

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Lesson At-A-Glance

Scripture Reference
Luke 1:39-58

Lectionary Sunday/
Church Season
Advent 4

Lesson Focus
**We can do
God's work.**

Bible Memory Verse
**And Mary said, "My soul
magnifies the Lord, and
my spirit rejoices in God
my Savior." Luke 1:46-47**



Gather (10 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Arrival Activity Kids list the jobs they have at home.	Activity Pages 	Sticky notes, pencils
Opening Conversation Kids check in and learn the Bible Memory Verse.	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers	Pencils
Opening Prayer Kids pray for the ability to tell others about Jesus.	None	Sticky notes from Arrival Activity

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Mary Visits Elizabeth Story Kids sing Mary's Magnificat to a familiar tune.	Spark Bibles	None
Angels Among Us Kids consider how to respond to God's goodness when they read a contemporary story.	Leaflets	None
Unjumble! Kids unscramble jumbled words from the Bible story.	Spark Bibles, Leaflets	Pencils

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Fun Facts Kids play a game using the Fun Facts.	Leaflets	None
Magnificat Prayer Cube Kids discover a fun way to pray with Mary's words.	Leaflets	Scissors, tape

Send (5 minutes)

	Spark Resources	Supplies
Closing Conversation Kids review the Bible Memory Verse and select a Faith on the Go! activity.	Spark Bibles, Spark Bible Stickers, Leaflets	None
Closing Prayer Kids name things that God has done.	Family Pages 	None



Visit www.sparksundayschool.org for more Spark content! Watch a short Lesson Prep Video that will prepare you and give you confidence to explore this Bible story with the kids you are leading. You will also find four downloadable resources for this lesson: an Activity Page, a Family Page, and two additional in-class activities.

Gather (10 minutes)

Arrival Activity

If some kids arrive earlier than others and you need a lesson-based activity, make copies of the downloadable Activity Page and set them out for kids to try.

As kids arrive, welcome them and pass out sticky notes and pencils. Invite them to write or draw all of the jobs they have in their families, one per note. Suggest jobs kids might have, such as babysitting, feeding pets, and cleaning. Make sure you write your jobs down, too!

Spark Resources

Activity Pages



Supplies

Sticky notes
Pencils

Opening Conversation

Good morning, everyone! Let's get started by checking in and seeing how the last week went for all of us. If you had a good week, sit up straight in your chair and smile. Demonstrate the action. **If your week didn't go so well, cross your arms and frown.** Demonstrate the action.

Ask kids to tell you their high or low points.

Now that we know a little bit about how your week went, let's see who got a chance to try a Faith on the Go! activity. What did you do? Allow time for sharing.

Pass out Spark Bibles. **How about our Bible Memory Verse? Who remembers that from last time we met?** Recite the first couple of words and stop, allowing kids to continue. After a few more words, or when several kids get stuck, jump back in with the next words.

Recite the verse together three times. Invite kids to place I Memorized It stickers in their Bibles next to the verse, if they haven't done so already. They can write today's date near the verse.

Good job! Let's see what God's word has in store for us today. When you arrived, I asked you to write or draw all the jobs you have at home. Let's see what you came up with. Give all kids a chance to share their household jobs by placing their sticky notes on the wall.

Today we're going to learn about a visit that Jesus' mother Mary made to her relative Elizabeth. Mary visited Elizabeth soon after the angel Gabriel told Mary that she was going to have a baby. God planned to send Jesus Christ to our world and asked Mary to help. God gave her a job to do. She would help bring Jesus into the world. Mary did God's work in the world. Even before Jesus was born, Mary told Elizabeth about what God's Son would do for the world.

Some people think that the words Mary used to tell Elizabeth her news were sung as a song. It's called the *Magnificat*. Our memory verse comes from it. It's

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers

Supplies

Pencils

Luke 1:46-47. Let's look it up. Help kids look up the verses on page 1128 in the Spark Bible. After reading the verse aloud together several times, challenge the class to recite it with their Bibles closed. Invite them to put I Memorized It stickers next to the verse and to write the word *Magnificat* in the margin.

Opening Prayer

Ask kids to place their sticky notes on their hands and to raise up their hands when you raise yours.

Let's pray. Dear God, thank you for giving us the gift of Jesus. Thank you for Mary, Jesus' mother, who did your work in the world. Raise up your hands with the sticky notes. Be with us as we do your work. Help us to tell other people about the great things you've done, especially about Jesus. Amen.

Spark Resources

None

Supplies

Sticky notes from Arrival
Activity

Open the Bible (15 minutes)

Mary Visits Elizabeth Story

I mentioned that some people think Mary used a song to tell Elizabeth about God's plan. Today we're going to treat her words like a song by giving them a tune. First, let's look up Mary's words. They're in Luke 1:39-58. Help kids find the passage on page 1128 of the Spark Bible. **Luke is one of the four Gospels. The Gospels are the first four books in the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.** Ask for a volunteer to read the verses.

