

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 Name and Circumcision of Jesus

January 1, 2023

INTROIT

Psalm 40:6-8; Antiphon: Psalm 40:16

*May all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who love your salvation
say continually, "Great is the LORD!"*

*Sacrifice and offering you have not desired, but you have given me an open ear.
Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required.*

*Then I said, "Behold, I have come;
in the scroll of the book it is written of me:*

*I delight to do your will, O my God;
your law is within my heart."*

**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.**

*May all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you;
may those who love your salvation
say continually, "Great is the LORD!"*

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *Lord God,
You made Your beloved Son, our Saviour, subject to the Law
and caused Him to shed His blood on our behalf.
Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit
that our hearts may be made pure from all sins;
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

Hebrews 8:10; 10:17

*This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel
after those days, declares the Lord:*

*I will put my laws into their minds,
and write them on their hearts.*

I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

P *Lord, in Your mercy,*

G **hear our prayer.**

Numbers 6:22-27 (ESV)

²² The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ²³ “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,

²⁴ The LORD bless you and keep you;

²⁵ the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

²⁶ the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

²⁷ “So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.”

Galatians 4:4-7 (ESV)

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, ⁵ to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ⁶ And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Luke 2:21 (ESV)

²¹ And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Next Week's Readings from God's Word:

January 8: First Sunday after Epiphany – The Baptism of our Lord
Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29 (v.3); Romans 6:1-11; Matthew 3:13-17

THE FEAST OF THE CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS

Numbers 6:22–27

Galatians 3:23–29

Luke 2:21

The Lord Jesus is Circumcised to Fulfill the Law and Shed His Blood for Us

Circumcision, the covenant God made with Abraham and his Seed, sealed His promises and blessings in the flesh, but it also signified the burden of the Law. When the Lord Jesus came in the flesh to redeem His people, He subjected Himself to that Law in order to fulfill the Law and release all people from its bondage. *“He was called Jesus”* (Luke 2:21), because He came to save His people from their sins. Jesus first shed His blood on our behalf when *“He was circumcised”* (Luke 2:21), thus foreshadowing His shedding of blood as He sacrificed Himself upon the Cross. We are *“justified by faith”* in His blood (Gal. 3:24). Therefore, we *“are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise”* (Gal. 3:29), not by the circumcision of our flesh, but in the flesh and blood of Christ Jesus, the true Seed of Abraham. *“Baptized into Christ,”* we belong to Him and are clothed and covered by His righteousness (Gal. 3:27). Holy Baptism is the true circumcision made without hands, by which the Lord Jesus puts His Name on us and blesses us (Num. 6:22, 27).

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

Isaiah 61:10—62:3

Galatians 4:4–7

Luke 2:22–40

The Time Has Fully Come for Redemption and Purification through Jesus Christ, Our Lord

“When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son,” born of the Woman, *“to redeem those who were under the law”* (Gal. 4:4–5). Therefore, *“according to the Law of Moses,”* Mary and Joseph *“brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord”* (Luke 2:22). There He was received and taken up into the arms of Simeon, who was righteous and devout, *“waiting for the consolation of Israel”* (Luke 2:25). Simeon praised God and blessed the parents by confessing the Cross for which this Child was appointed. *“At that very hour,”* old and faithful Anna, who had watched, prayed and worshiped in the Temple for so long, came up and *“began to give thanks to God and to speak of Him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem”* (Luke 2:38). The Lord causes *“righteousness and praise to sprout up before all the nations”* (Is. 61:11). We also *“greatly rejoice in the Lord,”* because this Child Jesus has clothed us *“with the garments of salvation,”* covered us *“with the robe of righteousness,”* and called us *“by a new name”* (Is. 61:10; 62:2).