

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols



The Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 20, 2020
5:00 p.m.
Pre-Service Music

4:30 pm

Stephan Casurella, organ

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659 & 661 Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) Chorale Prelude on
“Silent Night,” from *Die Natali*, Op. 37 Samuel Barber (1910–1981) Christmas Prelude on *Divinum
mysterium* John R. Watkinson (1904–1972) Noel X: Grand jeu et Duo Loui-Claude D’Aquin (1694–1772)
“Saluto angelico” from *Cathedral Windows*, Op. 106 Sigfrid Karg-Elert (1877–1933) Fantasia on *Vom
Himmel hoch* Johann Pachelbel (1653–1706)

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A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

5:00 pm

The people stand as the hymn begins

Hymn *(sung by the choir)*

1. 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.
2. 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 Saviour holy.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through his own redeeming love,
For that child so dear and gentle Is
our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.
6. 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; Where
like stars his children crowned All in
white shall wait around.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander (1818–1895).

Music: *Irby*, melody Henry John Gauntlett; harm. Arthur Henry Mann (1850–1929); desc. David Willcocks (1919–2015).

Bidding Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Beloved in Christ, in this Christmastide, let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the Angels, and 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 cathedral glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill over all the earth; for the mission and unity of the Church for which he died, and especially in this country and within this city.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and helpless, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all those 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 his pure and lowly Mother, and all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we evermore are one.

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

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

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.**

The people sit

Carol

Ding Dong! Merrily on High 16th-century French tune harm. Charles Wood (1866–1926)

Ding dong! merrily on high in heav'n the bells are ringing:

Ding dong! verily the sky is riv'n with angel singing.

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below, let steeple bells be swungen,

And *io, io, io*, by priest and people sungen.

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

Pray you, dutifully prime your matin chime, ye ringers;

May you beautifully rime your evetime song, ye singers.

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

—George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848–1934)

First Lesson

*God announces in the Garden of Eden
that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head*

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."

He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate."

The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." *Genesis 3:1-15 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree Howard Helvey (b. 1968)

The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

His beauty doth all things excel:
By faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought,
And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all; but now I see

'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil,
Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be,
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

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This fruit doth make my soul to thrive,
It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

—Anon., 18th century

Second Lesson

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed
shall the nations of the earth be blessed*

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, “By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.” *Genesis 22:15–18 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Carol

Love Came Down at Christmas John Rutter (b. 1945)

Love came down at Christmas,
love all lovely, love divine;
love was born at Christmas,
star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
love incarnate, love divine;
worship we our Jesus,
but wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token;
love be yours and love be mine,
love to God and all men,
love for plea and gift and sign.

—Christina Rossetti (1830–1894)

Third Lesson

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep

darkness—on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. *Isaiah 9:2, 6–7 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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Carol

O Come, Divine Messiah 16th-century French carol arr. Howard Helvey (b. 1968)

O come, divine Messiah! The world in silence waits the day
When hope shall sing its triumph, and sadness flee away.
*Dear Savior haste; come, come to earth,
Dispel the night and show your face, and bid us hail the dawn of grace.
O come, divine Messiah! The world in silence waits the day
When hope shall sing its triumph, and sadness flee away.*

You come in peace and meekness, and lowly will your cradle be;
All clothed in human weakness shall we your Godhead see.
Dear Savior haste...

O Christ, whom nations sigh for, whom priest and prophet long foretold,
Come break the captive fetters; redeem the long-lost fold.
Dear Savior haste...

— Abbé Simon-Joseph Pellegrin (1663-1745)
trans. Frances Mary Lescher (1825-1904), known as Sister Mary of Philip

Fourth Lesson

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. *Isaiah 11:1–9 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Carol

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming Michael Praetorius (1571-1621)

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming as seers of old have sung.
It came, a blossom bright, amid the cold of winter,
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind,
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,
When half spent was the night.

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O Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispel in glorious splendor the darkness everywhere;
True man, yet very God, from sin and death now save us,
And share our every load.

— St. 1-2: 15th-century German, trans. Theodore Baker (1851-1934)

St. 3: Friedrich Layritz (1808-1859), trans. Harriet Reynolds Krauth Spaeth (1845-1925)

Fifth Lesson

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her. *Luke 1:26-38 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

A Maiden Most Gentle Traditional French, arr. Andrew Carter (b. 1930)

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing:
Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King.
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria. [Hail, Mary.]

How blest is the birth of her heavenly child,
Who came to redeem us in Mary so mild.

Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.

The Archangel Gabriel foretold by his call
The Lord of creation and Savior of all.
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.

Three kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,
And marveled in awe at the babe in her care.
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray;
Sing praise to the Savior, sing endless “Ave.”
Ave, Ave, Ave Maria.

—The Venerable Bede (c.673–735), para.
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Sixth Lesson

Saint Luke tells of the birth of Jesus

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. *Luke 2:1–7 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Carol

A Babe Is Born All of a May William Mathias (1934–1992)

A babe is born all of a may,
To bring salvation unto us.
To him we sing both night and day.
Veni Creator Spiritus. [Come, Creator Spirit.]

