

Order of Service for 12-20-20 Recording

Prelude:

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Entrance Psalm:

P: Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors,

C: that the King of glory may come in.

P: The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof,

C: the world and those who dwell therein,

P: for He has founded it upon the seas

C: and established it upon the rivers.

P: Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD?

C: And who shall stand in His holy place?

P: He who has clean hands and a pure heart,

C: who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully.

P: He will receive blessing from the LORD

C: and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

P: Such is the generation of those who seek Him,

C: who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

P: Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors,

C: that the King of glory may come in.

P: Who is this King of glory?

C: The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle!

P: Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors,

C: that the King of glory may come in.

P: Who is this King of glory?

C: The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory!

**All: 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.**

P: Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors,

C: that the King of glory may come in.

Opening Hymn: *"Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"* - Hymn #341

Opening Sentences:

P: O Lord, open my lips.

C: And my mouth shall declare Your praise.

P: Make haste, O God, to deliver me.

C: Make haste to help me, O Lord.

ALL: 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.

Praise to You, O Christ. Alleluia!

P: Blessed be God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

C: O come, let us worship Him.

First Lesson: Luke 1:26-38

R: In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

P: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Hymn of Response: *"The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came"* - **Hymn #356**

Second Lesson: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

R: Now when the king lived in his house and the LORD had given him rest from all his surrounding enemies, the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells in a tent." And Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart, for the LORD is with you." But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan, "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD: Would you build Me a house to dwell in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent for My dwelling. In all places where I have moved with all the people of Israel, did I speak a word with any of the judges of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?"' Now, therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over My people Israel. And I have been with you wherever you went and have cut off all your enemies from before you. And I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. And violent men shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over My people Israel. And I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house... And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before Me. Your throne shall be established forever.'"

R: Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Third Lesson: Romans 16:25-27

R: Now to Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

R: Lord, have mercy on us. C: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Hymn: “*Jesus! Name of Wondrous Love*” - Hymn #900

Sermon: “*The Name of Jesus*” – **Luke 1:26-38**

The other day, as I was channel flipping on the car radio, I came across a story on NPR about the end of the hurricane season. They were talking about how many hurricanes there had been, and how unusual it was to have to use Greek letters once they ran out of the 21 names for the storms that year. The discussion also talked about why hurricanes were named in the first place. It had started in Australia, where a meteorologist started naming strong storms there until he was fired after he started naming storms after politicians. During World War 2, when American soldiers in the Pacific needed a way to talk about the strong storms there, they picked up that tradition, and named them using female names. Over the decades, male names were added, too. But why do we name hurricanes? Naming something makes it easier for the media to report on storms. Easier to talk about them on social media. Easier to hold our attention when the storm passes and it's time for relief efforts. As the report said, “Naming something-- even if it's this inanimate swirl of wind and warm waters-- just makes it feel real and more memorable.”

Names have power. “What’s in a name?” That was Juliet’s question in Shakespeare’s famous play, *Romeo and Juliet*. “That which we call a rose would by any other name smell as sweet.” But, in fact, there’s actually quite a lot in a name. Names are important, full of meaning. Sometimes they signify a family’s trade, like Smith or Baker. Some names tell you who someone’s ancestors were, like Johnson or Anderson.

Names have more power than just telling us about people. Names are also signs of love, of closeness. Studies have shown that patients want their doctors to call them by name, though only half of doctors do so. As a child, you all probably remember that once your parents called out your full name, you knew you were in big trouble! But the same name said in a different tone of voice, with a hug, meant something more important than you were in trouble. Being called by name means that you are loved.

The name given to Jesus has power, too. While we often focus on the reaction of Mary when we hear this story of the Annunciation, of the angel Gabriel appearing to Mary and telling her she will be the mother of the Son of God, we often just pass over that little detail. Amid all of the other information Mary receives from the angel is the name she is to give her miraculous child. Jesus.

Now for us that seems very auspicious, but it might not have to Mary. Jesus was a very common name in Israel at that time. One article claims that archeologists have unearthed the tombs of 71 men named Yeshua, or Jesus, from Israel around 2000 years ago. We find at least one other Jesus in the New Testament, Jesus Barabbas, the one who is released by Pilate instead of Jesus of Nazareth. It was a common name, though, because of the hope of the people of that time that God would come to save his people again, as he had throughout history.

