

# Fourth Sunday of Advent



The Children's Illustrated Bible page 154

## Be Joyful

Share the message from Isaiah and use *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, page 154, to show a drawing of Isaiah. Isaiah was a prophet who lived when his country was taken over by enemies and his people were forced to live in exile. Yet, in the middle of this difficult time, God told him three reasons to have joy, which he shared with his people. Read Isaiah 61: 1, 2, 8, 10, 11 and ask kids to find the three reasons.

1. God is on the side of those who are put down, brokenhearted, or trapped (verses 1 and 2). How does God bring us joy when we are feeling this way?
2. God loves justice (fairness or fair play, verse 8). Why do we feel joy when things are fair?
3. God has saved us (verse 10). During Advent this is shown by Jesus coming to live with us. Why do we feel joy knowing it is almost Christmastime?

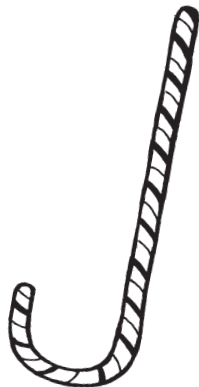
Experiment with joy. When someone is filled with joy, they are so happy they cannot be held down or made sad! In a bucket filled with water, immerse table-tennis balls. Try to hold them down, but notice how they keep popping to the surface. Let the kids try (this will be messy). Imagine that the balls are filled with the joy of knowing that Jesus is coming. Nothing can hold down this kind of joy. That's the way Isaiah felt about having the spirit of God upon him. That's how we feel knowing Jesus and Christmas are coming.

Read Psalm 126 and I Thessalonians 5:16-24. Challenge kids to move their arms, legs, and bodies in ways that spell "J-O-Y." Challenge them to spell other words and letters with their bodies. They may want to create a cheer about joy.

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a young maiden named Mary. She was engaged to marry Joseph. The angel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." Mary was confused and afraid of the angel, but the angel said, "Don't be afraid, for God chose you to have a son and name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Lord. He will reign over Israel forever, and his kingdom will last forever." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; I will do whatever the Lord says."  
—Luke 1:26–38 adapted



Light the candles from the last three weeks, and light the fourth candle for today. Ask: What did you do this week to get ready for Jesus to come?



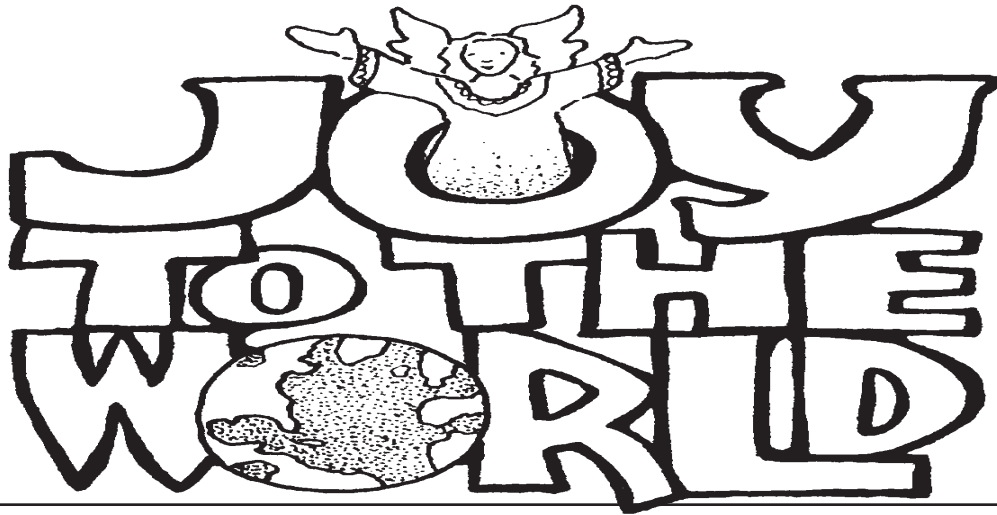
### J for Jesus

A choirmaster centuries ago made candy that would hang on a Christmas tree and remind people of Jesus. So he made "J"-shaped candy!

## Joy Candy

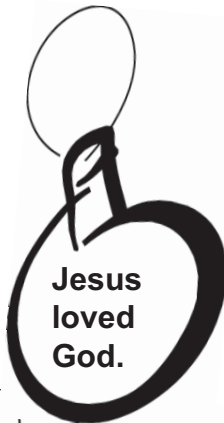
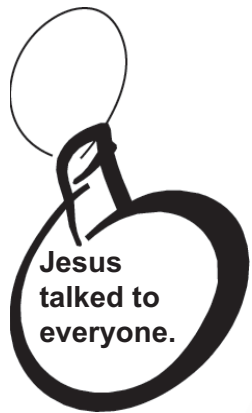
Sitting in a circle, tell the story of the candy maker (in box) to the kid on your left, passing a candy cane as you do. That kid then tells the story to the child on his/her left, passing the candy cane. Start a new candy cane around the circle which is also passed on. Every time the story is told, a new candy cane is added to the circle. By the time everyone has told the story, all should have candy canes.

Give everyone an extra candy cane to share with someone else in the congregation.



God's spirit is on me, because God has blessed me. God has sent me to bring good news to sad people, to hold people who have broken hearts, to preach about freedom and blessings. God loves fairness. I rejoice for my God!

—Isaiah 61:1, 2 adapted



Color in all the ornaments of how Jesus showed love.

