



A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS & CAROLS

December 4, 2022 | six-thirty in the evening
The First United Methodist Church of LaGrange

*Cover art: "The Adoration of the Magi" (1633-34) Peter Paul Rubens
Altarpiece, King's College Chapel, University of Cambridge*

WELCOME

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was first held at King's College at the University of Cambridge, England on Christmas Eve 1918. It was planned by The Rev. Eric Milner-White who was appointed Dean of the Chapel in 1912 and served as a World War I army chaplain from 1914 until 1918.

The service, adapted from an order drawn up by Bishop Edward White Benson for use on Christmas Eve in 1880 at Truro Cathedral in Cornwall, England, tells "the loving purposes of God" from the fall of humanity, to the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus Christ through nine Bible lessons interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols and choral anthems.

The service was first broadcast by the BBC in 1928 and has been broadcast annually, even during World War II when the 16th-century stained glass had been removed from the Chapel.



ORGAN VOLUNTARIES

§ *The congregation is silent during the organ voluntaries.*

Three Chorale Preludes on "*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*" – Johann Sebastian Bach

à 2 claviers et pedal (BWV 659)

à due bassi e canto fermo (BWV 660)

in organo pleno/il canto fermo nel pèdale (BWV 661)

"Pastorale on a Christmas Plainsong" – Virgil Thomson

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

§ *The Choir alone sings verses 1-3; Elissa Lawson, soprano*

Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a Mother laid her baby
In a manger for his bed:
Mary was that Mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
And his shelter was a stable,
And his cradle was a stall:
With the poor and mean and lowly,
Lived on earth our Savior holy.

And through all his wondrous childhood
He would honor and obey,
Love and watch the lowly maiden,
In whose gentle arms he lay;
Christian children all must be
Mild, obedient, good as he.

§ *All stand to sing.*



**For he is our childhood's pattern:
Day by day like us he grew;
He was little, weak, and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us he knew;
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness.**

**And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through his own redeeming love,
For that child, so dear and gentle,
Is our Lord in heav'n above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.**

**Not in that poor lowly stable,
With the oxen standing by,
We shall see him; but in heaven,
Set at God's right hand on high;
When like stars his children crowned
All in white shall wait around.**

*Cecil Frances Alexander
"Irby," Henry Gauntlett; harm. Arthur Henry Mann;
verse 6 arr. David Willcocks*

§ All remain standing.

BIDDING PRAYER

The Senior Minister:

Beloved in Christ, be it this Advent our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels; in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child, and let us make this house of prayer glad with our carols of praise:

But first let us pray for the needs of His whole world; for peace and health over all the earth; for unity and goodwill within the Church He came to build, and for goodwill among all peoples.

And because this of all things would rejoice His heart, let us at this time remember in His name the poor and the helpless, the cold and the hungry, the abused, the exploited and the oppressed; the sick in body and in mind and them that mourn; the isolated, the lonely and the unloved; the elderly and the little children; all who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love Him not, or who by sin have grieved His heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ Himself hath taught us:

All:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen.**

The Senior Minister:

The almighty God bless us with His grace:
Christ give us the joys of everlasting life:
and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may
the King of Angels bring us all.
Amen.

§ *All sit.*

CAROL

In dulci jubilo
Let us our homage shew;
Our heart's joy reclineth
In præsepio;
And like a bright star shineth
Matris in gremio;
Alpha es et O!

*In quiet joy

in a manger

in the Mother's lap
Thou art Alpha and Omega*

O Jesu parvule,
I yearn for thee alway!
Hear me I beseech thee,
O puer optime!
My prayer let it reach thee,
O Princeps gloriae!
Trahe me post te!

*O tiny Jesus

O best of all boys

O Prince of glory
Draw me unto thee*

O Patris caritas!
O Nati lenitas!
Deeply were we stained
Per nostra crimina;
But thou hast for us gained
Cœlorum gaudia.
O that we were there!

*O love of the Father
O gentleness of the Son

through our sins

the joy of heaven*

Ubi sunt gaudia,
O where, if that they be not there?
There are angels singing
Nova cantica,
There the bells are ringing
In Regis curia:
O that we were there!

*Where are joys

new songs

in the court of the King*

14th Century German Carol, arr. Michael Bedford

FIRST LESSON

§ A Chorister reads the lesson.

Charlotte Gardner

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head. Genesis 3:8–15, 17–19

“And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told

thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

*And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." **Thanks be to God.***

CAROL

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love;
Therefore don't turn me from your door,
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing which I do relate
Is that God did man create;
The next thing which to you I'll tell,
Woman was made with man to dwell.

Then after this, 'twas God's own choice
To place them both in Paradise,
There to remain, from evil free,
Except they ate of such a tree.

But they did eat which was a sin,
And thus their ruin did begin,
Ruined themselves, both you and me,
And all of their posterity.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes,
Till God the Lord did interpose;
And so a promise soon did run
That he would redeem us by his Son.

*"Herefordshire Carol," English Traditional
collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams; arr. Robert Kirby*

SECOND LESSON

§ A LaGrange College Choral Scholar reads the lesson.

Rebekah Powers

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. Genesis 22:15-18

“And the Angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL

The holly and the ivy when they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood the holly bears the crown.
*The rising of the sun, the running of the deer,
the playing of the merry organ, sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a blossom as white as the lily flow’r,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to be our sweet Savior.
Refrain

The holly bears a berry as red as any blood,
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ to do us sinners good.
Refrain

The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall,
and Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ on Christmas Day in the morn.
Refrain

English Traditional, arr. Richard Shephard

THIRD LESSON

§ A representative of LaGrange College reads the lesson.

Martha Pirkle

The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior. Isaiah 9:2-7

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Thanks be to God.