It isn’t just Mary who receives instructions from an angel on how to name this miraculous child. Joseph is told to name the child Jesus, too, in his own angelic encounter. “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:20-21).

So what does this name Jesus mean? Jesus is the Greek and Latin form of the Hebrew name Joshua, which means “the Lord saves.” Even before Jesus’ conception God had a plan for Jesus to be our Savior and rescue us from sin. Jesus’ name says who he is and what he came to do: Jesus saves.

Because Jesus is God, he is able to forgive our sins. And because Jesus is fully human, he was able to bear the punishment for our sins in his body. That is why he came, to “save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21), to save us from our sins.

Jesus is the most wonderful name in the whole world. We read in the book of Hebrews that Jesus is “the name above all names” (Hebrews 1:4). Peter appearing before the Sanhedrin preached that Jesus is the only “name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). Yet what is so special his name? Why should we care what we call him? Would it make any difference if his name were Steve or Frank? What’s so special about the name Jesus?

Quite a lot, actually! In the ancient world, a name was more than just something you called somebody. Names meant something. Names captured the essence of a person: their character, their reputation, the circumstances of their birth, and their parents’ hopes and dreams for their future. Names mattered because a man and his name were one and the same. The first man is called Adam because he is made out of the earth, the adamah. The baby who is drawn out of the Nile River is named Moses because of those circumstances. Daniel is renamed Belteshazzar when he is in Babylon, because he needs a name that praises the Babylonian gods, not the God of the Israelites.

So it is with Jesus. Jesus is our Lord and Savior, the one who saves. Yet a Savior must save you from something or someone. From what does Jesus save us? According to Martin Luther’s Small Catechism, Jesus saves us from “sin, death, and the power of the devil” That’s why the angel in Joseph’s dream told him to name Mary’s son Jesus, “for he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

Joseph and Mary followed the instructions of the angel and named their child Jesus, because he would save people from their sins. Jesus wasn’t just the name he received from his earthly parents. It was the name he received from His heavenly Father.

We, too, have received a name from our heavenly Father. In Baptism, God called you by name, added you into his family. The name of Jesus was placed on you. And because you have been called by name, because you have been chosen by God to be his beloved child, God promises that He will never let you go. God promises that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:38-39).

Jesus came to save you from your sins. Someday he will come again to judge the living and the dead. But right now, as we look into the manger with Mary and Joseph, we see that Jesus comes with salvation. The Lord saves. What a wonderful promise. What a wonderful name.

Responsive Reading on the Song of Mary: Luke 1:46-55:

P: "And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,"

C: "Jesus said, 'In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.'" (Matthew 5:16)

P: "and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,"

C: "Jesus said, 'When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.'" (John 16:21)

P: "for He has looked on the humble estate of His servant."

C: "Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'" (1 Peter 5:5)

P: "For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;"

C: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." (Romans 4:7-8)

P: "for He who is mighty has done great things for me,"

C: "But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'" (Matthew 19:26)

P: "and holy is His name."

C: "Hallowed be Thy name." (Matthew 6:9)

P: "And His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation."

C: "God made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the people of Israel." (Psalm 103:17)

P: "He has shown strength with His arm;"

C: "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." (Psalm 98:1)

P: "He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;"

C: "Behold, all who are incensed against you, Israel, shall be put to shame and confounded; those who strive against you shall be as nothing and shall perish." (Isaiah 41:11)

P: "He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;"

C: "Jesus said, 'For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.'" (Luke 18:14)

P: "He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty."

P: "He has helped His servant Israel,"

C: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1)

P: "in remembrance of His mercy,"

C: "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is God's steadfast mercy toward those who fear Him." (Psalm 103:11)

P: "as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham"

C: "God said to Abraham, 'I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'" (Genesis 12:3)

P: "and to his offspring forever."

C: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful." (Hebrews 10:23)

Magnificat (Song of Mary) Hymn: *"Tell Out, My Soul, the Greatness of the Lord"* - **Hymn #935**

Response: All: Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Prayer of the Church: (Pastor)

Lord's Prayer:

Prayer of the Day:

P: Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Closing Prayer:

P: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, You have safely brought us to the beginning of this day. Defend us in the same way with Your mighty power and grant that this day we fall into no sin, neither run into any kind of danger, but that all our doings, being ordered by Your governance, may be righteous in Your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and rules with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing:

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. C: Amen.

Closing Hymn: *"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus"* - **Hymn #338**

Postlude: