

Preparing the Way with Water to Thrive

Fourth Sunday of Advent – “Be Joyful!”

Luke 1:46b-55



Litany

L: On the fourth Sunday in Advent, we light four candles, reminding us to Be Joyful!

C: May we magnify God’s presence in our world , celebrating that Christ is with us at Christmas, and every day.

L: Like Mary, when she shared the news of Jesus’ imminent birth, we are in awe of your mercy.

C: You bring hope to the hungry. You uplift the lowly. Help us do likewise, forever proclaiming your name.

L: Called forth by your Son, Jesus Christ, let us share the glad tidings of great joy with all whom we meet, that generations to come may know God’s unrelenting love.

C: Amen.

Meditation

When Mary visits Elizabeth, there are many scary things happening in her life. She is unmarried, pregnant, and preparing for an 80 mile journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. There are no comfortable hotels along the way, no fast food restaurants with French fries and ice cream. But despite her many fears, Mary *rejoices*. She opens herself to a role that will change history.

The lives of women in rural Africa are not so different from those of women like Mary and Elizabeth. These women do not have many of the comforts of modern life, and their daily journey to collect water for their families can take *hours*.

When a clean, safe water well is built in their community, it is a true cause for joy. Imagine what these women must feel when they are no longer forced to spend half their day walking to a faraway source of dirty, contaminated water. Imagine how they must rejoice when their children no longer have to miss school to help them.

When these women celebrate the gift of clean water, their joy is contagious, and their laughter rings across the mountains and valleys and plains. What can we learn from these women, who have very little, yet still find a reason to be joyful? How can we, in our abundance, magnify God’s presence?

Prayer

God of Magnificence, In this last week of preparation for your son, let us give thanks for each gift that brings joy to our lives. Remind us that joy comes from simple things – laughter in a child’s voice, a warm hug from a friend, a hearty meal, and a glass of pure water. Remind us that when we share this joy with each other, we participate in your coming kingdom. In Jesus’ name we pray, **Amen**.