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles

Supplies

None

The words to the Magnificat are in verses 46-55. Remember, the verses are the little numbers right there in the sentences. The words are written like a poem. Let's figure out how we could sing this. Organize kids into pairs or small groups, giving each small group one or more verses. **Your challenge is to come up with a tune for your verse so that we could sing it. You can make up a tune, but you could also use one that the rest of us know.** It may be helpful to have one or more tunes in mind, in case the kids are unable to think of one that fits. Suggest a commercial jingle, a TV theme song, a familiar hymn, a ringtone, or a popular song. It's okay to alter the words or melody a little bit in order to make their songwriting project work.

Once kids have worked on the verses, ask each group to sing their verse or verses in sequence. Once you learn the tune, sing along! Don't be shy! The kids will open up more if you lead the way. Once all the groups have sung their verses, try singing Mary's song from start to finish.

Angels Among Us

Let's read a modern story that is connected to Mary's song in today's Bible story.

Pass out leaflets. Ask a volunteer to read Angels Among Us from the first page of the leaflet. Then use the following questions to dig deeper. **What connection does this story have to Mary's Magnificat?** (*People got what they needed. A young person was doing the work. God worked through Ricky to help others.*) **Have you ever seen someone who really needed help? What help did they need? How could they get the help? How can you be a part of God's work in our world?** Allow all answers.

Read through the I Wonder statements on the first page and take time to hear kids' responses.

Spark Resources
Leaflets

Supplies
None

Unjumble!

Ask kids to find Unjumble! on the second page of the leaflet. Read the instructions aloud for the kids. **Read the story one more time and then try to solve the puzzle. If you get stuck, you can look up the words in the Bible.** Allow time for kids to unscramble the words and then find them in the grid. Watch for anyone who may need help.

Answer Key

LIBEDEVE Believed

MEGAFINSI Magnifies

DEBLESS Blessed

BLAZEHEI Elizabeth

ARCHHAZEI Zechariah

CRYME Mercy

YAMR Mary

LYOH Holy

LOUS Soul

ROLD Lord

Once kids have found all the words, invite them to read Look It Up! on the bottom of the second page of the leaflet and to find Luke 1:11-20 on page 1127 of the Spark Bible. They can also read about children in the Did You Know? feature on the bottom of that page of the Bible.

Spark Resources
Spark Bibles
Leaflets

Supplies
Pencils

Activate Faith (15 minutes)

Fun Facts

Don't let the kids look at the third page of the leaflets until you've given directions for this activity. Split your group into two equal sized groups.

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Let's explore the Fun Facts on the third page of your leaflet. Here's the challenge. I'm going to give you one minute to read the Fun Facts with your team. Then we'll see which team can remember more.

Supplies

None

Give the teams one minute to look at the Fun Facts and remember as much as they can. After one minute, make the kids close their leaflets. Designate a Buzzer for each team. **I'll ask a question, and then you'll discuss the answer with your team. The Buzzer's job is to jump up with arms in the air and say "BZZZ!" when his or her team knows the answer.**

Ask the following questions for the game:

What was the name of the angel who announced to Mary that she would have God's Son? (*Gabriel*)

How old was Mary when that happened? (*about 15*)

Who else did Gabriel visit? (*Zechariah*)

When does Mary's Magnificat get used in our church nowadays? (*during Advent worship services*)

What did Elizabeth call Mary's baby? (*Lord*)

The Magnificat was something else besides a prayer—what was it? (*a prophecy*)

When a team knows the answer, their designated Buzzer jumps up and raises arms in the air. The fastest Buzzer gets to answer the question. The team with the most right answers wins!

Magnificat Prayer Cube

We've read, sung, and talked about Mary's visit to Elizabeth. Now let's see if we can figure out a way to use these words as prayers. Invite a volunteer to read Magnificat Prayer Cube on the third page of the leaflet. Distribute scissors and tape. Help kids create prayer cubes.

Spark Resources

Leaflets

Supplies

Scissors

Tape

After kids have completed the cubes, have them practice using them by giving them a toss and reading the top face of the cube. Remind kids that praying for others is an important way they can do God's work in the world. Encourage kids to share the cubes with their families.

Send (5 minutes)

Closing Conversation

Help the kids get centered and focus on the conversation. **I think I know this Bible story better than when we started. We looked at it in several ways. Let's look at the Bible Memory Verse again.**

Open Spark Bibles to Luke 1:46-47 on page 1128. Invite kids to read the Bible Memory Verse silently. Then ask the group to read it out loud. Finally, have kids mark the verse with their fingers, and close the Bibles. Have the kids recite the verse by memory.

If they haven't done so already, encourage kids to place stickers next to the Bible Memory Verse and to write any notes in the margin that they'd like to remember about the verse or the story.

Have kids turn to Faith on the Go! on the back page of the leaflet. Take turns reading the ideas. **These are some good ways for us to do the work of God in our world.** Invite each kid to pick at least one of the ideas to try out in the week to come. Remind kids that you'll be asking about it next week.

Spark Resources

Spark Bibles
Spark Bible Stickers
Leaflets

Supplies

None

Closing Prayer

Let's wrap things up with a prayer. Think of one great thing that God has done in our world. During the prayer I will ask you to name that thing out loud.

Dear God, you've done some wonderful things in our world. We praise you for your goodness and for these things that you've done. Invite kids to name God's great things in the world. **Most of all, we thank you for giving your Son, Jesus, for us. Amen.**

Be sure to send the leaflets and a Family Page home with the kids.

Spark Resources

Family Pages



Supplies

None

