

Context: After King Solomon's death, Israel split into two Kingdoms: Israel (Northern) and Judah (Southern). Isaiah is a prophet to Judah. The people are walking in darkness – political, spiritual, relational, and emotional; waiting for the arrival (The Advent) of a Messiah.

- The *holy nation* (**Exodus 19:4-6**) rebelled against God and became a *sinful nation* (**Isaiah 1:4**).
- The once promising people are engulfed by distress, anguish, gloom, and darkness. There is no joy.

What tends to rob us of joy?

- Sin - breaking the law of God
- Grief – what we might call depression
- Anxiety - a general sense of dread
- Discontentment – unhappiness when life isn't what you wanted
- Idolatry – called covetousness in the NT (**Colossians 3:5**)
- Ungratefulness – when complaints are constant and blessings look like burdens

Life-Truth: God's answer to our darkness is Himself. The joy He plans for us is not situational; it is relational.

For to us a son is given...his name [shall be] Immanuel [God with us]
Isaiah 9:6, 7:14

Reflecting on the pursuit of Joy (From Psalm 16)

- Will I fight to believe that *I have no good apart from God?* (**v1-2,4**)
 - Belief is not shown by what you say, but by what you do.
- Will I give myself to a community of faith? (**v3**)
 - Our delight in the church reflects on our delight in God.
- Will I trust in God's sovereign order and care of my life? (**v5**)
 - God is committed to your joy in blessings and in trials.



Worship Service Guide | | 12.23.2018

Welcome and Introduction: John Talley - Worship Pastor

Sing: *The Final Word*

Advent Reading: The Dean Family

Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge. I say to the LORD, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you." As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones, in whom is all my delight. The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply; their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names on my lips. The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup; you hold my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance. I bless the LORD who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. I have set the LORD always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also dwells secure. For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption. You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. **Psalm 16**

Sing: *The First Noel*

Corporate Prayer: Rob Ballentine – Prayer Ministry Coordinator

And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good. And on the seventh day God finished His work that He had done and He rested on the seventh day from all His work that He had done in creation. **Genesis 1:31a, 2:2.**

For unto us a Child is born, to us a Son is given. **Isaiah 9:6a**

Prayer Focus: *Lord help us to rest and enjoy your Son and one another.*

Sing: *My Eyes Have Seen Holy*

Important Dates to Remember

December 24th at 9pm - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.

We will close out the Advent season with scripture reading, singing, and prayers. We hope you can make it and bring a friend!!

December 30th Pastor Chase Thompson and his family will be visiting with us. We will have a **picnic lunch after church** (*bring something for your family*) as well as a **Corn-Hole Tournament for ages 13 and up**. The church will provide drinks and deserts.

Coming in January: Wednesday Night services resume on January 9th, **New members class** will be January 20th after church (See David for more info or if you would like to sign up) and our **Church Ministry Fair** will be January 27th during morning worship. More to come....



Sermon: Waiting to Rejoice || David McConnell and Immanuel Marsh

²¹ They will pass through the land greatly distressed and hungry. When they are hungry, they will be enraged and will speak contemptuously against their king and their God, and turn their faces upward. ²² They will look to the earth, but behold, distress and darkness, the gloom of anguish. And they will be thrust into thick darkness. But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. ² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. ³ You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. ⁴ For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. ⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. **Isaiah 8:21-9:7**