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St. Paul's Lutheran Church

2100 16th Street SW

Austin, MN 55912-1749

Pastor Ted Barthels

Sermon preached on

December 19, 2021

Sunday School Program Pastoral Address

4th Sunday in Advent

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon Text: Luke 2:10-11

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. " (NKJV)

This is the Word of God.

Sanctify us, oh Lord, through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

In Christ Jesus, the Babe of Bethlehem, dear fellow Redeemed:

INTRO: Christmas messages

There are many varied Christmas messages. Most of them come to us from the world, and the ones from the world focus on the ideals and virtues of mankind. Using many of the same words or expressions that we are accustomed to use in expressing our faith, they actually direct us away from the central meaning of Christmas to false hopes and dreams built upon the flawed ideas of mankind regarding peace, hope, love, and charity.

This morning these children of our congregation are going to lead us back to the source of truth and share that truth with us that comes from the faith in their hearts. The program theme the children are presenting for our edification is "*What Child Is This?*" The Child is of course Jesus, the Babe of Bethlehem. It is after all

His birthday we are celebrating this week. But again, to know and appreciate the true meaning of Christmas we need to know the truth about that question posed by the Christmas carol, and answered by the Scriptures these children are about to present. --

THEME: What Child Is this?

I read a couple of the verses of the angel's words that we might be focused in on the wonders of the truth to which these children will testify in the coming minutes. May the Holy Spirit open our hearts that we may know this Jesus, the Babe of Bethlehem for who He really is.

He is --

I. A Savior!

There was born to **you** a Savior. That is what we celebrate. The birth of OUR Savior. Why would we need a Savior? To save us from our sin. The children will remind us of this need and how it is fulfilled in Jesus. You see, not just anyone could save us from sin. Only Jesus the child of Mary and the Son of God could do this. The angel proclaimed the truth to the shepherds: this is Christ, the Lord!

Christ means the Anointed One. It means that Jesus wasn't a self-appointed Savior, but the One chosen by God, promised by God throughout the Old Testament Scriptures some of which we will hear again today from the children. Jesus was then sent by God when He sent His only begotten Son to be born of a virgin, to begin His earthly sojourn in a stable with a manger as His first bed.

He is true God from all eternity who came down to earth to be our brother so that He could sacrifice His life to save our lives, to secure eternal life for us. The Son of God, through whom all things were made, became a part of His creation for one purpose, to fulfill the covenant of salvation God made with a fallen mankind, to deliver us from death and hell.

What Child Is This ? The one who --

II. Replaces Great Fear with Good News of Great Joy

“Do not be afraid!” was the first thing the angel said to the shepherds, for when the glory of the Lord shone around them, they were very much afraid. But the angel shared with them that good news that dispels all fear, even in the presence of the glory of the Lord! And it is all about who this Child is, for this is the fulfillment of all our hopes for true peace and eternal life with God. **Jesus our Savior is born!** Listen as the children now open for you the blessed message of this good news for you and for all the world!

AMEN.