

Sermon for Advent Mid-Week #1

Date: December 2, 2020

Location: St. John's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

Old Testament: Genesis 12:1-3

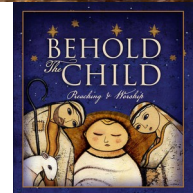
Epistle Reading: 1 John 4:9-14

Gospel Reading: Luke 2:8-20



Sermon Text: Luke 2:8-20

Sermon Title: For You and All the World



Hymns:

LSB 341 – Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

LSB 933 – My Soul Rejoices

LSB 349 – Hark the Glad Sound

Liturgy:

Creative Worship



Pastor James Groleau
St. John's Lutheran Church
1200 13th Avenue NW
Austin, MN 55912
Office: (507) 433-2642
Shepherd@JamesPlace.net
StJohnsAustinLCMS.org
Phone Streaming at: 518-906-1379
KAUS 1480 AM Sun. 9:00am



Text: Luke 2:8–20

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

NOTE: Copyright information.

Bible Translation: GOD’S WORD®, © 1995 God’s Word to the Nations. Some readings have been adapted to better reflect the original Greek or Hebrew.

Credit for Images:

Pronunciation for difficult words are contained in { }

© 2020 Pastor James Groleau.

Permission is granted to use these sermons for any non-profit purpose. I only ask that credit, as to their origination, be noted appropriately.

Grace, mercy and peace in Jesus' name. Amen.

You know the account. The son has wandered far from home. He has lived as if his father were dead, collecting his inheritance prematurely. He has squandered it all and sunk to the depths, feeding pigs and even longing to eat their food. The son returns home ready to be less than a son, ready to be a servant, but the father will have none of it. He runs to his son, embraces him, and orders the best robe, a ring, and shoes for him. It is time to feast on the fattened calf. His son was dead but is now alive. That is peace!

It is no wonder these words from Jesus are so well-loved. The reunion of the father and son without anger, without retribution, without scolding, is beautiful. Repentance is the key. Repentance is the ingredient that saved Peter. It's lacking condemned Judas. This is just the sort of thing that Luke the author of the Gospel reading today, loves.

Throughout his two books of Luke and Acts, Luke delights in how Jesus embraces the outcast, the downtrodden, the abused and the dismissed. Those who have been pushed away are now brought near. This is just the sort of account one needs, especially when they know what it is to be an outcast, to be alienated from others. Hang on to this, because this is the kind of God you have. This is the kind of God who lives you.

Christ comes to bring peace between you and the Father.

We hear in Luke chapter two. An angel of the Lord sounds with a clarion voice:

Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy. Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.¹

This good news of joy should be something personal. The angel speaks first to a select group of shepherds and says that Christ is born "for you." That message is echoed by the heavenly host, who praise God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among mankind with whom He is pleased."

Peace... It seems so foreign so often these days. These days of peaceful preparation for the birth of the Christ child, hardly seem peaceful. There are presents to buy, pageants to attend, halls to be decked with boughs of holly. Add to that COVID-19 and all the other ails and ills that come with it, and here you are with another Advent service to attend. Busy, busy, busy.

¹ Luke 2:11

You can also be robbed of peace by the absence of some. There are family members with whom you once spent these days, but they have been alienated, by this plague of ill, or by ill words and deeds. Things said that should not have been said. Time does not always heal all wounds. Repentance does. Without it, the more time passes, the more entrenched one can become. While others gather with loved ones, the cold shoulder and silence toward you makes the absence of peace all that much more clearer.

The Lord is true to His Word. Jesus comes with peace for this season and every season. He brings real peace because we don't know what real peace is. We are the role of Jerusalem over whom Jesus weeps saying,

“Would that you had known on this day
the things that make for peace!”²

We don't know what makes for peace, but Jesus does. The message of the angelic host to the shepherds is echoed as Jesus enters into Jerusalem, as the crowds praise God, saying:

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!³

There will be peace because Jesus comes to Jerusalem, knowing the things that make for peace. It was for this very moment He was born. He was born to suffer and die, to be outcast, downtrodden, abused and the dismissed, so there might be peace. Peace and healing that comes through repentance, and a washing in His precious blood. Shed for you.

What a wonder that the birth of the Prince of Peace was proclaimed to shepherds. We, like so many things, romanticize our view of shepherds, those of that day did not. Shepherds were the outcasts, the downtrodden, the abused and the dismissed. They were even despised by some. Luke's Gospel shows the good news being proclaimed to the poor and the lowly.⁴ Whether it's the lowly shepherds or the poor in spirit⁵ who receive the good news, one thing is certain. This peace is for you. No matter how lowly you might be, Jesus knows the things that make for peace.

Rejoice in the peace He brings. At His birth, the heavenly host say, “On earth, peace among mankind with whom He is pleased.” A blessed connection with peace

2 **Luke 19:42**

3 **Luke 19:38**

4 **Luke 4:18; Luke 7:22**

5 **Matthew 5:3** – Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

coming to you, proclaimed by the angels of heaven. Peace has come to earth in this Child who is born unto you in the city of David. The angels tell us it is for you.

When Jesus enters Jerusalem, the praise goes the other direction. Now it is the people who say, “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.”⁶ Jesus brings peace between you and your Father in heaven. It is yours for the sake of Christ, who took on human flesh and was born to bring you peace, who died in that flesh to reconcile you to God, who rose in that flesh to proclaim peace to you, and who is coming again in flesh to carry the repentance and faithful home. You who are poor in spirit, you are at peace with the Father. The sin that alienated you from the Father has been overcome. You who had been the prodigal, now in Christ, have been received back by the Father who greets you back in joy without anger, without retribution, without scolding. That is beautiful. That is peace.

That peace is what comes to you in this Advent season. Peace that spills down to earth from Heaven. We are not waiting to be at peace with the Father. We live here in that peace. Jesus knows the things that make for peace. Jesus can bring peace between you and those from whom you have been alienated and outcast. His peace is for you. Jesus brings forgiveness. Forgiveness carried on the vehicle of repentance. Forgiveness carried to you. That is what makes for peace. Jesus brings peace. Amen.

**Proclaim God's Word,
Encourage one another in faith,
Witness to God's love and
Serve all people**



6 **Luke 19:38** – Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!