next Week – The Love of Advent (Self-Directed)

A Servant Church
SAINT MATTHEW
 AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
 Orange, New Jersey
God's Love for God's People
Recover • Refresh • Renew • Restore

Generation One

Seniors Ministry

Fitness Class

December 17, 2025

1:15 PM

Come Dressed Comfortable
to Move & Workout

336 Oakwood Avenue, Orange, NJ
 For Information Call (973) 678-1217

Rev. Melvin E. Wilson
 Pastor/Teacher

Festival of Hope

Advent Zoom Revival

Hosted by
 Pastor Martin D. Odom
 Mt. Zion UMC
 Baltimore, MD



Isaiah 9:2
 "The people who walked
 in darkness have seen a
 great light."



Minister Shawn Elbert
 Epworth Chapel UMC
 Baltimore, MD
 December 3rd



Pastor Angelic Williams
 St. Luke UMC
 Baltimore, MD
 December 10th



Rev. Melvin E. Wilson
 Pastor/Teacher St. Matthew AMEC
 Orange, NJ
 December 17th

Wednesdays
December 3rd, 10th, & 17th

7pm, Zoom
 Meeting ID: 860 2904 9049
 Passcode: 394714



Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
 Martin D. Odom, Pastor
 3050 Liberty Heights Ave, Baltimore, MD 21215
 (410) 664-7490 | Email: mzumc@verizon.net



SAVE THE DATE

ADVENT

Candlelight Fellowship
Advent Candlelight: Lighting the way to Christmas



Friday, December 19, 2025



6:30 PM - 9 PM



St. Matthew Dining Hall



*"Come Share An Evening of Warmth, Food, and
Wonderful Gifts Shared through the Arts."*

Rev. Melvin E. Wilson
Pastor/Teacher

Never Alone

A Saint Matthew Christmas Day Gathering

Christmas Day

"Let's bring a dish, play some games, listen to music & just be together"

Anyone is Welcome

December 25, 2025

Worship @ 11 AM

12 pm - 3 pm Dinner & Fellowship

336 Oakwood Avenue Orange NJ 07050

Rev. Melvin E. Wilson
Pastor/Teacher

