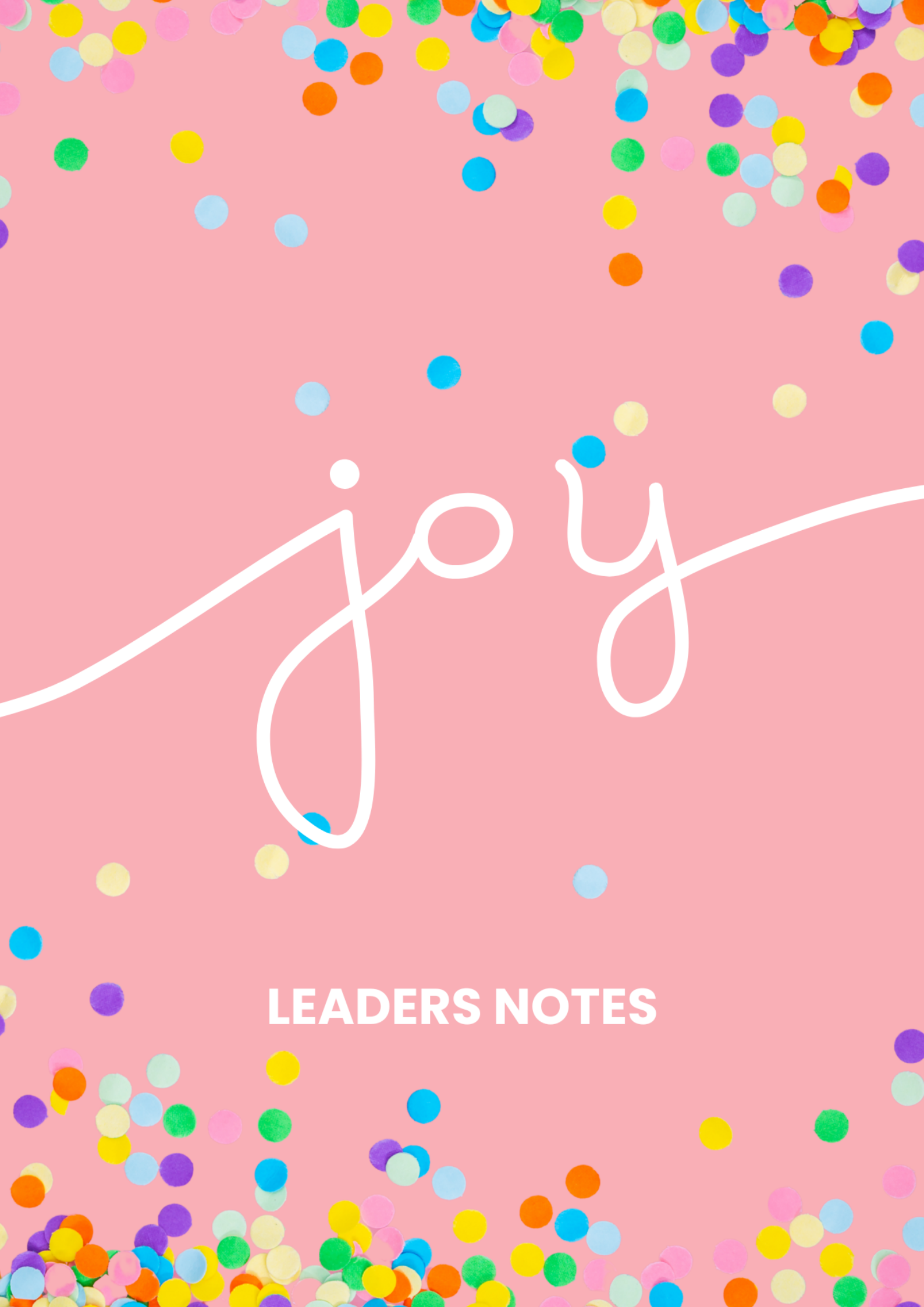




LEADERS NOTES

WEEK 1 — JOY IN CREATION

Genesis 1:26–31

Big Idea

God creates humanity in his image to represent him and steward his world with joy; in Christ, the true Image, our dignity and purpose are restored.

