



A Weary World Rejoices Worship Series

Series Overview:

The Christmas season often attempts to evoke joyful memories and traditions as an escape from the weariness many of us know all too well. Ironically, on that first Christmas 2000 years ago, the story wasn't void of weariness. In fact, the Christmas story was set in a time of unprecedented weariness. As we get ready for Christmas, what if we were reminded that it's in the midst of the difficult realities of life in this world that Jesus broke in. The Christmas story doesn't push aside the weary world, but rather enters into the middle of our weariness with hope, peace and rejoicing.

Worship Series Graphics:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/sisj3sl161a7vhw/AAC0frWs_L0s9pY2JlColtvxa?dl=0

Weekly Themes:

WEEK 1: Where you'll find hope.

*The thrill of **hope** the weary soul rejoices...!*

On the first Sunday of Advent, we'll begin our series with the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth, who would become the parents of John the Baptist—the forerunner of Jesus. From their story we'll learn where we look to maintain hope in situations that seem hopeless.

Birth of John the Baptist foretold | Luke 1:5-23

Birth of Jesus foretold | 1:26-80

John the Baptist Prepares the Way | 3:1-20

WEEK 2: Where you'll find peace.

*His law is love and His gospel is **peace**...!*

On the second Sunday of Advent, we'll explore the story of Mary and Joseph, a young peasant girl and a carpenter from that nowhere town of Nazareth who

had their lives turned upside down. They would become the people God would use to bring the prince of peace into the world, yet they were certainly not the obvious choice. God entered amid all the challenges of their lives. From their story we'll learn the kind of people God uses to bring peace into the world amid all the challenges that arise in our lives.

Mary | Luke 1:26-55 (Magnificat)

Joseph | Matthew 1:18-25

Escape to Egypt | Matthew 2:13-23

WEEK 3: Where you'll find love.

*Truly He taught us to **love** one another...!*

We'll join in the story of the shepherds and wisemen - the least likely to be the first informed of the birth of God's son. The shepherds were a rag-tag bunch and the wisemen were foreigners from a far off land who likely didn't speak the same language as Mary and Joseph and certainly did speak the language of faith - they were the first to receive the good news of Christmas. From their story we'll discover who the good news of our Jesus birth is for.

Shepherds | Luke 2:8-20

Wisemen | Matthew 2:1-12

WEEK 4: Where you'll find joy.

*Sweet hymns of **joy** in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise His holy name...!*

On the fourth Sunday of Advent we'll hear the story of the innkeeper, a character that isn't even named in the Bible. The innkeeper was overwhelmed and the inn was overloaded, but room was found. God found a way. From the story of the innkeeper, we'll hear how the joy of Jesus birth breaks in - into our homes and our hearts - even amid all the stresses, the expectations, the have-to's, and you-betters of this season.

Luke 2:1-11, especially verse 7

The Sunday after Christmas:

To give our staff, volunteers and families time with their family, the Sunday after Christmas at Calvary we are doing an online-only service. During that prerecorded service, we'll tell the Christmas story through the great carols of the season, readings and brief reflections. The order of service will look something like this:

1. Mary and Joseph
 - o Song

- Reading & Reflection
- 2. Shepherds
 - Song
 - Reading & Reflection
- 3. Wisemen
 - Song
 - Reading & Reflection
- 4. Birth of Jesus
 - Song
 - Reading & Reflection

Prayers:

Prayer of the Day

God of grace, Sometimes life is hard and we are weary. You sent your son into this world so we can find hope, peace, love and joy. In your son's name, Amen.

Prayers of the Church

Lord God, thank you for reminding us this advent season that you sent your son into the weariness of the world to show us the depth of your love. LIYM, HOP

Abundant Creator, our hearts are weary. Sometimes situations and circumstances burden us with worry and despair. Break into our lives and thoughts and give us hope. LIYM, HOP

Generous savior, As the days get shorter we pray for people of all ages who suffer depression and loneliness, especially during the holiday season; pray that they will be comforted and uplifted by their faith and the knowledge that God is ever-present and sees our suffering, loneliness and despair. LIYM, HOP

Holy Spirit, Bring peace to our world. Where there is division, create unity. Where there is conflict, create resolution. Where there is war, create treaties. Use us to do your restoring work for the world. LIYM, HOP

Generous Savior, As Christmas approaches we pray for those who grieve. Grieve the loss of someone missing in celebrations. Be with those who mourn giving hope and peace in the promise of the work of your son. We pray this in Jesus name, Amen.