

Sermon
Rev. Lang Yang

“Celebrate Christmas All Year Long”

First Sunday after Christmas
Our Savior Lutheran Church, Lansing, MI
12-29-19

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

John 1:14, “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*” (ESV) This is the word of God. (Cross-reference – Psalm 85:9, Ezekiel 37:27, Luke 9:32, John 1:1, 17; 2:11; 8:32; 14:6, 9; 17:22; 18:37, Galatians 4:4, Philippians 2:7, Hebrews 2:14, 2 Peters 1:16, 1 John 1:1; 4:2, 2 John 1:7, Revelation 19:13)

Illustration “Is Christmas Over?”

(Show music box and empty Christmas tree)



Dear friend in Christ, have you notice that at midnight 12:01 a.m. after Christmas, most of the radio stations went back to their regular programming of contemporary, popular music. The very minute Christmas was over, the station stopped playing Christmas music. It is as, no more Christmas. If you pay close attention to some of the shops in the area or the mall, some of the stores already have taken down all their decorations. All the lights, trees,

greenery and music were gone. It made you wonder, did someone coming at midnight to take everything down as if it were some disgrace to keep celebrating Christmas after Christmas Day had ended.

(Show Peace on earth – goodwill toward men)

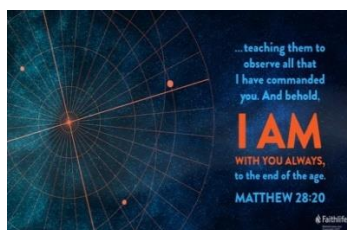
I. The illustration I just gave you illustrates the difference how this world celebrates Christmas.



For this world, Christmas is a 30th-day shopping spree that must end precisely at midnight, December 26th. All the talk about “Peace on earth, goodwill to men,” is quickly forgotten, and it’s back to reality. So how is the Christian celebrate Christmas? (Show celebrate Christmas all year)

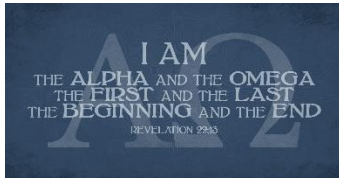


For Christians, however, it’s different, or at least it’s supposed to be. Christmas, for us, is primarily a celebration of Christ’s birth. This celebration doesn’t end at the close of Christmas day. Peace on earth, goodwill to men is not forgotten; rather, they become a way of life. And Christ himself is the reality that lives with us the rest of the year. As Christians, we celebrate Christmas all year long. (Show Matthew 28:20)



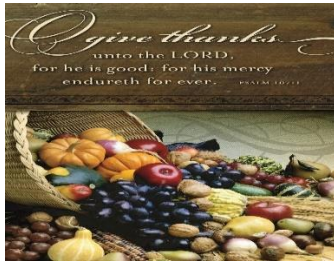
At first, that may sound strange. After all, don’t we take down our trees and decorations and stop singing Christmas carols? Doesn’t life move on to other things and other Christian holidays? Yes! It does, but there’s a difference. As Christians, we keep celebrating the gift of a Savior throughout the New Year. This gift is not just a one-day thing that’s used up and gone like a piece of Christmas candy. Christmas lasts because

Christ lasts. Jesus promises his disciples, "...I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20) [\(Show Alpha and Omega\)](#)



In the book of Revelation, he declared, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." (Revelation 21:6) Before he was born, the prophet Micah said that his origin was from ancient times. Christmas lasts more than just a day because Himself is eternal, and he lives with us throughout the year.

II. Because Christ is eternal, the forgiveness and mercy he brings are eternal as well. We enjoy his grace all year long. By nature, we are sinful in God's eyes. As we look back on 2019, we can easily see our failures and shortcomings. [\(Show Psalm 107:1\)](#)



We know we deserve God's condemnation and punishment. But Christ brings us the eternal mercy of God, a supply of forgiveness that can never be exhausted. King David, one of Jesus' ancestors, understood the everlasting mercy of the Messiah. He said, "Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!" (Psalm 107:1) We celebrate Christmas all year long because we know that our sins are forgiven all year long. [\(Show birth of Jesus and Christ on the Cross\)](#)



Christ is eternal, and he also brings us eternal life. We don't like to think about, but our Christmases are number. Some of us will not be here to celebrate Christmas next year or in a couple of years. But the eternal Son of God promises eternal Christmas celebrations for those who receive him as their Savior. That tiny infant, who would one day be crucified to take away our sins, would also conquer death by His resurrection from the dead. Those who won't celebrate Christmas here next year will celebrate with Christ himself. [\(Show shepherd and Magi worship Jesus\)](#)



How else do we celebrate Christmas all year long? We have Christmas every day because we worship Jesus. Our Gospel lesson writes, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God." (John 1:1-2) He is our God, and what made us not want to worship Him? Too many Christians have too many excuses for not worshipping Jesus. When Jesus was born, the shepherd and the Magi came to worship Jesus. [\(Show Shepherd\)](#)



Luke writes what the shepherd said after the angel visits them. He writes, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." (Luke 2:15) "Let us go" they said, and Luke writes that they went with haste; they went quickly. [\(Show shepherd\)](#)



Like the shepherd, we could find excuses for not worshipping Christ. "It's too early to go to church. It's too late to go to church. It's too hot. It's too cold. We have much work to do." But instead, we should have the attitude of the shepherds – "Let us go." I imagine that you have worn some of those clothes today that you have received for Christmas. When you receive a gift, you want to make use of it. That's the way it is with Christ, God's gift to us. We can enjoy him all year round by coming to worship him.

