

DECEMBER 19, 2021  
FOURTH SUNDAY  
OF ADVENT



*We rejoice in the fulfillment of God's promises.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 1:39-55	Mary visits Elizabeth
Monday	Micah 5:2-5a	A promised ruler
Tuesday	Hebrews 10:5-10	Christ's sacrifice once for all
Wednesday	Micah 4:1-5	Peace through obedience
Thursday	Psalms 80:1-7	Prayer for Israel's restoration
Friday	Luke 2:1-20	The birth of Jesus
Saturday	John 1:1-14	The Word became flesh
Sunday	Luke 2:41-52	The boy Jesus at the temple

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Luke 1:46b-47 (NRSV)*

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Come, Lord Jesus, come and bring hope, peace, joy, and love to our lives and for all the world. Amen.

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

God of abundance, as you fill us with this meal, we pray for all to have enough food to be satisfied and enough hope to have peace and joy in Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the mercy and love of God shine on you and give you joy.



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### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*He Came Down*



### WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

### CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- How is love more of a commitment to others than an emotion that comes and goes?
- How does Jesus' birth show God's loving commitment to us?

### DEVOTIONS

*Read:* Luke 1:39-55.

It is quite common for Christians to wonder what the God of the Old Testament has to do with the God of the New Testament and the grace, mercy, and peace described there. For Luke 1, the answer is everything. It is the same God. The God of the Old Testament keeps promises, like the promise of new life to Elizabeth, a woman beyond the child-bearing years, and Mary, a young maiden without a husband. This is the God who cares for the lowly and brings down the powerful, cares for the hungry, and sends the rich away empty. This new world order of lifting up the lowly is never fully lived out in Luke for all to see, but God's mercy definitely changes lives and households, like those of Elizabeth and Mary. God's steadfast love and mercy is here to stay, and God's people rejoice.

*Discuss:* Where do you see God's love today?

*Pray:* **Loving God, just as you gave Elizabeth and Mary reason to rejoice, fill us with love and joy in your presence through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

### SERVICE

Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Daily Bible Readings and theme this week, how can you care for the lowly and feed the hungry?

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

For this Fourth Sunday of Advent, we light four candles on the Advent Wreath.

*Say:* **We light the first candle, the Prophet's candle, the second candle, the Bethlehem candle, the third candle, the Shepherd's candle, and light the fourth candle, the Angel's candle. The fourth candle announces Jesus' mission on earth to love and unite all people, bringing them closer to God. May we prepare for the coming of Christ into our lives and our world with hope, peace, joy, and love.**

*Pray:* **Dear God, give us faith to trust your word, peace to care for others, hope in your promise, joy for the coming of Jesus, and love to share through Christ our Lord. Amen.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)