*From the Pastor’s desk:*

**THIRD ADVENT: JOY**

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” **(Luke 2:10, KJV)**

Advent is the coming or arrival of someone or something. Traditionally and liturgically, Advent relates to Christmas. In essence, the Advent is all about the coming of Jesus Christ. As stated in the write-up of the first Advent, each of the Sundays of Advent is significant and has a subject of focus. Today’s focus is on JOY. Joy is an expression or feeling of extreme happiness or cheerfulness, especially related to the acquisition or expectation of something good.

When He was born, the angel appeared to announce Jesus’ birth to the shepherds in the open field, keeping watch over their flocks at night. Instinctively, the sudden appearance of the angel brought fear, and the shepherds did well to be startled. But to alleviate their fear, the angel instantly instructed them: "Fear not”. Why should they not fear? The angel added, “…. for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." **(Luke 2: 10-11)**

The allusion is that *the prevailing circumstance justifies being startled, but what I brought to you supersedes whatever you may be thinking or seeing happening around you. This is not just the news of* ***joy****, but that of a* ***great joy****.* What is that tiding of joy? Christ is born.

Beloved, joy is not a function of what has happened but will happen. Else, it will be known as happiness. That is why it may appear illogical when expressing joy especially when happenings around you does not suggest it. Joy is a thing of the inside, an inner combustion, welling out of your spirit being. People cannot see. Even you, too, may not be able to put your finger on it. This is another fruit of the Spirit which must be evident in you. And it can only be expressed if you let it.

I pray that that unspeakable joy that only God can give will find full expression in your heart at this season in Jesus’ Name. AMEN.