Joy in the Waiting
Advent 2026
November 29, 2026
Matthew 11:2–11, Isaiah 35

Big Idea: Joy is deep gladness in Jesus himself, because he's with us now, and he's beautiful.

Outline:
1. The Question from the Prison (Matt 11:2–6)
2. The Answer of the Dawn (Matt 11:4–6; Isa 35)
3. The Fire He Took Himself (Matt 11:6; Isa 53)
4. Where Joy Rests (Ps 16:11; Hab 3:17–19)
5. Ask, Look, Tell

Questions (For personal reflection and small group discussion)

1. Without sharing details you're not comfortable with, what kind of "waiting" best describes your current season? For example, waiting for an answer, waiting for healing, waiting for direction, or waiting for something good to continue.
2. What did John expect the Messiah to do (see Matthew 3:10–12)? What did Jesus actually do? And what did He not do? How did Jesus answer John's question?
3. Why is it easy to "stumble" over Jesus? What specific expectations about what Jesus should do might cause a person to be offended by Him or walk away from Him?
4. Read Isaiah 53:5 and Romans 5:9. If Jesus had not "taken the fire," what would our situation be? How does the cross enable you to have joy in the waiting? Your circumstances may not have changed, but the Person at the table is worth singing to.
5. In your current season of waiting, what "timetable" or expectation have you placed beneath your prayers without realizing it? If that timetable is shaken, what does it reveal about what you are ultimately trusting?
6. Which of these three, Ask, Look, or Tell, is the next step for you? Share it with the group so they can pray for you and follow up.

Personal Notes