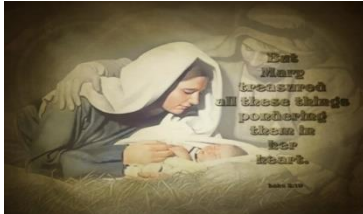
Christ also lasts all year long because of the changes Christmas brings. (Show Luke 2:20)



The shepherds praised God for Jesus. Luke 2:20

They shepherd went to Bethlehem and saw the Messiah with their own eyes. What do you think they said the next day? “Well, Christmas is over. It’s time to forget about it until next year.” Of course not! Christmas changed their lives. How could they ever forget what they were so privileged to see and hear? *“The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.”* (Luke 2:20)

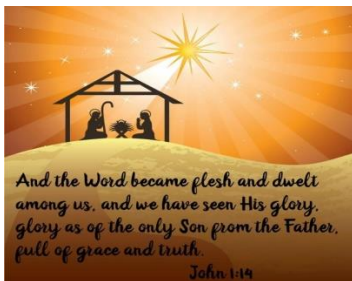
III. It was the same way with Mary, the mother of Jesus. (Show Luke 2:19)



Luke writes, *“Mary treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart.”* (Luke 2:19) She treasured the message of the angel Gabriel, the visit from the shepherd, and later, the wise men from the east. The things she heard and saw made her realize that she was blessed among women. Christmas change her. Her life would be different from now on because the Son she also bore her Savior.

Christmas also changes us as well. How could we hear how God gave His only Son to us at Christmas, and not be changed? How could we know that God looked upon us not in anger but with mercy, and sent His Son to take away our sins – how could that not change us? And this change that Christ brings is lasting, something that we can daily treasure in our hearts, knowing that we have a Savior.

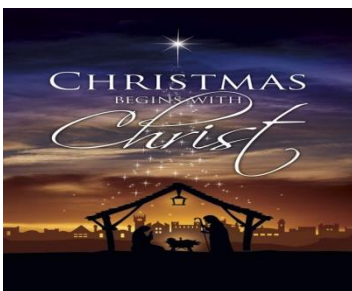
The Apostle John writes, *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”* (John 1:14). (Show John 1:14)



Jesus Christ, our Lord, and Savior came in the flesh to save the world. We celebrate Christmas all year long by proclaiming what God has done for us. After Christmas, our children could not wait to tell their friends about the great gift they got. Like the shepherd, they can’t wait to tell others about the Savior. Luke writes, *“And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.”* (Luke 2:17-18).

After hearing about and seeing this great gift, they went out and told others. Even after they returned to their homes and fields, they still glorified and praised God for the Christ-child. For the shepherds, Christmas didn’t end in Bethlehem. That was only the beginning.

(Show Christmas begins with Christ)



Some of you probably took down the Christmas tree, packed away the decorations, and maybe finish off the last of the cookies and candy. But remember that the real substance of Christ, the birth of Jesus – remains. Christmas for us should also be the beginning. We are just a few days before the new year. The love and joy and peace that Christmas brings is a high starting point for the days to come. Like the shepherds, we can also speak of the Christ-child and proclaim the wonders of his love. As the Apostle John writes, *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among*

us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.” Every time we speak of Christ, Christmas comes again and again because it begins with Christ. This is why we celebrate Christmas all year long. Amen.

May the peace of God, which passed all understanding, keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Children Message

Christmas According to Kids

Theme: **How Kids explain of the Christmas story**

Object: **None**

Scripture: **John 1:14**, “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.*” (ESV)

Good morning children! Did all of you have a wonderful Christmas? (*Let them answer*). What kinds of gifts did you receive? (*Let them answer*). Thank you for sharing. Our lesson today is that Jesus came and live among us over 2000 years ago. We celebrate Christmas because Jesus was born, He came in a flesh so that He can save us.

Let us watch a video “Christmas According to Kids.”



Christmas According to Kids - Southland Christian Church - YouTube 3.15 Min.wmv

We continue to celebrate Christmas all year long because each time we say the name Jesus, we celebrate Christmas all over again.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank you for coming to the world to save us. We celebrate Your name forever and ever. In Jesus' name, Amen!

Source:
Christmas According to Kids – Southland Christian Church
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=suowe2czxcA>