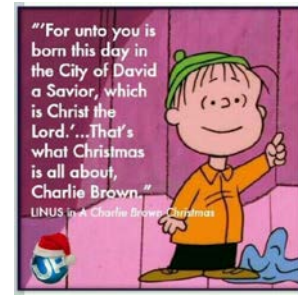


**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church**  
**Christmas Eve December 24, 2017**  
**Trinity St. Luke Lutheran Grade School Service**  
**Pastor Anthony E. Schultz**  
**Luke 2:8-11 King James Version**



*<sup>8</sup> And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

Children of our Heavenly Father, precious in His sight for Jesus' sake:

My Mom used to say, "If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride!" If I could wish anything and it would happen—I would wish that we could step into the Star Trek *Enterprise* transporter and be beamed to the hills around Bethlehem. It's not very cold around Bethlehem this time of year. People from Wisconsin would do fine wearing sweatshirts! This is the time when lambs are born by Bethlehem. If you pay a shepherd \$1 he will let you pick up one of his lambs and you can take a selfie. The sheep have black faces. Their wool is oily and greasy. Little twigs and parts of a leaf—and little lamb raisins get stuck in their wool. Truth be told they are kind of dirty and smelly. I have told you before—that sheep aren't very bright either. When the shepherd finds them some nice green grass and maybe even some sweet clover to eat—they would by nature—eat the grass and clover to the very nubs—all of it—effectively killing it. And so the shepherd has with every clump of sheep at least one goat. Sheep and goats have some things in common—but truth be told—they are in many ways quite different. The goats like to keep moving—and so they do. Out of the corner of their eye the sheep see legs—little black legs going by and they think, "We are moving! We are moving!" And so the sheep move too—sparing the grass and clover!

**And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.** Through the night—the sheep are in danger. In Bible times—sheep were in danger from wolves, danger from bears, danger from lions! If you are a hired worker—who doesn't really care about the sheep—if you see the wolf coming—you run away! Save yourself! Run for your life! The wolf scatters the flock and picks off a tender order of lamb chops! **Jesus—the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep!** That's how much Jesus loves you. He loves you enough to die for you! Samson fought with a lion—and literally tore the lion into pieces. David fought with a lion and killed it. David fought with a bear and killed it. David fought with the warrior giant Goliath—and by the power of the LORD took Goliath down, too! Shepherds who know that the LORD is with them—are not afraid!

**<sup>9</sup> And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.** *Sore afraid!* Do you know what that means? Do you know what that feels like—**sore afraid?** I have on my book shelf the Worst Case Scenario Survival Handbook: Holidays edition. The cover claims to teach you how to \*fend off a charging Reindeer \*evade a stampede of shoppers \*survive a runaway sled \* repurpose a fruitcake and much more. And that's all well and good. What to do *if—heaven forbid* your Christmas tree should catch fire is something I think about for 3 week every year. How do you open champagne without putting some one's eye out with the cork—how to deal with meddling relatives—how to treat food poisoning from bad egg nog and what to do if you

realize you are falling off your ladder – when putting Christmas lights around your garage roof peak! The problem is – the first page of the book is a **warning** – a *disclaimer* that says “When a life is imperiled or a dire situations is at hand, safe alternatives *may not exist* – and elves are not always around to help out. Instead of trusting my little book – they *insist* – you consult an expert to find out what you should do! A person would be **sore afraid** – all the time – were it not for the message the angels told the shepherds... **Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.** <sup>11</sup> **For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.**

**Μὴ φοβεῖσθε! Stop being afraid!** Don't be afraid anymore! You have nothing to fear! Fear...is almost the universal reaction to angels – messengers sent by our Heavenly Father to tell us stuff. People are sore afraid of angels – because angels are holy – set apart to serve their Heavenly Father – they are without sin – flawless – never saying or thinking or doing anything – *anything* wrong! They brought good news to shepherds. Again – we live in a world where lots of people judge other people by how much money they have! Professional football players – making more than \$24 million for throwing a pig skin inflated to the proper psi to someone else who breaks an invisible plane with said pig skin. You can be a guy with really long hair and massive biceps – and run and tackle quarterbacks before they throw the ball--or tackle guys carrying the pigskin toward that invisible plane – and knock the ball loose and quickly pick it up – and run the opposite direction and break the opposite invisible plane and get paid in excess of \$15 million a season! It is perhaps tempting to judge people by how much education they have so they can get a job that pays lots and lots of money so they can buy lots and lots of *things and stuff* – so much stuff that there isn't room enough under the Christmas tree to hold it all.. And yet again this Christmas we were reminded in an undeniable way that people are very breakable! You can be working one moment and fall down – and get back up in Heaven! The worth of a person has absolutely nothing to do with their ability to buy a big new truck with a huge ribbon on top – a truck that costs almost \$90,000. Our worth is found in the Christchild born to redeem us!

**Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.** A little baby boy was born in a stable – probably much more like a cave than a Wisconsin dairy barn – a place with hay and straw. The little baby boy was wrapped in swaddling clothes. Little strips of cloth wrapped around him to keep him safe and warm and protected. This little baby looked like any newborn Jewish baby. The unique aspect – he was sleeping in a feed box. This little baby Jesus was born to save his people from all their sins! I read about a guy named Roberto Munguia. He was born in Torrance, CA – where my uncle – the literal *rocket scientist* lives. Roberto Munguia is about 1 inch taller than I am and weighs about 5 lbs less than I do. He has 10 aliases and is the first name on the FBI's 10 most wanted list. Roberto is wanted for unlawful flight to avoid prosecution – murder with a deadly weapon, first degree kidnapping with a deadly weapon and much more. His victim was his own wife! The most remarkable thing about Roberto Munguia – FBI's most wanted – is the fact his first name is Jesus! There is a \$100,000 reward if you have any information that would help the FBI. The fact is – Jesus in Heaven knows *Jesus Roberto* – here on earth. Jesus – the Christ child was born to die on the  $\dagger$  for Jesus Roberto's sins and for the sins of we who are here in Church on Christmas Eve – all tempted to think like the Pharisees – I'm thankful that I am not like other men – even as this criminal. The truth is we all have sinned and deserve nothing but God's eternal wrath. It is only by grace alone that we know Jesus was born to save us. **Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior – which is Christ the Lord!"** *That's what Christmas is all about, Charlie Brown!*

