

The Festival of the Circumcision of our Lord
St. Luke 2:21
January 1st, 2022
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC
Simpsonville, SC
Pastor Jerald Dulas

The Name Given by the Angel

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Merciful and Eternal God, heavenly Father, Who didst cause Thy Son to endure circumcision and to be made subject to the Law, that we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law: We beseech Thee, grant us grace to become partakers of this redemption and thus obtain eternal salvation, through the same, Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Nine months and eight days ago the angel Gabriel appeared to the Blessed Virgin Mary and greeted her with the good news that she would give birth to a Baby Boy. This Baby, the angel Gabriel told the Virgin Mary, was to be called + “Jesus.” He was to be called + “Jesus” because He would save His people from their sins. That is what the name + “Jesus” means, it means “Savior.” Our Lord + Jesus, the Christ—the Anointed One of the Lord God—is our Savior. He is the Savior of the whole world. He came to this Earth to save mankind. He took upon Himself our flesh, but without sin, in order that He might rescue us from sin, death and the power of the devil. He came down from Heaven to be with us, to dwell with us, and to be one of us in order to save us from our sins. This is the Name that the angel Gabriel told the Blessed Virgin Mary was to be the Name of this Child born to her in the city of David—in Bethlehem of Judea—at midnight eight days ago.

Even though these events took place nine months and eight days ago—the angel Gabriel’s annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary—we have heard about these events during the season of Advent. We heard the first chapter of the Evangelist St. Luke’s Gospel telling us the history of these events leading up to our Savior’s birth on the Mass of the Christ—Christmas Day. Our Savior was born on Christmas Day. He was heralded by the angels hosts of Heaven, and they sang His praise in the words of the Gloria in Excelsis. They proclaimed this good news of a Savior to shepherds abiding in the fields keeping watch over their flocks by night. They would find the Baby—the Savior of mankind; their Savior—wrapped up in linen cloths and lying in a manger in the House of Bread—in Bethlehem. The descendant of King David—the heir to the throne of King David—would be found in the city of King David—in Bethlehem of Judea.

The shepherds would find the One, True Shepherd of Israel—of the Church—lying in a manger in the city of King David. They would find the Living Bread from Heaven, Who gives us to eat of His Body in, with and under the bread, and of His Blood in, with, and under the wine in the House of Bread. The Savior of the whole world, and especially of them that believe was found humbly laid in a manger in Bethlehem and wrapped up in swaddling cloths. This Baby did not officially have a name when the shepherds came and found Him just as the angel had proclaimed, and they spread abroad the things which they had heard and seen, so that all of Judea marveled at these things. But even though this

Baby was not officially named, He was still known by His Name. For the angel proclaimed that the shepherds would find in the manger in Bethlehem their “Savior.”

This is the Name by which our Lord has always been known: “Savior.” He is our Savior and redeemer from sin and death. The events of today’s Gospel reading from the Evangelist St. Luke take place only eight days later. Even though it may seem like a lifetime ago, Christmas Day was only eight days ago. This is the same amount of time that has passed since the shepherds heard the heavenly Host singing “Gloria to God in the Highest and peace, goodwill to men.” It has been only eight days since we celebrated these events with singing and rejoicing and hymns and gifts and food and all the celebrations. The same is true of the historical events. It has been only eight days since our Lord—our Savior—has been born for us in the city of King David.

Now, our Lord receives His official Name. He is given the Name which the angel Gabriel gave Him nine months and eight days ago. The Name that the angel Gabriel gave to the Blessed Virgin Mary on that day nine months and eight days ago was + “Jesus.” This Baby Boy is called + “Jesus.” Our Lord is called + “Jesus.” Our Savior is called + “Jesus.” + “Jesus” means “Savior.” Our Lord + Jesus is our Savior. He is the One Who saves us from sin and death by His own sinless suffering and death.

You will remember in the last week of Advent that we heard from St. Luke’s Gospel, the First Chapter, that St. John the Baptist was circumcised and named on the eighth day of his life. His name was to be called John. The same name that the angel Gabriel gave his father Zacharias in the temple when his birth was announced. Circumcision on the eighth day was the case for all Jewish boys. They were circumcised and named on the eighth day. This was a sign of the covenant that the Lord God had made with Abraham. All male children of the Israelites were circumcised on the eighth day. The only time this did not happen was during the forty years of wandering in the wilderness after the Israelites had refused to take the land of Canaan when the Lord God had commanded them. When the forty years were up, all the males who had not been circumcised yet were circumcised in Gilgal just before they conquered Jericho by the Jordan River.

Here on this eighth day of our Lord + Jesus’ life, He is also circumcised. He is also given a Name on the eighth day. The Name by which He is called, and by which we know Him, is the Name + Jesus. Our Lord + Jesus, our Savior, already begins to suffer on our behalf. He already begins to obey the Law of God for us. Only at eight days old our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ is fulfilling the Law of God for us and suffering on our behalf. Our Lord God in the flesh is already working toward our redemption from sin and death. His flesh is cut off. He has entered into the covenant with which He had made with Abraham and all his descendants. He takes part in the covenant which He made with His ancestor Abraham.

He is now both Lord and Son of Abraham. He is Lord of Abraham, because He is the One Who made the covenant with Abraham, and which Abraham obeyed and taught his descendants to obey. And He is the Son of Abraham, born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and His guardian St. Joseph, both of whom were of the house and lineage of King David, a descendant of Judah, a son of Jacob, a grandson of Abraham. Our Lord + Jesus—our Savior—is now both the son of Abraham, and also the Savior and Lord of Abraham. Our Lord + Jesus, circumcised and named for us today, is the Lord and Savior of all those who are of the house of Israel. He is the Lord and Savior of all those who are of the Church—the spiritual Israel. He is both the brother of all those in the spiritual house of Israel—the Church—and also the Lord and Savior of all those in the spiritual house of Israel—the Church. He is both our brother and our Savior.

For this is the Name given to Him by the angel Gabriel. This is the Name by which our Lord + Jesus has always been known. He is known and called our Savior. This is what the angel told the Blessed Virgin Mary He would be called. This is what the angel of Heaven told the shepherds that He

would be called. And this is the Name by which He is called at His circumcision and naming eight days after His birth. The Savior of mankind sheds His blood for us, and fulfills the Law for us, so that we might be rescued and saved from sin and death.

This is why this eighth day after our Lord's birth is celebrated with much solemnity, for our celebration does not end just with our Lord's birth in Bethlehem of Judea, but lasts even to today. Indeed, the celebration of our Lord's birth is celebrated for twelve days. We mark and celebrate our Lord's receiving of His Name + Jesus—Savior—and His placing Himself under the covenant He made with Abraham. For this covenant that He made with Abraham—circumcision—is only a sign of the true circumcision—the circumcision of the heart through faith—that we receive through the waters of Holy Baptism.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us rejoice and give thanks for our Lord's circumcision and naming. Let us give thanks that our Savior—our Lord + Jesus, the Christ—has come to us to redeem us from sin and death, and free us from the power of the devil, so that we might be with Him and live with Him in all righteousness, innocence and blessedness forever. Thanks be to the Lord God for our Lord and Savior + Jesus! In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty and Everlasting God, from Whom cometh down every good and perfect gift: We give Thee thanks for all Thy benefits, temporal and spiritual, bestowed upon us in the year past, and we beseech Thee of Thy goodness, grant us a favorable and joyful year, defend us from all dangers and adversities, and send upon us the fullness of Thy blessing; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!