

A SAVIOR IS BORN

A Savior Is Born to Dwell Among Us

Christmas Day

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH | York, Nebraska

December 25, 2022

SERIES THEME: A SAVIOR IS BORN

The first Christmas sermon was preached to a small congregation consisting entirely of shepherds. The preacher was an angel. The message of his sermon? "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you." That is a heavy word: Savior. It says as much about us as it does about this child. If the angel had said "a teacher has been born" or "a mentor has been born," it would mean that within us exists the potential to fix all that is wrong with the world. It would mean we just need a bit of help: a coach, a mentor, a source of inspiration. But the angel said, "A Savior has been born." If one needs saving, it means he is totally helpless—completely lost—doomed, without outside intervention. That is how God the Father viewed us: helpless, lost, doomed. So, he sent more than a coach. He sent his only Son to be our Savior. After December 25 the secular world is done with Christmas. But for the Church, the season of Christmas has just begun. For twelve glorious days—The Twelve Days of Christmas—we will ponder the nativity of the Son of God. We will celebrate what that nativity means. A Savior is born!

THEME OF THE DAY: A SAVIOR IS BORN TO DWELL AMONG US

For centuries on Christmas Day the Church has read chapter one of St. John's Gospel. There, in just a few simple words, Scripture describes the indescribable: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us" (John 1:14). The word God had spoken in the Garden, promising to send a Savior who was part of mankind, came true. God himself became flesh and blood—to be born under law, to suffer, and to die that he might redeem us. The Greek word translated "made his dwelling" can also be translated "pitched his tent." That word describes a temporary dwelling place. God came into our broken world to dwell for a time, so that one day we might go to God's perfect home and dwell for all eternity. Unlike those Christmas Eve shepherds, we cannot see Christ with our eyes. Yet still he dwells among us. For he is the Word made flesh. As we listen to the Word today, we truly are hearing the voice of Christ. As we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we partake of his true body and blood. In Word and sacrament, still today, our Savior dwells among us, feeding our faith, preparing us for our true home.

Worship Leader
Organist/Pianist

Pastor Justin Wilkens
Quinton Corwin

Acknowledgments

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The Service, Setting One (page 154 in Christian Worship 21)

Hymn: 354 O Come, All Ye Faithful

Stand

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession

CW 154

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Silence for meditation and reflection

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Lord, Have Mercy

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

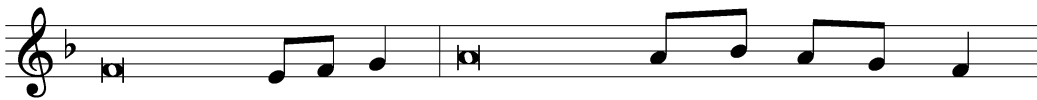
Lord, have mercy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

Amen.

Glory Be to God

CW 157



Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor - ship you, we glorify you,



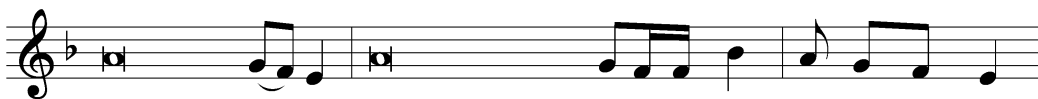
we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther Al - mighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sin of the world;



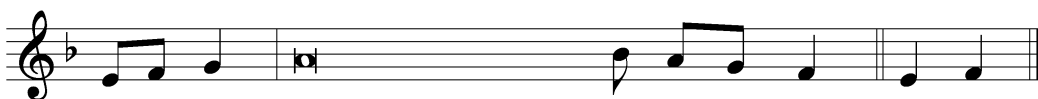
have mercy on us. You take away the sin of the world; re-ceive our prayer.



You sit at the right hand of God the Father; have mercy on us.



For you on-ly are holy; you on-ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the



Ho - ly Spirit, are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

THE WORD

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, grant that the birth of your only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Be seated

First Reading

Isaiah 52:7–10

The prophet foretold that the Lord would dwell among us, laying bare his arm, rolling up his sleeves and doing what was necessary to bring the good news of salvation to the ends of the earth.

⁷ How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of a herald,
who proclaims peace and preaches good news,
who proclaims salvation,
who says to Zion, "Your God is king!"

⁸ The voice of your watchmen—they lift up their voices.
Together they shout for joy,
because with both eyes they will see it
when the Lord returns to Zion.

