

WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE

THE BIBLE – We believe that EVERY word in the Bible is inspired by God, and therefore the whole Bible is the true, unalterable Word of God, clearly teaching the way of salvation. (2Ti. 3:15-17).

GOD – We believe that God is ONE (Dt. 6:4) and that He has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons (Mt. 3:13-17), the Father, our Creator and Preserver; the Son, Jesus, Who is both God and Man, and our only Saviour; the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts and enables us to live a God-pleasing life.

MAN – We believe that God created man with body and soul, in His image, but man of his own free will lost this image through sin. (Gn. 1:27; 2:7; 3.)

SIN – “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” (1Jn 3:4). There are two kinds of sin: original (inherited) sin (Ps. 51:5) and actual sin (sin in thought, word and deed) (Mt. 15:19). Man is subject to death and eternal damnation by reason of the guilt that attaches to sin.

REDEMPTION – We believe that God out of pure love and mercy redeemed mankind from sin through the all-sufficient sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus, and His resurrection shows that God was satisfied with the work of Christ. (Jn 3:16; 1Jn 2:2; Ro. 4:25).

FAITH – We believe that the sinner must personally receive the merits of Jesus for salvation and trust that, “Jesus died for me.” (Jn 17:3; Ja 1:21; Ps. 31:14).

THE CHURCH – We believe that the church, established by Christ is the whole number of believers in Christ, for only believers are members of the church. Jesus Christ is its one and only foundation (Ep. 2:19-22). The church is found wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution.

SACRAMENTS – We believe that Christ instituted two sacraments, and when Baptism is administered to infants and adults, according to the command of Christ, God offers His grace and forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16). In the Lord’s Supper communicants receive in, with and under the bread and wine also Christ’s body and blood. Believing communicants receive this for the forgiveness of sins (1Co. 11:24-25).

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST – We believe that Christ will return visibly to earth (Acts 1:11) on the Last Day (Mk. 13:32) to judge the world (Acts 10:42). The believers will go to heaven, to be with God forever (1Th. 4:13-18). The unbelievers will go to hell, eternally separated from God (Mt. 25:32, 46).

RESURRECTION – We believe that on the Last Day believers in Christ will rise from the dead, their souls reunited with their earthly bodies and glorified by Christ (Jn 14:19; 17:24).

The Nativity of our Lord: Christmas Day

December 25, 2022

INTROIT

Psalm 98:1-4; Antiphon: Isaiah 9:6

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things!
His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him.
The LORD has made known his salvation;
he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations.
He has remembered his steadfast love and faithfulness to the house of Israel.
All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth;
break forth into joyous song and sing praises!*

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *Almighty God, grant that the birth of Your only-begotten Son in the flesh may set us free from the bondage of sin; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.*

G Amen

GRADUAL

Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26 alt

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!
From the house of the Lord we bless you.*

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

P *Lord, in Your mercy,* **G** **hear our prayer.**

Isaiah 52:7-10 (ESV)

⁷ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." ⁸ The voice of your watchmen--they lift up their voice; together they sing for joy; for eye to eye they see the return of the LORD to Zion. ⁹ Break forth together into singing, you waste places of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰ The LORD has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Hebrews 1:1-7 (ESV)

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become as much superior to 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"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? ⁶ And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him." ⁷ Of the angels he says, "He makes his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire."

John 1:1-14 (ESV)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines 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 a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the

right to become children of God,
¹³ who were born, not of blood nor
of the will of the flesh nor of the
will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh
and dwelt among us, and we have
seen his glory, glory as of the only
Son from the Father, full of grace
and truth.

CHRISTMAS DAY

Isaiah 52:7–10

Hebrews 1:1–6 (7–12)

John 1:1–14 (15–18)

The Living and Life-Giving Word of God Dwells Among Us in the Flesh

The Lord sends out His ministers of the Gospel to make disciples “*of all the nations,*” so that “*all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*” The Lord has “*bared His holy arm*” in the incarnate Christ (Is. 52:7, 10). The child in the manger, born of the Mary, is the very Word of God, the only-begotten Son of the Father, “*whom He appointed the heir of all things, through whom He also created the world*” (Heb. 1:2). As “*all things were made through Him*” (John 1:3), so are all things redeemed and made new in Him. In his body of flesh and blood, we behold “*the radiance of the glory of God*” (Heb. 1:3), “*glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth*” (John 1:14). He dwells among us in peace, that we might have life and light and salvation in Him. For by His Word of the Gospel, we are born again as the children of God, bearing His name and sharing His eternal life.

Next Week’s Readings from God’s Word:

January 1: First Sunday of Christmas – Circumcision and Name of Jesus
Numbers 6:22-27; Psalm 8 (v.9); Galatians 3:23-29; Luke 2:21