CAROL

On Christmas night all Christians sing,
To hear the news the angels bring;
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
"Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore, Amen."

*"Sussex Carol," arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams
Elissa Lawson & Susan Lee, soprano*

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL

§ *All stand and sing the carol.*



O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary;
And, gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wond'ring love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth;

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming;
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

*English Traditional, arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams
descant, Thomas Armstrong*

§ *All sit.*

FOURTH LESSON

§ *A member of the Church Council reads the lesson.*

Nancy Stevens

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown. Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. With righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.

*The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.” **Thanks be to God.***

CAROL

The Angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
“All hail,” said he, “thou lowly maiden Mary,
most highly favored lady.” Gloria!

“For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honor thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold.
Most highly favored lady.” Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
“To me be as it pleaseth God,” she said,
“My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name.”
Most highly favored lady. Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout all the world will ever say:
“Most highly favored lady.” Gloria!

Traditional Basque Carol

FIFTH LESSON

§ *A member of the Church staff reads the lesson.*

Page Estes

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary. Luke 1:26–35, 38

*“And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.” **Thanks be to God.***

CAROL

There is no rose of such vertu
As is the rose that bare Jesu.
Alleluia, Alleluia.

For in this rose contèined was
Heaven and earth in lital space
Resmiranda, Resmiranda. *Wonderful thing*

By that rose we may well see
There be one God in persons three
Pares forma, pares forma. *Equal in form*

The augels sungen the shepherds to:
Gloria in excelsis, gloria in excelsis Deo.
Gaudeamus, gaudeamus. *Let us rejoice*

Leave we all this werldly mirth,
And follow we this joyful birth.
Transeamus. *Let us turn (from earth to heaven)*

Alleluia, Resmiranda, Pares forma,
Gaudeamus, Transeamus.

*From "A Ceremony of Carols" by Benjamin Britten
Sara Hancock, harp*

SIXTH LESSON

§ *A Community representative reads the lesson.* Patrick Crews, Troup Co. Commission Chair

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus. Luke 2:1-7

"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

Thanks be to God.

CAROL

Unto us is born a son
King of quires supernal:
See on earth his life begun,
Of lords the Lord eternal.

Christ, from heav'n descending low,
Comes on earth a stranger;
Ox and ass their owner know,
Be cradles in the manger.

This did Herod sore affray,
And grievously bewilder,
So he gave the word to slay,
And slew the little child.

Of his love and mercy mild
This the Christmas story;
O that Mary's gentle Child
Might lead us into glory.

O and A, and A and O,
Cum cantibus in choro,
Let our merry organ go,
Benedicamus Domino.

*Omega and Alpha, and Alpha and Omega
Let us sing in chorus*

Let us bless the Lord.

Tune from "Piae Cantiones" (1582), arr. David Willcocks

SEVENTH LESSON

§ *The Minister of Music reads the lesson.*

Dr. Richard Prior

The shepherds go to the manger. Luke 2:8-16

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger."

Thanks be to God.

CAROL

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child,
Holy infant, so tender and mild:
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds first saw the sight:
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia:
Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light;
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Joseph Mohr, trans. John F. Young
"Stille Nacht," Franz Gruber

EIGHTH LESSON

§ *The Senior Associate Minister reads the lesson.*

The Rev. Liz Millar

The Wise Men are led by the star to Jesus. Matthew 2:1-12

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judæa: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

*And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way." **Thanks be to God.***

CAROL

As I sat on a sunny bank,
On Christmas Day in the morning,
I spied three ships come sailing by,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And who should be on those three ships,
But Joseph and his fair lady!
O he did whistle and she did sing,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the bells on earth did ring,
On Christmas morning,
For joy that our Savior he was born,
On Christmas Day in the morning.

“Sunny Bank” by Peter Hurford

§ *All stand.*

NINTH LESSON

§ *The Senior Minister reads the lesson.*

Dr. John Beyers

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation. John 1:1-14

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” **Thanks be to God.**

§ *All remain standing and sing the carol.*

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL



O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him,
Born the King of Angels.
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!*

True God of true God,
Light from light eternal,
lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created; *Refrain*

See how the shepherds,
Summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
We too will thither
Bend our joyful footsteps. *Refrain*

Child, for us sinners
Poor and in the manger,
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
Who would not love thee,
Loving us so dearly? *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God in the highest: *Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing: *Refrain*

"Adeste, fideles," John Francis Wade

§ *All remain standing.*

COLLECT AND BLESSING

The Senior Minister:

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

Let us pray.

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only Son, Jesus Christ: grant that as we joyfully receive Him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold Him, when He shall come to be our Judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

Christ who by His incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill, and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL

§ All sing the carol.



Hark! the herald-angels sing
"Glory to the new-born King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise,
Join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim,
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

*Hark! the herald-angels sing
"Glory to the new-born King!"*

Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
Late in time behold him come,
Offspring of a Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
Hail th'incarnate Deity,
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel. *Refrain*

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
Ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by,
Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.** *Refrain*

*Charles Wesley &al.
Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy; adapt. William Hayman Cummings
verse 3 arr. David Willcocks*

§ *All sit for the organ voluntary.*

Toccatà on "Veni Emmanuel" – Andrew Carter

DISMISSAL

§ *All stand.*

Go forth in peace to love and serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



Senior Minister
The Rev. Dr. John Beyers

Senior Associate Minister
The Rev. Liz Millar

Minister of Music
Dr. Richard Prior

Organist
Don Papenbrock

Crucifer
Charlotte Gardner

AN INVITATION

Celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ!

Christmas Eve Service and Children's Pageant

December 24, 5:00 pm

Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Service & Holy Communion

December 24, 11:00 pm

Sanctuary

Christmas Worship Service

December 25, 11:00 am

Wesley Hall



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