

Touchstones Project Theme: Joy

If the day and the night are such that you greet them with joy, and life emits a fragrance like flowers and sweet-scented herbs, is more elastic, more starry, more immortal- that is your success. All nature is your congratulation, and you have cause momentarily to bless yourself. The greatest gains and values are farthest from being appreciated. We easily come to doubt if they exist. We soon forget them. They are the highest reality. Perhaps the facts most astounding and most real are never communicated by man to man. The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. It is a little star-dust caught, a segment of the rainbow which I have clutched. *Henry David Thoreau*



The old stories we retell at this time of year have clues. They tell us something important about the nature of joy— that joy can break through like starlight or candlelight in the darkness, but that it is surrounded by the hard stuff of everyday life. ...Winter Solstice arrives in the midst of the deepest darkness.

The joy comes alongside the waiting; it comes alongside the pain and fear and uncertainty, and has nothing to do with ideal circumstances. Maybe all we can do is issue joy an open invitation and then start paying attention to how and where it shows up. We may discover that joy is already happening, smaller and quieter and braver than we realized. We may find joy is in the taste of an orange, the smell of coffee, the view of the night sky, the sound of the violin. *Rev. Elea Kemler*

Join us in exploring Joy

Photo Credits (top to bottom)

- ◆ Walden Pond, by angela n, October 21, 2011, (CC BY 2.0), <https://www.flickr.com/photos/aon/6273509024>
- ◆ Winter Sunrise, Denys Nevozhai on Unsplash