

**Saint Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz
TSL Children's Christmas eve service
December 24, 2013 Luke 2:10-12 KJV**



¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

The Savior Is Born For You!

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

You can tell it's Christmas time – if you just listen to the radio. I love to listen to Snoopy and the Red Baron – and “Merry Christmas, *Mein Freund!*” You can sit in the Piggly Wiggle parking lot listening to the Muppets sing – the 12 days of Christmas – Miss Piggy singing, “Five, golden rings – badump, bump!” You can listen to Band-aid's “Do they know it's Christmas?” It was a song written by a guy named Bob – a frantic effort to send sacks of flour to people who were literally starving to death in Ethiopia. It was a literally 16” record recorded in England – to save people in Northern Africa. You can tell it's Christmas time when they play Dan Fogelberg singing about drinking a beer in a car with his high school sweet heart. Or John Lennon singing, “Imagine there's no heaven – it's easy if you try. No hell below us – above us only sky – nothing to kill or die for – and no religion too!” Tonight we are going to hear Christmas songs – Christmas Carols – Christmas songs about the Christ child – the eternal Son of God – the Word made flesh – our Savior and Redeemer. Tonight we hear essential good news – the Savior is born for you and for me!

Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord... Do you ever stop and wonder what kind of Christmas those people are having who won the Mega Millions Lottery the other day? What was it – some 636 million dollars? A little grandma from Georgia named Ira – who bought one ticket using birthdays for numbers and lucky #7 was one of 2 winners. So how does that work? I think taxes take half – you are down to 318 and half of that because there are two winners – you are down to \$159 million dollars. Only \$159 million? They say some 70% of winners--within 5 years of winning – have nothing left – of all that money – *nothing*. There are all sorts of pain and grief and sadness. One big winner said not long after winning – it wasn't the best day ever – it was the worst. That all he wanted now – was his life back. He wanted to go back to before he won – before everything and I mean everything was ruined! The secret is contentment – to be joyful and thankful with who you are and what you have! Be content with all that Jesus has given you! Heaven forbid – but if there was a terrible house fire – if the Christmas tree caught fire – and burned up – and all your toys and presents and smart phones and pads and tablets and x-boxes and ugly Christmas sweaters were all gone – would that really be so bad? Do we not already have closets full of clothes? They say the average person only wears about 30% of your clothes – about 30%--the same pants you like – the same shirts – the same ties – the same shoes – the ones we feel comfortable in. The rest just hangs on the hangers – until we do Spring cleaning and give them to Twice Is Nice and Bethesda Thrift! More things? More stuff? We have so much stuff already! All we really need is Jesus!

Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord... About this time of year you hear people say Keep Christ in Christmas and you hear about the war against

Christmas. And I get that. But the fact is – you can't throw Jesus out of Christmas. You can't kick the Christ-child out of Christmas – you can't. I was shopping again the other day – and the check out lady said, "Happy holidays!" And I said, "Blessed Christmas to you. Baby Jesus is born!" Again she said, "Happy holidays!" I said, "It will be happy no matter what – because Christ the Savior is born!" You can say that – firmly and clearly. You can say it – so people standing near you will hear it. There's precedent for that, too. Remember the Shepherds who came with haste to see the Christ-child? They returned glorifying and praising God for all that they had seen and heard. They told everyone they met – that they had seen the Messiah – promised for literally thousands of years – and now born in a stable! You can literally do that – the first weekend in December – with the live Nativity. You can be one of the shepherds – who tell people sitting on park benches – warmed by blankets and burning firewood – by bales of hay – by the cow and the sheep and the goat. You can literally call out to friends and neighbors and complete strangers – the Christ-child is born to take away all our sins! Jesus came to give us the gift of eternal life!

Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord... Keep Christ in Christmas? There was a grade school on Long Island in New York. They wanted to sing "Silent Night!" But they didn't want to sing about baby Jesus – so they switched the words around to sing about a quiet night – all soft and still – covered with snow! People found out and there was a great uproar! You can't sing "Silent Night! Holy Night!" – without baby Jesus. What's holy about it? All is calm – all is bright – round yon Virgin, Mother and Child – holy Infant – so tender and mild. Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born!" That school in Long Island is almost are more famous than anybody this year – and they will be singing the right words – singing Christ the Savior is born! Christ the Savior is born! Just the opposite of what they had planned! Funny how that works out – and so!

Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour which is Christ the Lord... I heard the other day that the average human ♥ beats some 2 billion 500 million times. As they say – that's hard to wrap your head around – 2 billion 500 million times. Most of the time you don't even realize your heart is beating – and so? And then some times it's beating so hard people say – I thought it was going to break right out of my chest. Sometimes it aches – when we are sad – the fact that it's Christmas and everyone seems so happy and our ♥ has a part missing because someone we love is gone to Heaven and we miss them. The precious good news is this – because the Christ child was born – Jesus grew up to die on the cross to take away all our sins. Christmas is here. April 20th will be Easter. And soon – perhaps very soon – we will all be home forever in Heaven. Then we like the shepherds will hear the angels sing, "Glory to God in the highest!" God bless us everyone! Amen.

To God alone all glory!

Rev. Anthony E. Schultz