

Matthew 1  
Son of Mary  
Christmas Eve

December 24, 2019  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Pastor Hartwig

Grace, mercy, and peace from God, our Heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen! Dear brothers and sisters in Christ –

**[Introduction]**

Hallmark wants to tell you the story of Christmas.

“It’s about the unexpected love waiting for you!”

Hollywood wants to tell you the story of Christmas.

“It’s about the warm feeling inside of you!”

Target, Walmart, and Best Buy wants to tell you the story of Christmas.

“It’s about giving gifts!”

Yet, Matthew wants to tell you the real story of Christmas!

It’s all about two names—Jesus and Emmanuel

Matthew says, ***“This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit.”*** (1:18)

Mary conceives Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

At first Joseph is hesitant to believe it. AND REALLY, can we blame him?

So God sends an angel— who talks to Joseph in a dream.

And Joseph believes the unbelievable.

Joseph is convinced. His anxiety is gone.

Joseph chooses to trust God and love Mary.

So, the two now live together and share a home.

And This will most certainly raise some eyebrows.

Busybodies will assume that Joseph and Mary conceived the child during their engagement instead of waiting to be married.

“What nerve! Can you believe these two!”

Nazareth was a very small town—only 2,000 people—  
so gossip would travel fast.

[*Jesus is Savior*]

Matthew continues his story, “*She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins*” (Mt 1:21).

“Jesus” is the English form of the Hebrew name, “Joshua.”

It means “*Yahweh (the LORD) saves.*”

The child’s name is Joshua—or Jesus—because this Son  
will save his people from their sins.

Jesus will forgive all sin—that is sure and certain!

And we need it! Oh Boy, do we need it!

We are people who need to be saved from our sins.

That’s because—contrary to what most of us think most of the time—  
we are not superheroes. We cannot save ourselves.

His name is Jesus, “*because he will save his people from their sins.*”

And we need to be saved.

Our biggest problem is ourselves, and so we need a Savior.

We need a Savior to rescue us from our sins.

If we come to Jesus for any other reason—we will be disappointed.

Jesus, the Son of Mary, is our Savior.

Jesus isn’t another prophet;  
another rabbi;  
another wonder-worker.

Jesus was THE ONLY ONE they had been waiting for—

to complete God’s story of salvation;

to deliver his people from exile;

to establish God’s reign and rule;

to heal the sick,

give sight to the blind,

freedom to the prisoners and

proclaim Good News to the poor;

to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Jesus is the Savior

[*God with Us*]

Matthew then continues the real story...

***“All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet [Is 7:14]: ‘The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Emmanuel’—which means, ‘God with us’”*** (Mt 1:22–23).

Jesus is the Savior, and more than that, he is God with us!

“God with us” is what Matthew’s Gospel is all about.

1. It appears here, in the beginning.
2. Then in the middle,  
***“Where two or three gather in my name, there I am in their midst”*** (Mt 18:20).
3. And then in Matthew’s last verse. Jesus says in Matthew 28:20,  
***“I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”***

Jesus, the Son of Mary, is not only our Savior from sin.

Jesus, the Son of Mary, is Emmanuel God with us—up close and personal.

Emmanuel is also God in us and God behind us and

Emmanuel is God going before us.

Jesus is God—up close and personal—entering our muck and mire,  
our chaos and our deep confusion.

We see it most profoundly— on the day of deepest darkness.

On that day we all grabbed hold of Emmanuel,  
nailed him to a cross and cried out, “Crucify Him!”

Except what we meant was...

“Leave us alone! Leave us alone!”

To this day, our every sin demands just that—for us to be left alone  
by God, forever.

Yet, on the other side of Good Friday, Emmanuel lives!

There was the cradle and there was the cross.

But, conquering death, Emmanuel now wears the crown.

Jesus, God with us, completes our story!

Jesus fulfilled the commandments, and Jesus reversed the curse.

Jesus has come to crush the serpent's head;  
be our Great High Priest;  
be Isaiah's Suffering Servant;  
Jeremiah's Righteous Branch;  
Daniel's Son of Man;  
Amos's Roaring Lion;  
Haggai's Desire of all the nations;  
Zechariah's King riding on a donkey; and  
Malachi's Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings.

Jesus is God predicted through the prophets and  
prepared for through John the Baptist.

**[Conclusion]**

Jesus, the Son of Mary, our Savior and our Emmanuel  
isn't a figment of our imagination  
or the projection of our own desires.

Jesus is the Lord.

Jesus is the Savior of the world, and the substitute for all our sin.

Jesus is more loving,  
more holy, and  
more wonderfully merciful than we ever thought possible.

Every last bit of God's forgiveness, grace and love  
are packaged and delivered to us in two marvelous Hebrew names  
—Jesus and Emmanuel.

They complete your life, your story,  
and these names are his Christmas gifts for you, forevermore!

In these names you have the real story of Christ. Jesus and Emmanuel.  
The Son of Mary. Amen.

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As followers of Christ, "Keep loving one another earnestly  
And show hospitality to one another without grumbling." AMEN! (1 Pt 4:8-9)

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