

Hope Presbyterian Church  
Sermon-Based Bible Study

December 21, 2025

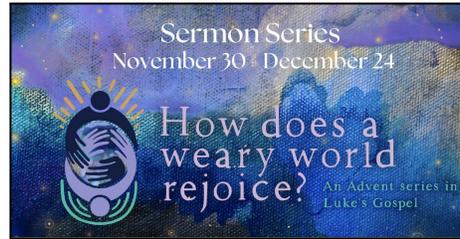
**"Sing Stories of Hope"**

#4 in the series

*How Does a Weary World Rejoice?*

**Scripture Text (NRSVUE)**

Luke 1:46-55



1. Singing carols is one of the best ways to experience joy during the Advent season. In fact, singing alone or with others at any time of year can provide significant health benefits that include:

- Lowering stress hormones
  - Lessening anxiety
  - Increasing lung capacity
  - Improving cardio health
  - Fostering trust/belonging
- Why do you think the act of singing can provide these benefits?
  - Have you experienced any of these benefits of singing? When?

2. **Read Luke 1: 46-50.**

Known as Mary's Song, these verses begin what also became known as The Magnificat, which means to *praise or to make great or mighty*.

- What do we learn about the source of Mary's rejoicing?
- How was it possible that Mary would have known that God's mercy toward her was also for generations to come?

3. **Read Luke 1:51-55.**

Mary's song turns toward larger issues and themes of God's response to injustice in what can be described as a *theology of reversal* in which God has:

- V. 51 - scattered the proud
  - V. 52 - brought down the powerful and lifted the lowly
  - V. 53 - filled the hungry with good things
  - V. 55 - kept His promise to Abraham and his descendants forever
- How do you think Mary would have been sensitive to these issues?
  - What relevance to the present do you find in these verses?

4. The Magnificat could be considered a blueprint for a just society.

- Why would the ruling classes in some countries have banned the sharing of the words of the Magnificat?
- What's your response to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's description of the Magnificat as the "most passionate, wildest" song of Advent, celebrating God's reversal of worldly power structures where the lowly are exalted, and the mighty brought down?

5. How can we pray for you?