⁹ Break out, shout for joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem,
because the Lord is comforting his people.
He is redeeming Jerusalem.

¹⁰ The Lord lays bare his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation from our God.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm of the Day: 98-Front of Hymnal: All the Ends of the Earth

Second Reading

Hebrews 1:1–9

In the past God sent angels and prophets as messengers to his people. In these latter days, God speaks to us through his Son who came to dwell among us.

God's Final Word: His Son

¹ In the past, God spoke to our forefathers by the prophets at many times and in many ways. ² In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. ³ The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact imprint of the divine nature. He sustains all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

The Son Is Superior to the Angels

⁴ The Son became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. ⁵ For to which of the angels did God ever say:
You are my Son. Today I have begotten you?

I will be his Father, and he will be my Son.

Let all God's angels worship him.

He makes his messengers winds and his ministers flaming fire.

God, your throne is forever and ever,

and the scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness.

Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of joy
beyond your companions.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Galatians 4:4,5



Al - le-lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those un - der the law.

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Gospel

John 1:1–14

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

The Word Became Flesh

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him everything was made, and without him not one thing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of mankind. ⁵ The light is shining in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light.

⁹ The real light that shines on everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not recognize him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, yet his own people did not accept him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, to those who believe in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. ¹³ They were born, not of blood, or of the desire of the flesh, or of a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and dwelled among us. We have seen his glory, the glory he has as the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day: 352 Joy Has Dawned

Sermon

Stand

Confession of Faith: Luther's Explanation on the Second Article (Redemption)

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

What does this mean?

I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord.

He has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver but with his holy, precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death.

All this he did that I should be his own, and live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he has risen from death and lives and rules eternally.

This is most certainly true.

Be seated

Prayer of the Church

Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.

Eternal Father, we give you thanks and praise on this holy day for sending your one and only Son to share our humanity, carry our guilt, and become for us the perfect Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

Lord, we praise you.

Keep our faith in your Son alive and strong. Nourish us with your Word and sacraments and by your Holy Spirit give us strength to overcome Satan's power and empty promises. Help us to withstand the temptations the world and our sinful nature put on our path.

Give us faith and courage.

Remember ministers of the gospel throughout the world who on this day are proclaiming that a Savior has been born. We especially commend to your care the missionaries we have called as members of the Wisconsin Synod. Since they cannot enjoy the fellowship of their extended families this Christmas, grant to them the inner joy that comes with service in your kingdom.

Protect all those who proclaim the gospel in our place.

We pray for our city and countryside, for our neighborhoods and subdivisions, and for all who live and work and find delight here. Give to the leaders of government wisdom to make and uphold laws that promote the good of society. Grant our nation peace, health, and

prosperity that we may have the opportunity and resources to spread the good news to all people.

Govern and prosper your people.

Fill us with kindness and arouse us to do good to all people, especially those who are less fortunate than we. Bring your healing to those who are sick or diseased in body or mind and comfort those who are mourning the death of someone they love. [Keep in your care...*here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] We especially pray for brothers and sisters who are setting aside their celebration today to care for the sick and stand at the side of the dying.

Sustain those who endure the troubles of life.

Be a source of strength to all your people and fill them with your power and peace. If any are among us today who have lost the true meaning of this festival, let them rediscover the joy that comes from Christ alone.

Let your peace reign in the hearts of all.

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

Silent prayer

As you sent your Son to bring peace to all people on earth, so we pray for all people, those known and those unknown to us.

We pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Offering

Hymn: 355 Let All Together Praise Our God

sts. 1–2

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn: 350 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today: 10:30 AM Worship

Saturday 12/31: 6:30 PM Joint Worship Service at Bethel

Sunday 1/1: 10:30 AM Worship

WELS Regional Youth Night

The next WELS regional youth night will take place on January 15th from 3:30-5:30 at Good Shepherd in Omaha.

Quarterly Voters Meeting

The next quarterly voters meeting will take place on Sunday January 8th following our worship service.

CONNECTION CARDS: Visitors or members with changes in contact information, please fill out a connection card online at www.bethelyork.com on the member connect tab or scan this code.



Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bethelyork



Personal assisted listening devices are available.

Given to the Lord: Attendance: Worship 64, Offerings: Operating: Needed 2,854.90, Given \$5,986.25. **To God be the glory!**

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