

# SINGING IN HOPE: COVID RELIEF IN NEPAL

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LUKE 1:68-79 | THE TENDER MERCY OF GOD

ADVENT WEEK 2 | SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

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## LEARN HOW YOUR LOVE SINGS A SONG OF HOPE FOR COVID RELIEF IN NEPAL

Despite recent declines in poverty, Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world with high incidents of natural disasters, such as floods and earthquakes. Lutheran World Relief has been working in Nepal since 2009, reaching indigenous, Dalit and marginalized communities with programs in agriculture and food security, adapting to weather changes and being prepared for disasters, and emergency response. LWR's holistic approach — which includes gender equity and opportunities for youth — helps communities to build the resilience they need to thrive.

LWR is also working to increase access to COVID-19 care and prevention in rural communities where a large swath of the residents are at risk. Interventions to strengthen livelihoods

and health systems in Nepal will facilitate recovery of vulnerable communities and build resilience in the face of future COVID-19 or other disease outbreaks.

## WATCH



<https://youtu.be/WJbD-zzq6b0>



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## DISCUSS

1. What brings you fear? Where can you offer your fear to God and ask for prayers to move forward with hope?
2. What did you notice about the images from the hospital scenes?
3. Compare and contrast your experience of the pandemic to the people living in Nepal.

## BIBLE STUDY

Zechariah knew what it felt like to not be able to speak. After an angel of the Lord came to Zechariah to tell him he would have a child, Zechariah lost his voice when he didn't believe the angel's prophecy. "How could it be?" he wondered. In our Gospel for today, Zechariah's voice just returned. He now has a son named John. Imagine the questions Zechariah had. Perhaps they are questions your congregation is asking: Can God continue to bring hope into our world today?



Zechariah models a way forward despite fear and uncertainty. After months of not being able to speak Zechariah receives his voice upon writing the name of his son. His first words are praise to God. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel." The season of Advent meets some people with waning light and dropping temperatures. Others find themselves in a season of uncertainty and waning hope. The pandemic is still a reality. You can also imagine that Zechariah's life held tension and fear, yet, he doesn't hesitate to declare God's promises. Even in the darkness, God is with us. Read together **Luke 1:78-79**.

1. Have you ever had the experience of losing your voice? Literally or figuratively? What was it like?
2. Talk about where you've experienced darkness in the last few months. Where, too, have you experienced hope?
3. We don't know the response to Zechariah's words. Imagine how others responded and reflect on what resonated with you from his words.



Shruti Shrestha for LWR

Shankhi Kumari Chaudhary near her home in Nepal.



## PRAY

God of Silence and Praise, be with us. We know what it feels like to be in darkness and we know, too, how your hope brings us healing. In the moments of fear and loss, keep our hearts turned to you so that we can sing a song of praise. Open our eyes to your goodness and mercy so that we may always walk in the way of peace. We pray all this in the name of Jesus, the One whose dawn breaks upon us. Amen.



## SHARE YOUR LOVE

As we eagerly wait for Christ's coming, so many of our neighbors around the world are also waiting ... For food. For clean water. For medical care. For hope.

When you help neighbors like Shankhi and her family through Lutheran World Relief, you spread hope throughout the world. Who will you reach next?

Visit [lwr.org/hope](https://lwr.org/hope) to make your gift and be a light in the darkness for someone in need.



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