

24 December 2025
Christmas Eve

St. Athanasius Lutheran Church
Vienna, VA

Jesu Juva

“Tiny Baby. Mighty Saviour”

Text: Luke 2:1-20; Isaiah 9:2-7; Micah 5:2-5a; Titus 2:11-4; 1 John 4:7-16

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

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour.

That sounds like a contradiction. Even an absurdity. And it would be for any other baby than this one. But for this one it is true. As it had been prophesied, so it has been fulfilled. The almighty, all knowing, all glorious God, the immortal, invisible, and infinite God, now Immanuel, God *with us*, in human flesh and blood. That's who this baby is . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour.

Normally when a baby is born, we are filled with hopes and dreams as to how this child will grow and what he or she will be and do. But with this child, *we know*. His name says it all. He is named Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. That's what this baby will do . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour.

Tiny baby born to, well, tiny people. Not tiny in stature, but in status. A carpenter and a virgin, not a prophet or a priest or a king or a queen. Mention Joseph and Mary back in that day, and the answer probably would have been: *Joseph and Mary who?* Common names. Common people. But not for long. *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a . . .*

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour.

That was the message of the angels to the shepherds. First one angel with a message, then the whole heavenly host - which the book of Revelation numbers as myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands (Revelation 5:11) - far too many to count! All singing together, ***Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.*** Clearly, something significant, something important, something momentous and world-changing was happening. Tonight there was born a . . .

Tiny baby. Might Saviour.

But for such an occasion, why tell shepherds? Why bother to tell *shepherds*? Mere shepherds at or near the bottom of the social ladder. But here is comfort for us. For this child, this Saviour, isn't just for the elites, the upper crust, the somebodies - Oh, He is for them, too! They'll come later, the Magi. But first - **first!** - the humble, the low, the blue collar workers. The shepherds. They're the first to know, of a . . .

Tiny baby. Might Saviour.

And not just know, but go see! They're not just notified, but invited. To see this . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour . . .

. . . who will be as humble as they! ***And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.***

Which is a strange sign, is it not? Certainly not what people think of when they think of religious "signs." Those are spectacular, out of the ordinary, unusual phenomena. Visions and dreams and miracles and weird, unexplainable events. Not *babies*. Not mangers. Not swaddling clothes. And especially after seeing such an amazing sight as the whole heavenly host, dazzling in their appearance and singing in their perfect million-part harmonies! . . . *This* shall be the sign? This? Really? Could it really be the sign is a . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour?

They go to Bethlehem. They go and see. But it doesn't get anymore believable. They see . . . *ordinary*. They see . . . *a tiny baby*. What they *don't* see is anything that looks like a Mighty Saviour. And yet He is. Which is another miracle of Christmas. That the shepherds believe this. Believe and return ***glorifying and praising God, making known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.*** Making known this truth, of a . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour.

And that is why you are here tonight. Because you've heard the message of the angels and the example of the shepherds. Because you've heard the prophecies of old and their perfect fulfillment in the fullness of time. Of a . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour.

Of a Mighty Saviour who comes to you this day in just as humble and small ways. For that is His way. Plain water, mighty saving. Ordinary words, mighty Gospel of forgiveness. Common bread and wine, mighty and extraordinary Body and Blood. But here, in these common, low places is Immanuel, God with us! Mighty to save the worst of sinners, the most common of people. The highest of the high and the lowest of the low. Whatever you are to the world, you are precious to Him. This . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour.

Come to make you, as we heard, ***heirs according to the hope of eternal life***. Heirs of His kingdom, but also heirs of His love. His love to abide in you for others. Love that maybe looks tiny, but really is mighty. Like Him.

Which means that the love you give, the love you do, is mighty, too. Don't underestimate that. Small acts of love can make a world of difference. That's what the shepherds saw in the manger, with this . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour. They saw mighty Love.

And so it was on this night that the shepherds were ***the people who walked in darkness that have seen a great light***. The **great** light of the angels, yes. But the even **greater** light wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in the manger. And the **greatest** light of all - the love of God that would bring Him here to us. That would cause Him to come to us, as one of us, to die for us. This . . .

Tiny baby. Mighty Saviour.

So if you've never had some amazing religious experience that rocked your world . . .

If you're not perfect, but, in fact, a poor miserable sinner . . .

If you don't have everything figured out, and still have a lot of questions . . .

If you're heavy laden with guilt or fear or shame . . .

If you're hurt or hurting, mourning or grieving . . .

If you're struggling with life, feeling downtrodden and weak . . .

If you feel overwhelmed and under appreciated . . .

If you think no one cares . . .

If that's you, then this night is for you. *Especially* for you. ***For unto you is born this day your Saviour, Christ the Lord.***

A **Tiny baby**. But your **Mighty Saviour**.

In the Name of the Father, and of the (+) Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.