



Christmas Words

An Advent to Candlemas Course from the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney

Name

Wednesday 1st January 2025



Divine injury, prefiguring the Passion: The Circumcision of Christ by Fra Angelico, in the Fresco Museo di San Marco, in Florence [Photography by John Pope-Hennessy, Beato Angelico, Scala, Florence 1981]

Scripture: Luke 2:15-21

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

To reflect

The second chapter of Luke tells us that Jesus was circumcised and named on the eighth day after his birth so the church marks this on the first day of a new calendar year.

Names are important – they're what we're called by, known by, baptised by and we're called by God. We may like our names (first, middle, last) or not, we may know the story behind our surname or why we are called the name we're known by or have chosen to be change the name, nickname or abbreviation we're known by through the years.

In the Bible there are many names for God – the Creator, the Lord, our Peace, the Almighty amongst others, Jesus has many names too – Messiah, Saviour, Christ. As you begin this new year you're invited to reflect on the name of God as you seek to start this new year and this time of your walk in faith.

To Pray – A Collect for the Naming of Jesus

Eternal Father,
we give thanks for your incarnate Son,
whose name is our salvation.
Plant in every heart, we pray,
the love of him who is the Saviour of the world,
our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, in glory everlasting.
Amen.

Poem of Praise by Mari Fitz-Wynn

Jesus.
His name is a complete sentence.
His name is an entire prayer.
His name alone brings healing.
His name guarantees salvation.
His name quenches the thirsty soul and fills the soul's hunger.

Jesus
His name is the perfect solution to every problem.
His name can resolve conflict.
He brings peace and calm into every situation.
His name is protection.
His name brings light when darkness is all around.

Jesus
His name is music, it is the sweetest melody.
His name is joy unspeakable. His name is perfect
His name is altogether lovely, magnificent, glorious.
His name is Emmanuel, He is God with us.
Amen

[Mari Fitz-Wynn www.marifitzwynn.com via EngageWorship]

To Listen (these and other suggestions can be found on a Spotify playlist at

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/0F5bU2sf4OiOtQY3q78Rj2?si=a99cbbf61e7d4587>)

- 'A New Year Carol' by Benjamin Britten, one version is by The Bach Choir with the Philamonic Orchestra.
- 'The Blessing' by Cody Carnes, Elevation Worship, and Kari Jobe. A song of Blessing for the New Year. It is based on Numbers 6:22-27, one of the readings assigned for this day.
- 'Fantasia on Christmas Carols' by R.W. Vaughan-Williams, one recording is by Roderick Williams and the Joyful Company of Singers. This is compilation of songs and hymns from Advent to Christmas to New Year.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.