

Wednesday

Read Luke 1:52-53 *He has brought down the powerful; lifted up the lowly; filled the hungry with good things....*

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. How does this reversal of the status quo feel to you? Why?
2. Why does God reverse the fortunes of the powerful and the lowly? What message does God intend to convey?

Prayer Focus

Pray for the welfare of the common good, that the basic needs of all God's people might be met.

Thursday *He has helped his servant...in remembrance of his mercy*

Read Luke 1:54-55

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. How does it feel to know that God desires to remember to be merciful and compassionate to those who serve God?
2. How have you experienced God's mercy and compassion?

Prayer Focus

Lift up your need for God's mercy in your life. Pray for others in need of God's compassion and kindness.

Friday *My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God.*

Read Luke 1:46-55

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. How do you intend to give glory to God this Advent season?
2. What does Mary's prayer teach us about prayer? How might your prayer life change after reflecting upon Mary's song?

Prayer Focus

As Mary rejoices in God's powerful actions in her life, offer a prayer rejoicing in God's powerful presence and activity in your life.

Responding to Grace: Prayers

"Whether we think of or speak to God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love, and the desire of pleasing him" – John Wesley

Mary's prayer in Luke 1 is not simply her words, but is her "yes" to God. In her dedication to glorifying God's name in her very being, the course of her life is changed. All is prayer when we live each moment with the intention of bringing glory to God. What is your intention for this season of Advent? How will you orient your daily actions around giving glory to God?

Message Notes:

Small Group Format

Welcome

- Introductions/getting acquainted
- Mutual Invitation question: *Is rejoicing in God's presence and power a familiar style of prayer for you or is it new? How does it feel? Might it be a form of prayer to continue?*

Opening Prayer

Song (optional)

Reflection on Luke 1:46-55.

- Have someone read **Luke 1:46-55**.
- Discuss observations about the text
 - *What word or phrase strikes you the most?*
 - *What do you think is the most important point of the text?*

Application of Scripture (The central transformative questions)

- What did you hear God say to you through this week's Scriptures?
- What are you doing about it?
- How can we support you?

Share your faith (in groups of 3)

- *How have you experienced God recently in your life?*
(This is a weekly question – it may be difficult to answer at first, but if you ask it each week you may start to notice God more in your life.)

Pray for each other

Refreshments (optional)

December 2, 2018

Prayers

Monday *My soul magnifies the Lord, who has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant*

Read Luke 1:46-49

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. Why is Mary surprised that she has been chosen to bear the Son of God?
2. How have you received God's favor? What good work has God done for you? through you?

Prayer Focus

Rejoice in God's presence and goodness in your life. Reflect on the ways in which God has raised your standing in life and give thanks.

Tuesday *His mercy is for those who fear him...*

Read Luke 1:50-51

Questions for Reflection and Application

1. Fear means "reverence" or "awe." Why does it take a posture of reverence to receive God's mercy or compassion?
2. Why does God "scatter the proud in the thoughts of their hearts"? What's the difference between pride and humility?

Prayer Focus

Pray for the strength to set aside personal pride and ego and set God at the center of your life. Offer your reverence to God, seeking God's forgiveness and patience with the weakness and corruption of humanity.

