Joy to the World
Sunday, December 25

Focus: To celebrate the joy of Christmas with all creation

On this Christmas Day, we hear the call for all creation to witness God’s saving action, and take up the song to praise God. This crescendo of celebration sings of awe of God who comes to us in Jesus to bring a new kind of justice – one of mercy, and fair, compassionate judgment. Joy to the world!

Opening Prayer:

We offer you a new song, God. It is a song of thanksgiving, a song of regret, a song of passion, a song of praise, a song of lament, and sometimes it is a song of joy. We thank you for the ways in which you hear our prayers, whatever their tone. Amen.

Focus scripture: Psalm 98

The focus reading from the Bible for today speaks about giving joyful praise to God. Invite everyone in your family to share a “God moment” or experience of joy from the weeks of Advent leading up to Christmas, or from this Christmas morning.

You may use the Bible or the included choral reading to read Psalm 98 together. Explain that the Psalms are a collection of poems and songs that people have been singing for thousands of years.

After reading the Psalm, consider the following wondering questions:

- What musical instruments are mentioned in the psalm? What instruments might we use today to make a joyful noise?
- Which parts of creation are invited to sing praise to God? What parts of creation would you include in a song of joy to God?
Sing a brand new song to God,
    for God has done super-wonderful deeds!
Response: Praise God for the birth of Jesus!

God's deeds set things right for us,
    and God has told this to all creation.
Everyone knows about God's marvellous deeds.
    God is always on the side of God's people.
Response

The ends of the earth know about the deeds of our God.
Response

Sing joyfully to God, all the earth.
    Open your mouths wide with God's praises.
Response

Sing praises with the lyre,
    and with trumpets and horns.
Response

Make a joyful noise before our God.
Response

Let the sea and all that lives in it roar with joy.
Response

Let the rivers and the hills sing together for joy.
Response

God is coming!
Response

God will look over us fairly.
Response
**Optional Craft: Celebration Hats!**

**Celebration Hats**

**Directions**

**Paper bag hat**
1. With the bag folded flat, cut off top edge so the bag is 13 cm/5 in from top to bottom.
2. Open the bag and crease the bottom across the middle so it is slightly indented. This will be the top of the hat.
3. Decide what you want on the hat (mountains and hills, rivers and seas, fishes in the sea) and draw them on the front of the hat and on pieces of construction paper to glue to the sides of the hat.
4. You can cut the side pieces to the shape of the things you have drawn and glue them to the sides of the hat so they stick out like ears.

**Paper plate hat**
1. Cut a slit from the edge to the centre point of the plate.
2. Put the two edges together to make a pointed party hat that fits your head. Mark the middle of the front of the hat.
3. Lay the paper plate hat flat and draw what you want on it (mountains and hills, seas and rivers, fishes in the sea).
4. Bring the two edges together and staple them.
5. Staple string or yarn to the sides so you can tie the hat on.

**Closing Blessing:**

Go out and celebrate the good news that Jesus is born!