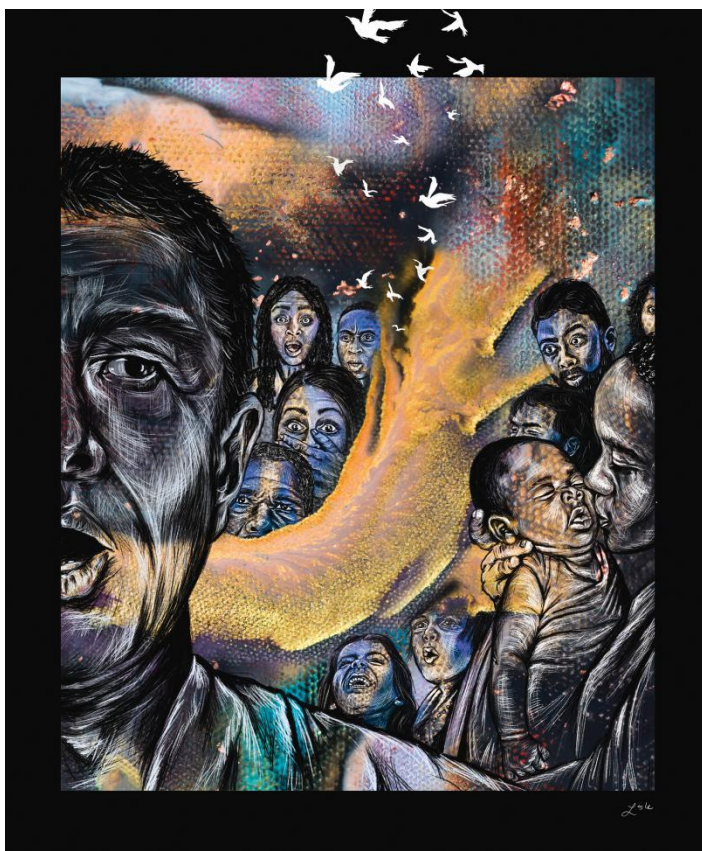


# St. James United Church

Advent 3

How Does a Weary World Rejoice?

We allow ourselves to be amazed...



December 10, 2023 @ 10:00 AM

181 Portland Street  
Dartmouth  
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902-464-8852



(▲ Rise in body or in spirit/Responses in bold)

## **WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE**

Welcome & Acknowledging the Territory

Our God can part the sea.

**God can bring water from a rock,  
and provide bread in the desert.**

Our God can walk on water.

**He can heal the sick,  
and turn water into wine.**

Our God sets the stars in the sky.

**God hears our voice when we cry,  
and is closer than our own breath.**

There is nothing our God cannot do.

**Let us stand in awe.**

**Let us worship God with wonder.**

Lighting the Advent Candles

How does a weary world practice joy?

**By dancing,  
and throwing birthday parties.**

By hanging Christmas lights, and holding  
sleepy babies. By singing loudly,  
and looking for good news.

**By telling the story of Jesus, and  
showing up for our community.**

There are a million ways to practice joy.  
So today we light the candle of joy as a  
reminder and a charge.

**With God's help, may we bring joy  
into a weary world. Amen.**

Candle Lighting Song – Tune – Silent Night

**Candle light, sacred light.**

**Mystery flames, burning bright.**

**We are waiting for Jesus' new birth.**

**Shine his joy over all of the earth.**

**Thanks for the gift of joy,  
thanks for the gift of joy.**

Prayer of Confession (Together)

**Holy God,  
Somewhere in our childhood we face pressure to outgrow awe.  
We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts.  
We praise those who have answers,  
and assume that wonder is an answerless game.  
Forgive us for closing that door to you.  
Remind us that the kingdom of God belongs to children.  
Teach us the ways of awe and wonder,  
so that like Zechariah,  
when we find ourselves speechless,  
our first words will be words of praise.  
With hearts open wide, we pray, amen.**

▲ Hymn – Isn't It Amazing – Please See Insert

Ministry of Music – Would You Bring a Song?

**LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD FOR US TODAY**

A Time of Wondering

An Ancient Word – Luke 1:57-66

Reflection – Can We Still Be Amazed

Reflective Music

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

▲ Hymn – Blessed Be the God of Israel – Please See Insert

▲ Affirmation of Faith

We believe in a God who knows our names,  
**who counts the hairs on our heads,  
and carries the dreams in our hearts.**  
We believe that God's fingerprints are all over creation,  
**and that God is forever speaking to us  
in a million different ways.**  
We believe that awe and wonder,  
goosebumps and laughter,  
telling stories and paying attention,

**are all ways that we can say thank you  
to our creating, sustaining, and loving God.**

Therefore we commit ourselves  
to moving through this world  
**with eyes wide open,**

**with porous hearts,  
and grateful spirits.**

We commit ourselves  
to living lives of awe, wonder, and gratitude,  
trusting that these things  
will forever draw us deeper into God's loving arms.

**We believe. We stand in awe.**

**Thanks be to God**

Minute for Mission

Sharing Our Gifts

Prayers of the People & The Lord's Prayer

### **THRESHOLD INTO GOD'S WORLD**

The Life and Ministry of the Faith Community – Please See Insert

▲ Hymn – I Was There to Hear Your Boring Cry # 644

▲ Commissioning & Blessing

Carol Selection

▲ Song of Dismissal – We're Seeking Your Presence

**We're seeking your presence.**

**Help us find it today.**

**We wonder and ponder, in so many ways.**

**Joy stirs deep within us, we actively pray.**

**As we await Jesus, please show us the way.**

Music Takes Us into the World