

## PREPARING AT HOME

January 21-27, 2019

*Focus reading:* Luke 4:14–21 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=413283222>)

*Other lectionary readings:* Nehemiah 8:1–3, 5–6, 8–10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12–31a

*Theme:* Shaped by God’s Word

Most reunions and homecomings offer moments that are comfortably familiar along with those that reveal new realities. Such is the case when Jesus returns to his hometown. He does what he is used to doing. He goes to the synagogue on the sabbath. Jesus is at home here. Luke tells us that Jesus is “filled with the power of the Spirit” (verse 14) and praised by everyone. As he has no doubt done many times before, Jesus reads the scripture from the scrolls that are handed to him. He reads Isaiah’s familiar words about God’s anointed bringing good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight to the blind, and freedom to the oppressed. The proclaimed “year of the Lord’s favor” (verse 19) may be a reference to the year of Jubilee in which all debts would be cancelled. After reading, Jesus sits down, according to custom, and everyone waits for him to start a discussion on the reading. Instead, Jesus announces, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (verse 21)! Suddenly the comfortable, familiar routine is shattered! The words are no longer about some future hoped-for day. They are about a new reality. Even today Jesus’ announcement may seem premature. The poor still await good news, and the oppressed long for freedom. Yet, we must not wait for a future Day of the Lord. Jesus did fulfill this proclamation and invites us to join in this on-going work of making God’s love and justice visible in the world.

### JESUS IN THE SYNAGOGUE

Jesus went to the synagogue and regularly participated in the religious practices of his Jewish community. Ask your child, “I wonder why Jesus went to the synagogue?” He certainly didn’t need to go to learn about God! Talk with your child about why you go to church. Draw pictures of yourselves in worship. What is the most meaningful part of worship for you? What do you struggle with?

### SHARING GOOD NEWS

How can you share hope and good news with others? Think of someone who needs good news and do one thing that might bring them hope – visit, send a card, share a meal, donate.

### PRAYER

Loving God,  
Help us to hear your good news  
and to spread that good news  
by feeding the hungry and healing the sick,  
by working for freedom and justice  
for all people.  
Amen.

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