

**18 December 2016 - Fourth Sunday of Advent.**

**Readings:** Isaiah 7:10–16, 17–19; Romans 1:1–7; Matthew 1:18–25.

**Theme:** *Most joyous mountain* – Psalm 122:1, “**I rejoiced** with those who said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord.’”

**INTRO:** “*Joy to the world, the Lord has come...*” If there’s one note that characterises Christmas for me, it’s joy. Our final Advent theme...



## **I. THE JOY OF PREGNANCY.**

**Matthew 1:18**, “This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, **she was found to be pregnant** through the Holy Spirit.”

**Luke 1:46**, “Mary said, ‘My soul **magnifies** the Lord, and my spirit **rejoices** in God my Saviour.’”

**Cf. Matthew 1:19**, “Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, **he had in mind to divorce her quietly.**”

**Matthew 2:3**, “When King Herod heard this he was **disturbed** (*troubled, terrified*), and all Jerusalem with him.”

**Illus. Holy Trinity Church, Adelaide.**

**Illus. *Encounter Christmas*.** Anthony Schulz, “I want to kill him!”

**Romans 10:17**, “**Faith comes from hearing the message**, and the message is heard through **the word about Christ.**”

**1 Peter 1:23**, “You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, **through the living and enduring word of God.**”



## **II. THE JOY OF BIRTH.**

**John 16:21-22**, “When a woman gives birth, she has a hard time, there’s no getting around it. But **when the baby is born, there is joy in the birth.** This new life in the world wipes out memory of the pain. The sadness you have right now is similar to that pain, but the coming joy is also similar. **When I see you again, you’ll be full of joy, and it will be a joy no one can rob from you.**”

**John 20:20**, “And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then **rejoiced** when they saw the Lord.”

**Luke 15:7**, “I tell you that in the same way there will be **more rejoicing in heaven** over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.”



### III. THE JOY OF GROWING UP.

**Isaiah 9:6-7**, “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... Of the **increase of his government** and of peace there will be no end.”

**Galatians 4:19**, “My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth **until Christ is formed in you.**”

**Philippians 2:2**, “**Make my joy complete** by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.”

**3 John 4**, “I have **no greater joy** than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”

Comment on my shock this last week finding out how divided our congregation is along the lines of whether we relocate or renovate.

**Ephesians 4:15**, “**Speaking the truth in love**, we are to **grow up** in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.”

**CONCLUSION:** I want to acknowledge that every one of these areas as much as they bring the greatest joy, they also bring the greatest sorrow. Not being able to conceive. Miscarriage. Still birth. Losing a child. Children that do not live up to their potential. At the same time, this is what Christmas is about. A baby who was and is conceived by every believer. A baby who is born. A baby who grows and grows.

*So... Joy to the world! The Lord is come. Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart, Prepare Him room; And heaven and nature sing; And  
heaven and nature sing And heaven and heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the world, the Saviour reigns; Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, Rocks, hills and plains, Repeat the sounding  
joy, Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the nations prove,  
The glories of His righteousness, And wonders of His love; And  
wonders of His love; And wonders, wonders of His love. In*

Jesus' name, Amen. Aldi ☺