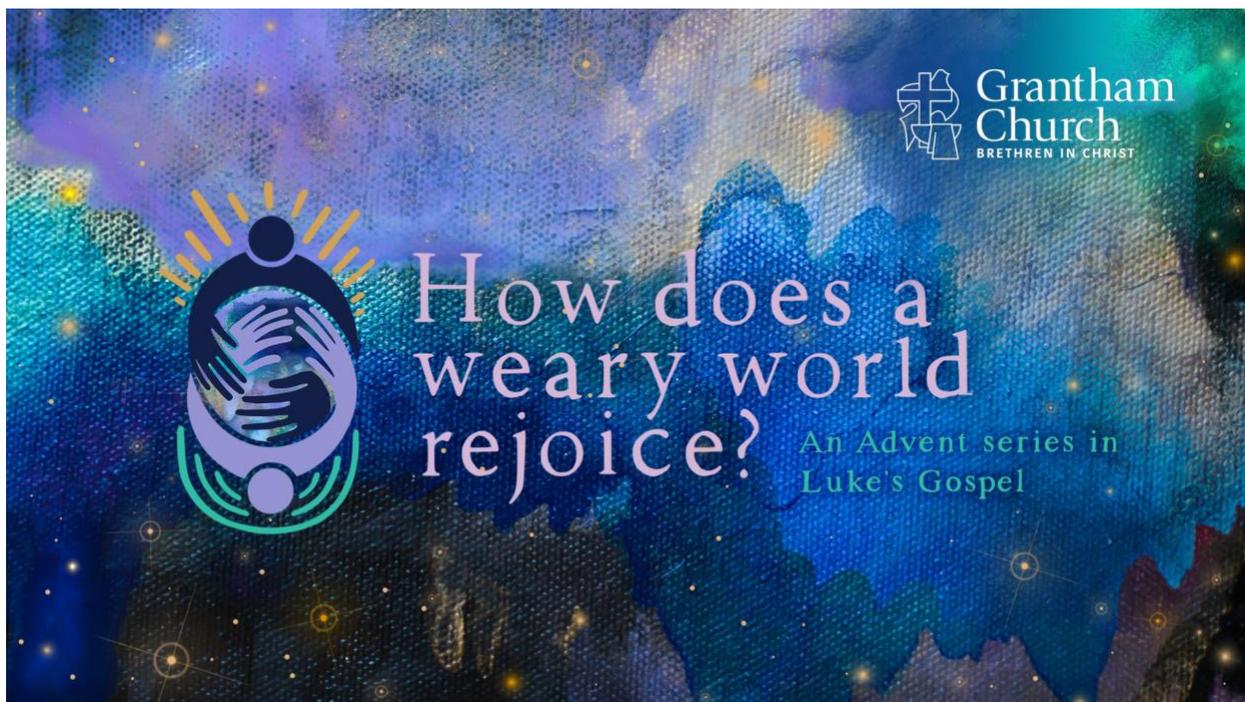


We Trust Our Belovedness
Small Group Discussion Questions

Join our congregation for worship in-person or online at 10:30 am each Sunday via our [Grantham Church YouTube Channel](#). If you ever miss a message, the sermons are always posted to the [recent sermons page](#) at our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the sermon slides and small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for staying connected with us!

Sunday, January 7th, 2024



Sermon Title: We Trust Our Belovedness

Scripture Reading: Luke 3:21-22

Sermon Focus: We are confronted all the time with the narrative that we must prove we are worthy of being loved. Some of our deepest fears are to be rejected, isolated, or hurt by another. At Jesus' baptism, God called him "beloved" and that confirmation of his identity fueled Jesus' ministry. In the final message of this series, Pastor Melissa encourages us to remember our baptism and trust our Belovedness so that we can join with God in helping others claim theirs.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group in person or by video call. Use the following questions to help *guide* your small group discussion:

1. Read Luke 3:21-22 together. What do you notice in these short verses? Imagine being in the crowd watching Jesus being baptized. What do you think you would be thinking or feeling?
2. Why is it significant that the Father's message to Jesus at this time was simply: "You are my Son, whom I love. With you I am well pleased."?
3. Can you recall a person or people who have spoken this kind of truth to you? What did they say? Why was it meaningful? How did it affect your feelings, thoughts about yourself, and actions?
4. Why is it so difficult for us to believe the truth that we are loved *no matter* what we do or don't do? What lies do you tend to believe that our culture or others tell you? Be specific. Where do you tend to look for affirmation apart from God?
5. Suffering can make it difficult for us to trust our Belovedness. Pastor Melissa suggested that hardship must be framed within the reality that we are deeply loved by God. Have you ever experienced God using your suffering to bring you or someone else closer to him?
6. In his book *Life of the Beloved*, Henri Nouwen says that we are Beloved, but we also need to engage in a process of living into that reality. He suggests that process includes being taken, blessed, broken, and given. We are reminded of this process every time we take communion. God has chosen us, loves us and calls us his own and that enables us, even in our brokenness and suffering, to give of ourselves to others so that they can experience the joy of being God's child. Is there a way God might be inviting you to give of yourself for another this week? That could look like speaking a good word to someone, taking a step in opening your life or home to someone, extending an expression of peace, or something else. If it's helpful, take a moment of silent prayer to ask God that question and then share with the group.