

## Advent 2025: Recovering Wonder in an Age of Algorithms Week 3: Joy

### Discussion Guide – December 14, 2025

<sup>51</sup> He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;  
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

<sup>52</sup> He has brought down rulers from their thrones  
but has lifted up the humble.

<sup>53</sup> He has filled the hungry with good things  
but has sent the rich away empty.

<sup>54</sup> He has helped his servant Israel,  
remembering to be merciful

<sup>55</sup> to Abraham and his descendants forever,  
just as he promised our ancestors.” Luke 1:51-54

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” Matt. 5:6

#### Quotes

“Simply put, it is naïve to think we should have the capacity to attach to Christ if we are endlessly entangled by myriad lesser attachments.” Steve Bell

“To the modern ear, austerity sounds a dour tone; restraint is cheerlessly counter-intuitive; contentment is pointlessly counter-cultural. Ironically, however, the saints who sincerely practiced recollection and detachment were often renowned for their child-like joy. I have met contemporary ascetics whose countenances bear this out. They understand that when we give ourselves over to things that are neither restorative nor life-giving, we soon find ourselves greasy and glutted with paltry pleasures and petty distractions rather than exuberantly satiated with nutrient-rich fare. In our day, I suspect one reason we increasingly find the season of Christmas a time to endure rather than celebrate is that we come to the table already full.” Steve Bell

“You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” Augustine

#### Discussion Questions

1. Mary sings, “He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.” When you think about your own life right now, where do you feel **hungry** (aware of your need) and where do you feel **“already full”** in the way Pastor Steve described?
2. How does the Christmas dinner / coffee table junk food analogy land for you? Where in your life are you living on “Kay’s mix” spiritually — good things, maybe, but ultimately junk compared to the feast? What are your “salty-sweet snacks” right now (habits, patterns, comforts)? What might the “feast” be that you’re too full to really taste?
3. Steve Bell talks about **recollection** (stepping away from the fray) and **detachment** (loosening our grip on lesser attachments). Which of those two practices feels most needed for you in this Advent season, and why? Is there one specific “lesser attachment” you sense Jesus inviting you to loosen your grip on?
4. Jesus says, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” If “the fast makes the feast,” what is **one concrete way** you could practise holy hunger this week?