Discussion Starters

1. Where do people around you look for identity and worth? What happens when those sources shift?
2. What from Sunday's sermon most challenged your view of being made in God's image?

Read Genesis 1:26–31

1. What stands out in the wording “Let us make man... in our image” (vv26–27), and what does that signal about human uniqueness?
Plural language hints at divine communion (illuminated by NT, but don't over-press in Genesis). Humans uniquely bear God's image- relational, moral, vocational likeness.
2. From vv26–27, what does “image/likeness” imply about humanity's role in creation?
Royal representation - reflect God's character and rule under him; inherent dignity given, not earned.
3. What tasks are given in vv28–30, and how do they frame our daily work?
Be fruitful, fill, subdue, have dominion - cultivate and care; stewardship, not exploitation.
4. How should we read “subdue” and “have dominion” alongside God's goodness in the chapter?
Firm, responsible ordering for flourishing; dominion mirrors God's benevolent rule.

5. What does “very good” (v31) add to the tone of the whole passage?
Creation (and humanity) as gift; joy starts with receiving God’s world as good.
6. How does the NT pick up Genesis 1 (e.g., Col 1:15; 3:10) to show Jesus as the true Image—and how does that restore our vocation described here?
Christ is the Image; in him we’re renewed in knowledge; vocation becomes grateful service shaped by Jesus’ likeness.
7. Which part of vv26–31 most corrects common cultural views of identity, work, or creation?
Draw out contrasts: worth beyond achievement; work as worship; creation as entrusted, not owned.

Transformation

- Where does Genesis 1:26–31 most reframe how you see yourself this week?
- What one act of stewardship (home/work/creation-care) will you practise because of vv28–30?
- How can our group help one another reflect God’s image (specific prayer/accountability)?

WEEK 2 — JOY IN DELIVERANCE

Deuteronomy 32:1–4, 36–47; Exodus 15:1–6

Big Idea

The Lord our Rock delivers and sustains; remembering his rescue fuels joyful obedience - and in Christ, the new Exodus secures our freedom.

Discussion Starters

1. Share a song that marks a turning point in your life. What did it help you remember?
2. What line from Sunday most expanded your view of God as “the Rock”?

Read Deuteronomy 32:1–4, 36–47 and Exodus 15:1–6

1. How do the titles and actions for God in Deut 32:4 (“Rock... ways are just...”) shape your security and joy?
Stability, justice, covenant faithfulness - safe ground for trust.
2. Why does Moses insist God’s word is “your life” (Deut 32:46–47), not “empty words”?
God’s speech sustains and directs; urge habits of hearing/doing.
3. What features of the Lord’s deliverance are sung in Exod 15:1–2?
Strength, salvation, warrior-deliverer; rescue leads to worship.
4. In Exod 15:3–6, how do power and justice appear, and what pastoral cautions do we need when reading them?
Righteous judgment on oppression; avoid vindictiveness; marvel at holy justice.

5. How does the NT describe a “new exodus” in Christ, and how does that deepen the joy and obedience Deut 32/Exod 15 call for?

Deliverance from sin/darkness into Christ’s kingdom; freedom to serve without fear; let Christ’s rescue fuel sustained obedience.

6. What practices help God’s people remember rescue (Deut 32:46–47; Exod 15’s song)?

Scripture, testimonies, Lord’s Supper, corporate singing.

7. Where do these passages invite you to trust God’s timing of justice rather than forcing your own?

Name a situation; move to prayerful entrusting.

Transformation

- Which truth about God as Rock (Deut 32:4) could you rehearse daily—and how?
- How could you build one remembering habit (song, verse, journal) so rescue fuels obedience?
- Whom might you entrust to God’s justice this week, and what prayer will you pray?