At Bethlehem, that blessed place,
The child of bliss now born he was;
And him to serve God give us grace,
O lux beata Trinitas. [O Trinity of blessed light.]

There came three kings out of the East,
To worship the King that is so free,
With gold and myrrh and frankincense,
A solis ortus cardine. [From the rising of the sun.]

The angels came down with one cry,
A fair song that night sung they
In worship of that child:
Gloria tibi Domine. [Glory to you, Lord.]

A babe is born all of a may,
To bring salvation unto us.
To him we sing both night and day.
Veni Creator Spiritus. [Come, Creator Spirit.]
Noel!

—15th century, anon.

Seventh Lesson

The shepherds go to the manger

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to

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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. *Luke 2:8–20 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly Polish carol, arr. Gerre Hancock (1934–2012)

Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the Babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging, angels singing, Nowells ringing, tidings bringing,
Christ the Babe is Lord of all.

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new;
Saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow,
Christ the Babe was born for you!

—Traditional Polish, trans. Edith M. G. Reed (1885–1933)

Eighth Lesson

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired

of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’” Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”

When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road. *Matthew 2:1–12 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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Carol

The Three Kings Peter Cornelius, arr. Ivor Atkins (1869–1953)

Three kings from Persian lands afar
To Jordan follow the pointing star:
And this the quest of the travelers three,
Where the newborn King of the Jews may be.
Full royal gifts they bear for the King:
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.

The star shines out with a steadfast ray;
The kings to Bethlehem make their way,
And there in worship they bend the knee,
As Mary’s child in her lap they see;
Their royal gifts they show to the King;
Gold, incense, myrrh are their offering.

Thou child of man, lo, to Bethlehem
The kings are trav’ling, travel with them!
The star of mercy, the star of grace,
Shall lead thy heart to its resting-place.
Gold, incense, myrrh thou canst not bring;
Offer thy heart to the infant King.

—Peter Cornelius (1824–1874), trans. H. N. Bate

The people stand

Ninth Lesson

Saint John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into

being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. *John 1:1–14 (NRSV)*

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The people sit

10

Hymn (*sung by the choir*)

Son of God the Father;

1. 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,
Christ the Lord.*
2. God from God,
Light from Light eternal,
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
only-begotten

3. Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heaven
above; glory to God,
glory in the highest;
4. Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father,
now in flesh appearing;

Text: John Francis Wade (1711–1786); tr. Frederick Oakeley (1802–1880) and others.

Music: *Adeste fideles*, att. John Francis Wade (1711–1786); harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906; desc. David Willcocks

(1919–2015). **Welcome & Announcements**

Offering

Our cathedral vestry has designated that the Christmas offering go to Episcopal Relief & Development (ERD) for the benefit of the people of Nicaragua living in chronic poverty. Recent hurricane destruction has further exacerbated the needs. In partnership with local organizations, Episcopal Relief & Development is empowering communities to become climate resilient while improving food supply and preventing waterborne disease and to equip women to provide for their families. Because of the hurricane destruction, as well as the impact of the ongoing global pandemic, this year's Christmas offering will also provide vital disaster relief. As in past years, the Christmas offering will be matched

by the Coombe Fund. To make a donation online, text “giveccc” to 73256 or visit cincinnati.cathedral.com/e-donate.

Carol

Huron Carol Traditional French, arr. James Kirkby (b. 1949)

'Twas in the moon of winter-time
When all the birds had fled,
That mighty Gitchi Manitou
Sent angel choirs instead;
Before their light the stars grew dim,
And wandering hunters heard the hymn:

*“Jesus your King is born, Jesus is born,
In excelsis gloria.”*

Within a lodge of broken bark
The tender Babe was found,
A ragged robe of rabbit skin
Enwrapp'd his beauty round;
But as the hunter braves drew nigh,
The angel song rang loud and high:

—Jesse Edgar Middleton (1872–1960)

The people stand

The earliest moon of wintertime Is not so round
and fair
As was the ring of glory
On the helpless infant there.
The chiefs from far before him knelt With gifts of
fox and beaver pelt:

O children of the forest free,
the angel song is true,
The Holy Child of earth and heaven Is born today
for you.
Come kneel before the radiant Boy Who brings
you beauty, peace and joy:

11

Collect & Blessing

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, you make us glad by the yearly festival of the birth of your only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that we, who joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our Judge; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

May he, who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Hymn *(sung by the choir)*

1. Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;

with the angelic host
proclaim Christ is born in
Bethlehem!

*Hark! the herald angels sing
glory to the newborn King!*

2. Christ, by highest heaven adored;
Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead
see; hail the incarnate Deity.
Pleased as man with man to

dwell; Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Text: Charles Wesley (1707–1788), alt.

3. Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Risen with healing in his
wings, light and life to all he
brings,
hail, the Sun of Righteousness! hail,
the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Music: *Mendelssohn*, Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847); adapt. William H. Cummings (1831–1915); desc. David Willcocks

(1919–2015). *The people sit*

Voluntary

Chorale Prelude *In dulci jubilo*, BWV 729 Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)

□ □ □

Officiant

The Reverend Canon Jason Leo

Musicians

The Christ Church Cathedral Choir
Stephan Casurella, Canon Precentor & Director of Music
Shiloh Roby, Associate Director of Music