

NEWSLETTER
December - 2023

TAPIOLA APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH

Sunday Bible Study: 9:45 a.m.

Sunday Service: 11:00 a.m.

**Wednesday Bible Study:
7:00 p.m.**

SPEAKERS

December 3: Ken Storm, *Holy Communion*

December 10: Mark Sunnarborg

December 17: Ken Storm

**December 24:
11:00 a.m. - Charles Korhonen
6:30 p.m. - Caroling
7:00 p.m. - Ken Storm**

December 31: Nathan Ruonovarra

CONTACT

**Website:
www.tapiolachurch.org**

**Mailing: P.O. Box 531,
Houghton, MI 49931**

**Location:
17602 N. Lake Ave.,
Tapiola, MI 49916
(906) 334-2766**

**Contact: Ken Storm, Pastor
(906) 482-3234**

Love

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" - 1 John 4:10

Love so great the world has never known that God allowed His only Son, Jesus, to be born in a stable in Bethlehem and, later, to be sacrificed on the cross of Golgotha for the full payment of sins of all humanity without Himself committing one sin. There may have been other ways to effect this payment but scripture states that *"by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for all that have sinned"* and further that *"by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous"* (Romans 5: 12, 19). Thus, the love of God brought Jesus into this world for one reason: to save us from our sin.

Sin first entered the world when Adam and Eve ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They knew that on the day that they ate from that tree, they would die. Nonetheless, Satan, in his beguiling way, convinced them that they would not die but, instead, *"... shall be as gods, knowing good and evil"* (Gen 3:3); so they ate of the tree with this possible thought, that they would become better helpers of God. However, once they tasted of the fruit that looked so good, they immediately and sadly discovered that they were naked, had disobeyed God's word and now were faced with death, both physical and eternal death. They hid from Him, but God already knew what had happened. *"Where art thou"* (Gen 3:9) was the loving call they heard from God. Of course, He knew of their whereabouts but God wanted them to willingly come out of hiding and admit their sin. They came out of hiding and God forgave them after they confessed to their transgression. God subsequently shed the blood of an animal and used its skin to cover their sin, thus, providing them with a token of His forgiveness.

From this point forward animal sacrifice was inextricably connected with the forgiveness of sins. In the Old Testament it was to the door of the tabernacle where a penitent soul would voluntarily bring an animal to confess his sin before a priest. The animal's blood would then be shed and the priest would sprinkle the blood round about making atonement for the sin, and it was forgiven him by God. (Perhaps, it is important to realize that people came to an understanding of sin well before the Ten Commandments were ever given to Moses.)

It is neither animal's blood nor the law, but it is the blood of Christ (the Lamb of God) which permanently washes away all past sin from a penitent heart: *"For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins"* (Hebrews 10:4). The Old Testament practice of confession at the door of the tabernacle was a foreshadowing of the coming Messiah who would shed His blood to be sprinkled by a New Testament priest on guilty consciences: *"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus"* (Hebrews 10:19). The priest we confess our sins to nowadays is a fellow believer who has the Spirit of God dwelling within his heart. Such a person is the equivalent to the Old Testament priest standing at the doorway of the spirit-filled tabernacle because as a believer he is *"...a*

chosen generation, a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9). We can therefore confidently confess our faults to any believer because each believer also embodies the spirit-filled tabernacle of the Old Testament: “Know ye not that Ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?” (1 Cor 3:16).

The birth of Christ and His subsequent crucifixion some 4,000 years after God first mentioned Him (Gen 3:15) is the only reason why the world should celebrate the Christmas season. May the love of Jesus through the forgiveness of sins and the power of the Holy Ghost abide in your heart today and carry you in faith until the end.

God's Peace,

Charles Korhonen