

January 1 – The Name of Jesus

Word of God

Numbers 6:22–27: The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. So shall they put My name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.”

Psalm 8: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth! You have set Your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babies and infants, You have established strength because of Your foes, to still the enemy and the avenger. When I look at Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him? Yet You have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is Your name in all the earth!

Galatians 3:23–29: Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

Luke 2:21: And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, He was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

Reflection in the Field

On this day, the church pauses to behold a single, sacred act—the naming of the Christ Child. It is a moment of obedience, yet also of revelation. The name Jesus means “The Lord saves,” and with it, the fullness of God’s promise is spoken into time. In His name, mercy takes on flesh; salvation becomes personal. The blessing that once echoed through the voice of Aaron now rests in the infant whose breath blesses the world.

In the stable light of the New Year, this naming reminds us that healing begins in identity. Horses recognize the call of their name; it centers them, steadies their attention, and builds trust with the one who speaks.

Likewise, when God names us as His own in baptism, He calls us into calm assurance—no longer strangers or slaves, but children known and loved. To bear the name of Jesus is to carry His healing presence wherever we go.

His name is more than a title; it is the heart of His mission. Through it, sins are forgiven, wounds are mended, and hearts are restored. The world may rush to begin again, but the Church kneels first—to receive the blessing of the Lord’s face turned toward us. In His name, peace settles the spirit, and grace flows quietly into a new year made holy by His love.

Luther Quote

“The name of Jesus is sweet and comforting to those who believe. For in this name we see and possess our salvation. This name is not given for ornament or sound, but for power and comfort; it is the heart of faith and the voice of grace. Whoever calls on this name calls upon a Savior who is present, who heals, who blesses, and who gives peace.”

— Martin Luther, Sermon for the Circumcision and the Name of Jesus (1523, WA 10/1.1:478–482)

Reflection Prompts

How does knowing that God has placed His name upon you bring peace or assurance as you begin a new year?

In what ways do you carry the presence of Christ into your daily interactions—at home, at work, or beside the horse?

What blessings from the past year remind you that His grace has truly “kept” you?

How might you speak or act in the power of Jesus’ name to bring healing to another this week?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, Your name is our hope and our healing. You are the blessing spoken over us, the peace that steadies our hearts, and the grace that makes all things new. As the year unfolds, teach us to walk in Your name—to speak it with reverence, to live it with compassion, and to rest in its saving power. Let Your face shine upon us and give us peace.

Amen.

*The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you;
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.
(Numbers 6:24-26)*