WEEK 3 — JOY IN RELATIONSHIP

Zephaniah 3:14–20

Big Idea

The Lord dwells with his people and rejoices over them; in Christ, God is with us and places his joy in us.

Discussion Starters

1. When have you felt genuinely “rejoiced over”? What did that do in you?
2. What from Sunday corrected a harsh or distant picture of God?

Read Zephaniah 3:14–20

1. List God’s actions in vv15–17. Which one most reveals his heart?
Removes judgments; is in your midst; quiets with love; rejoices/sings - divine delight.
2. How does “the King... in your midst” (vv15,17) re-shape life in a fearful context?
Presence fuels courage, holiness, and joy.
3. What does “he will quiet you by his love” (v17) look like when shame is noisy?
Assurance, acceptance; speak gospel truth to accusatory scripts.
4. How do vv18–20 address loss, shame, and reputation in the community?
Gathering the lame/outcast; honour replaces shame; corporate restoration.
5. How do Jesus’ names/promises (Immanuel; John 15:11) fulfil Zeph 3’s presence-and-joy theme?
God with us; Christ’s own joy in us by the Spirit; abiding leads to durable joy.

6. Which phrases in this passage most need to be prayed over your situation right now?

Encourage scripture-praying; personalise the text.

7. How might our church mirror God's rejoicing stance toward the weak and outcast?

Welcome, advocacy, celebration of grace stories.

Transformation

- Where could you invite God's quieting love (v17) to speak into shame or fear this week?
- What's one way your group might rejoice over someone in a restorative way?
- Which line from vv15–17 could you pray each day, and for whom?

WEEK 4 — JOY IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Psalm 37:1–7; Psalm 1:1–3

Big Idea

Joy grows as we trust God's justice and root ourselves in his Word; ultimately, Christ the Righteous One fulfils the Psalms and shares his life with us.

Discussion Starters

1. When has envy (Ps 37:1) stolen your peace?
2. Which image from Sunday most helped you picture a righteous, joyful life?

Read Psalm 37:1–7; Psalm 1:1–3

1. Which imperatives in Ps 37:3–7 challenge you most, and why?
Trust, do good, dwell, befriend faithfulness, delight, commit, be still, wait.
2. How does “delight in the LORD” (37:4) transform what we desire?
God becomes the desire-giver and satisfier; desires are reshaped by delight.
3. What does “commit your way” (37:5) look like in a concrete decision this week?
Prayerful entrusting; make plans aligned with righteousness.
4. Contrast the images: the wicked as grass (37:2) vs the righteous as a tree (Ps 1:3).
Temporary vs rooted/fruitful; stability comes from Word-rootedness.
5. What does meditating day and night (Ps 1:2) look like in modern routines?
Habit stacking - commute, meals, bedtime; shared plans.

6. How does the NT locate true righteousness in Christ (e.g., 1 Cor 1:30), and how does that deepen what these psalms call us to?

Christ is our righteousness; we pursue holiness from acceptance, not for acceptance.

7. How do these psalms redefine prosperity/fruitfulness for you?

Fruit = Christlikeness, wisdom, faithful witness - not mere success.

Transformation

- Which one imperative (37:3–7) might you practise this week—and how?
- What Word-habit could you build (Ps 1:2–3) and when might you do it?
- Where could you replace envy with gratitude tomorrow?

WEEK 5 – JOY IN PARTNERSHIP

Philippians 4:10–20; 2:12–18

Big Idea

Joy thrives in gospel partnership, contentment in Christ, and Spirit-empowered obedience.

Discussion Starters

1. Where do you most feel discontent biting at your heels?
2. What from Sunday clarified the difference between “contentment” and “complacency”?

