**Scripture and Background Information for December 15-21**

***Unexpected***

To prepare for your group discussion each week**,** group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD’S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

One of my favorite things at Christmas is to give someone a gift they never saw coming, wouldn’t have thought to ask for, but later on find themselves unable (or unwilling) to live without. I believe we inherit that directly from our Heavenly Father. This is God’s calling card. And it shows up explicitly at Jesus’ house leading up to the very first Christmas.

**Background for Luke 1:46-55**

Luke’s gospel is known for being an historical account of Jesus’ life and ministry (Luke 1:1-4). In verses 39-45, Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth who was pregnant with John the Baptist. As they celebrate and visit with one another, Mary sings her praise to God.

In verses 46-55, Mary praises God for the unexpected gift that God has given her. Her song of gratitude rings as true for us today as it did for her so long ago. This child soon born to Mary, would be an unexpected and unearned gift for us all.

**Scriptures for the upcoming weeks:**

**December 22 Luke 2:33-35**

**December 29 Luke 2:41-52**