



APC Advent Devotional – December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020

## Finding joy and gratitude in our APC community

**Today's Scripture: Philippians 1:3-11 (NIV)**

<sup>3</sup>I thank my God every time I remember you. <sup>4</sup>In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy <sup>5</sup>because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, <sup>6</sup>being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. <sup>7</sup>It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. <sup>8</sup>God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup>And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup>so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup>filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.



Life amidst the COVID-19 pandemic has been stressful. We've been social distancing, attending church online, forgoing birthday parties, travel plans and family reunions. This year has been marked by isolation—a sort of imprisonment.

What do we have to thank God for during these times?

Perhaps Paul the Apostle can help us. When Paul wrote this personal letter to the Church of Philippi, he was imprisoned (see Philippians 1:7, 13). Despite his situation, Paul expresses thankfulness and joy as he remembers the community he has with his Philippian brothers and sisters in Christ. This Advent season, may each of us also find joy in our **community in Christ**. And, from this joy, may we express thankfulness to God for what--and who--we have in our lives.

Prayer: Lord, in this Advent season, may we celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus, and also find joy in and gratitude through our community of believers. May we be filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, and may our lives be marked by Your love and grace. Amen.

By Jacqueline Day & Timothy Lee