Read Philippians 4:10–20; 2:12–18

1. What has Paul learned about contentment in 4:11–13, and how did he learn it?
Through plenty and need; Christ-strengthened sufficiency.
2. How do gifts become “a fragrant offering” (4:18) and what does that reveal about partnership?
Giving/receiving as worship; partnership is God-ward.
3. How does 4:19 encourage generous, risk-taking partnership?
God supplies needs according to his riches in Christ.
4. How do we hold together “work out your salvation” and “for God works in you” (2:12–13)?
Our responsibility grounded in God’s energising will and power.
5. What dims Christian witness in 2:14–16, and how can we “shine” instead?
Grumbling and disputing vs blamelessness and word-holding.

6. Where do you see joy explicitly or implicitly motivating obedience in these passages?

Joy in the Lord fuels contentment and cheerful service.

7. What concrete form might partnership take for our group this term?

Prayer, giving, practical service, encouragement to partners.

Transformation

- Which circumstance could you practise contentment in this week, and what might that look like?
- How might you partner (pray/give/serve/encourage) before next meeting?
- Where do you need to replace grumbling with gratitude tomorrow?

WEEK 6 — JOY IN FULFILMENT

Luke 1:39–56; 1:57–80

Big Idea

In Mary's Magnificat and Zechariah's Benedictus, joy overflows as God keeps ancient promises in the coming of Christ.

Discussion Starters

1. Share a moment when God's faithfulness surprised you.
2. What from Sunday drew your attention to God's mercy across generations?

Read Luke 1:39–56; 1:57–80

1. What fuels Mary's joy in 1:46–50, and what does that teach us about praise?
God's holiness and mercy to the humble; joy springs from seeing God rightly.
2. How do 1:51–55 describe the kingdom's reversals, and who benefits?
Proud scattered, mighty brought down, humble exalted, hungry filled - grace to the lowly.
3. What covenant notes ring through 1:54–55 and 1:72–75?
Abrahamic mercy remembered; rescue to serve without fear in holiness.
4. In 1:68–75, what specific deliverances are named, and toward what purpose?
Redemption, salvation from enemies → worshipful service.
5. How is John's vocation described in 1:76–79, and what hope imagery stands out?
Prepare the Lord's way; forgiveness; light/dawn guiding to peace.

6. Where do you see humility and boldness together in these songs?
Lowly recipients praising confidently because God keeps promises.
7. Which line from the Magnificat or Benedictus most speaks into your situation now - and why?
Invite personal resonance and prayer.

Transformation

- Which verse from Luke 1 could you pray/sing this week, and when?
- What hidden act of mercy could you practise because of God's mercy to the lowly?
- Where could you serve without fear (1:74) in the coming days?

WEEK 7 — JOY IN RESTORATION

Revelation 7:9–17

Big Idea

Before the Lamb, a diverse multitude finds shelter; worship replaces weeping—forever.

Discussion Starters

1. What picture of the future most strengthens you today?
2. What from Sunday grew your longing for the nations to know Jesus?

Read Revelation 7:9–17

1. What does the multitude from every nation (v9) reveal about God’s global purpose?
Fulfilment of the promise to bless the nations; the church’s diversity is by design.
2. How does the crowd’s confession in v10 centre salvation on God and the Lamb?
Salvation is God’s gift in Christ - no boasting.
3. What does it mean that robes are washed in the Lamb’s blood (v14)?
Cleansing/justification through Christ’s sacrificial death.
4. How do vv15–17 describe God’s present care and final comfort?
Shelter, shepherding, springs of life, tears wiped - now in part, then in full.
5. How does the “great tribulation” context shape our understanding of present suffering?
Expect hardship; hope isn’t naïve - endurance with future joy.

6. What aspects of the scene correct thin or individualistic views of worship?
Corporate, loud, global, Lamb-centred doxology.
7. Which image in this passage most fuels perseverance for you right now—and why?
Invite concrete sharing; move to prayer.

Transformation

- Who could you pray for by name from “every nation” this week (mission partners, neighbours)?
- Where do you need to endure with hope—and which verse here will you carry into that?
- How can your group preview heaven’s welcome in one tangible way?

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small groups

LIFE TOGETHER