

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit

With the Lord's *Name* comes the Lord's blessing.

Where the *Name* goes, He goes.

“At every place where I cause My *Name* to be remembered, there I will come to you and bless you” (Exod 20:24).

“Saying back to Him what He has said to us, we repeat what is most true and sure.

Most true and sure is His *Name*,

which He put upon us with the water of our Baptism.

We are His.

This we acknowledge at the beginning of the Divine Service.

Where His *Name* is, there is He.”¹

What is this *Name* that so wondrously works His blessing?

What's this *Name* that delivers the promise of God Himself?

What's this *Name* that God ordered His priests to speak and put upon His people?

It's none other than the *Name* of God Himself—

Yahweh,

Father, Son, Holy Spirit,

Jesus.

That's how the Scriptures give His *Name*.

From the beginning of our service to the end, we're surrounded and encompassed by the *Name*.

The Divine Service begins:

“In the *Name* of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

To which you all respond:

“Amen”—that is, “Yes, yes, it shall be so!”

Do make sure you always say your “Amen” to the *Name*.

Say your “Amen” every time you hear it!

Whether it's at the beginning of the service or at its end,

at the beginning of the sermon or its end,

at the beginning of the day, or its end—

always say “Amen” to the *Name*;

because by saying “Amen” you're saying,

“Yes, that's my God and I'm His child—

I bear His *Name* and He bears me.”

When you say your “Amen” to His *Name*

you're also saying “Amen” to all that His name offers and bestows upon you.

¹ “Introduction” to *Lutheran Worship*, 6.

As we look at our Old Testament reading for today, we come across a familiar text—
it's what the Church now calls "The Aaronic Benediction,"
which simply means the blessing that Aaron gave.

Aaron, as you know, was the first High Priest—
the one given authority to bless and sacrifice and lead the Divine Service of Israel.

Aaron was told,

**"Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,
Yahweh bless you and keep you;
Yahweh make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
Yahweh lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace."** (Num 6:23-26)

We get so used to this blessing that we forget what it's *doing*—
putting the Lord's *Name* upon us—
and with it, His blessing!

We hear "The Lord bless you" and think little more than what's said when someone sneezes!
We forget that "Yahweh," the personal, intimate, revealed *Name* of God is meant.
We forget that here our God puts His own name upon us;
and with the *Name*, He puts Himself upon us.

That's why, when I speak this name over you or myself, the sign of the cross is made too.

The cross goes with the *Name*
Because the *Name* goes with the cross.

The *Name*,
given to Jesus just 8 days after His birth,
on the day of His circumcision,
was the name the Angel Gabriel gave to Joseph in a dream.

It's the *Name* of God—
Yahweh,
Father, Son, Holy Spirit,
Jesus—
who goes the way to the cross.

His blood was shed when His name first was put upon Him in the ritual of circumcision.
And that shedding of blood went along with the *Name* all the way to the cross.

Cross, blood, and *Name* all go together.

That's how it is with Baptism:

“Receive the sign of the holy cross, both upon your forehead and upon your heart to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.”²

And,

“You were buried therefore with Him by Baptism into death” (Rom 6:3).

And again,

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, Baptizing them in the *Name* of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28:19).

Baptism has a way of putting the *Name* upon you and with it the cross.

Baptism is the new circumcision:

St. Paul says in his letter to the Colossians,

**“In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands,
by putting off the body of the flesh,
by the circumcision of Christ,
having been buried with Him in *Baptism*,
in which you were also raised with Him
through faith in the powerful working of God,
who raised Him from the dead.”** (Col 2:11-12)

Baptism is the new circumcision and the new 8th day!

8 is the number of the new creation.

God created the world in 6 days, rested on the 7th,
and so the 8th Day becomes the new 1st Day.

It was on the 8th day that Christ rose from the dead

and it's the 8th day of the week that we now worship and gather around His *Name*.

There were 8 souls in all saved on Noah's ark—

Noah and his wife, and his 3 sons and their wives—

8, saved by waters that prefigure Baptism as the 8th day (1 Pet 3:20-21).

It's no wonder the Church remembers the Circumcision and Naming of Jesus—

The 8th day of His life,

the shedding of His blood in fulfillment of the covenant given through circumcision,
the putting upon Him the *Name* of God Himself.

This very act fulfills the promise given to Aaron in his benediction:

“So shall they put my *Name* upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them” (Num 6:27).

The *Name* goes first and foremost on the 8 day old baby Jesus.

Remember what His Name means:

Yahweh Saves.

² LSB, 268.

This Jesus, who bears the *Name* of God Himself,
then puts His *Name* upon you too.

At your Baptism you got the Cross, the *Name*, and the blessing—
“It’s no longer you who live, but Christ who lives in you” (Gal 2:20).

When the Lord’s *Name* is put on you—
you’ve got everything the Name promises:
most importantly, is the forgiveness of sins—
that’s what it means to be *saved*: forgiven.

And now that this *Name* is given to you,
put on you,
you’re given to call upon it, in every trouble,
pray, praise, and give thanks!

And you know that whatever the *Name* promises and declares it’s as good as gold—
Its true and sure—
It’s *yours*.

That’s why, when we pray, we pray *in the Name of Jesus*.
And every prayer calls upon Him using the *Names* He has revealed to us:
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace,
Alpha and Omega,
Beginning and End,
King of Kings
and Lord of Lords,
Lamb of God,
Great I AM,
Servant,
Lord,
Crucified and Risen Savior.

“So shall they put my *Name* upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them” (Num 6:27).

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit