

# A SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

*for the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord: Christmas Eve*

December 24, 5:00 p.m.

## The Prelude: Carols from St. Alban's Belltower

God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen  
Caroline Johnson, and James Johnson, *piano*

1<sup>st</sup> pub. *Little Book of Christmas Carols*, c. 1850  
arr. Jennifer Eklund, 2020

*Suo Gân*, traditional Welsh lullaby  
Kathleen Blackwell-Plank, *harp*, and Karl Plank, *violin*

arr. Kathleen Blackwell-Plank, 2013

In My Arms the Savior (Mary's Conflict)  
Mark Germino, *guitar*

Mark Germino

What'll I do with this babe in a manger? Have I enough love to give him?  
Another strange night, twilight is dimmin', I hear say "Blessed art thou among women!"  
I must live for this command I was given. Gabriel came to me with God's Word.

I shoulda been stoned to death for this incident. Joseph coulda left—it all seemed imminent,  
But his dream, too, came from The Omnipotent. I shoulda stayed in Galilee.

I was given his commands in the vapor of a dream. I questioned ev'ry word—what does it all mean?  
There are people in this shed I've never even seen! How did God know Joseph would forgive me?  
We traveled by day; stars said, "We can't see ya." Herod wanted ev'ry shekel in Judea.  
He counted and he taxed in the shade by a fig tree. Gabriel came to me with God's words.

I shoulda been stoned to death for this miracle. I've never heard declared an account this spiritual,  
a hand so calm, his voice was lyrical. I shoulda stayed in Galilee.

I'm holdin' in my arms the Savior of the world. I'm holdin' in my arms the Messiah.

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## Words of Welcome

### The Processional Carol 102: Once in Royal David's City, *stanzas 1, 2, 4, 6*

IRBY

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.

- Amelia Amadio, *soloist*

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, the scorned, the lowly, lived on earth our savior holy.

For he is our lifelong pattern; daily, when on earth he grew,  
he was tempted, scorned, rejected, tears and smiles like us he knew.  
Thus he feels for all our sadness, and he shares in all our gladness.

Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing 'round,  
we shall see him; but in heaven where his saints his throne surround:  
Christ revealed to faithful eye, set at God's right hand on high.

Text: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848, alt.

Music: Henry John Gauntlett, 1849; vs. 1, 2, & 3 arr. Arthur Henry Mann, 1919; vs. 4 arr. David Willcocks, 1970

## A Bidding Prayer

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion until the glorious redemption brought to us by the holy Child Jesus, and let us make this world glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this region.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name those who are poor or helpless, those who are cold or hungry, those who are oppressed, those who are sick and those who mourn, those who are lonely or unloved, those who are old or young, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

And now, to gather up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

***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, 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 to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. **Amen.**

**The First Lesson** *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. 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**Carol 83: O Come, All Ye Faithful, stanzas 1, 2, 3, 6**

ADESTE FIDELES

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:

*Refrain: O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord.*

God from God, Light from Light eternal,  
lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;  
only begotten Son of the Father: *Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,  
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:  
"Glory to God! Glory 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*

Text & Music: John Francis Wade, c. 1743

Text: tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841

Music: vs. 1 & 2 harm. *The English Hymnal*, 1906; vs. 3 & 4 arr. David Willcocks, 1961

**The Second Lesson** *Adam and Eve are cast out of the Garden of Eden.*

**Genesis 3:1-15**

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.'

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**Poem: The Coming**

R.S. Thomas

And God held in his hand  
A small globe. Look, he said.  
The son looked. Far off,  
As through water, he saw  
A scorched land of fierce  
Colour. The light burned  
There; crusted buildings  
Cast their shadows: a bright  
Serpent, a river  
Uncoiled itself, radiant  
With slime.  
On a bare  
Hill a bare tree saddened  
The sky. Many people  
Held out their thin arms  
To it, as though waiting  
For a vanished April  
To return to its crossed  
Boughs. The son watched  
Them. Let me go there, he said.

**The Third Lesson** *A child shall be conceived who will be known as "God with us."*

**Isaiah 7:10-15**

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: 'Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.'

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**Carol 81: Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming, stanzas 1 & 2**

ES IST EIN ROS

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.

Text: German, 15<sup>th</sup> cent. tr. Theodore Baker, 1894

Music: *Alte Catholische Geistliche Kirchengesäng*, 1599; harm. Michael Praetorius, 1609

**The Fourth Lesson** *Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by the prophet.*

**Isaiah 9:2-7**

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. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, 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 onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection**

The Rev. Kevin Lloyd

**The Fifth Lesson** *The angel Gabriel greets Mary, as told by the young people of St. Alban's*

**Luke 1:26-58**

**Carol 89: It Came Upon a Midnight Clear**

CAROL

Sarah Hicks, *voice*

Matt Presson, *guitar & voice*

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,  
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:  
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all-gracious King."  
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,  
and still the heav'nly music floats o'er all the weary world;  
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hov'ring wing,  
and ever o'er its Babel-sounds the blessed angels sing.

Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffer'd long;  
beneath the heav'nly hymn have rolled two-thousand years of wrong;  
and warring humankind hears not the tidings which they bring;  
O hush the noise and cease your strife and hear the angels sing!

And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,  
who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,  
Look now! For glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;  
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing!

For lo! the days are hast'ning on, by prophets seen of old,  
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold,  
when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
and all the world give back the song which now the angels sing.

Text: Edmund H. Sears, 1849 alt.

Music: Richard Storrs Willis, 1850

**The Sixth Lesson** *Jesus is born in Bethlehem, as told by the young people of St. Alban's*

**Luke 2:1-7**

## Carol 79: O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see the 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.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!  
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.

Where children pure and happy pray to the blessed Child,  
where misery cries out to thee, Son of the mother mild;  
where charity stands watching and faith holds wide the door,  
the dark night wakes, the glory breaks, and Christmas comes once more.

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1868

Music: Lewis H. Redner, 1868; vs. 3 arr. M. Presson, 2020

**The Seventh Lesson** *The shepherds go to the manger, as told by the young people of St. Alban's*

**Luke 2:8-20**

## Carol 109: The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;  
in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep.  
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east beyond them far,  
and to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.  
And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;  
to seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star where-ever it went.  
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

This star drew nigh to the north west, o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,  
and there it did both stop and stay right over the place where Jesus lay.  
Then entered in those wise men three full rev'rently upon their knee,  
and offer'd there in his presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.  
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heav'nly Lord;  
that hath made heav'n and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought.  
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Text & Music: English carol, c. 15<sup>th</sup> cent. collected in *Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern*, 1833

Music: vs. 1 harm. John Stainer, 1871; vs. 2, 3, 4, & 5 arr. M. Presson, 2020; vs. 6 arr. Healey Willan, 1926

**The Eighth Lesson** *The magi follow a star to Jesus, as told by the young people of St. Alban's*

**Matthew 2:1-12**

## Poem: First Coming

Madeleine L'Engle

He did not wait till the world was ready,  
till men and nations were at peace  
He came when the Heavens were unsteady  
and prisoners cried out for release.  
He did not wait for the perfect time.  
He came when the need was deep and great.  
He dined with sinners in all their grime,  
turned water into wine. He did not wait  
till hearts were pure. In joy he came  
to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.  
To a world like ours, of anguished shame  
He came, and his Light would not go out.

He came to a world which did not mesh,  
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.  
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh  
the Maker of the stars was born.  
We cannot wait till the world is sane  
to raise our songs with joyful voice,  
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,  
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

**The Ninth Lesson** *God has spoken through a Son*

**Hebrews 1:1-4**

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

**Reflection**

The Rev. Carmen Germino

**Carol 111: Silent Night**

STILLE NACHT

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. Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight:  
glories stream from heaven afar, heav'nly hosts sing "Alleluia!  
Christ the Savior is born! 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. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1818; trans. John Freeman Young, 1859

Music: Franz Gruber, 1818; arr. M. Presson, 2020

**The Concluding Collect**

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

**The Christmas Blessing**

Adapted from *The Work of Christmas* by Howard W. Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and the princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,  
The work of Christmas begins:  
To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among people,  
To make music in the heart.

May God, who sent angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. May the work of Christmas begin in you tonight; and the blessing of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be with you this night and always. **Amen.**

## The Recessional Carol 100: Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

Joy to the world! the Lord is come: let earth receive her King;  
let ev'ry heart prepare him room, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the world! the savior reigns; let us our songs employ,  
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;  
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness, and wonders of his love!

Text: Isaac Watts, 1719, alt.

Music: English tune, c. 18<sup>th</sup> cent. adapt. Lowell Mason, 1848; vs. 1, 2, & 3 arr. M. Presson, 2020; vs. 4 arr. Matthew Corl, 2002

## The Postlude Carol 99: Go! Tell It on the Mountain

*Hallelujah! Go! tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev'rywhere;  
Go! tell it on the mountain: Jesus Christ is born!*

While shepherds kept their watch o'er silent flocks by night,  
behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light! *Refrain*

The shepherds feared and shook when lo! above the earth  
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our savior's birth! *Refrain*

Down the lowly manger the humble Christ was born,  
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn! *Refrain*

Text & Music: African American Spiritual, 19<sup>th</sup> cent.

Text: adapt. John Wesley Work, Jr., 1940, alt.

Music: arr. Paul Simon & Art Garfunkel, 1964

### **Officiants**

The Rev. Carmen Germino, Rector  
The Rev. Kevin Lloyd, Associate Rector

### **Lectors**

Valerie Colbert  
Richard Colven

Julia Lloyd  
Dave Pylipow  
Ashley Romero

Rosalind Seneca  
Leslie Urban

### **Prelude Musicians**

Caroline Johnson  
James Johnson

Mark Germino

Kathleen Blackwell-Plank  
Karl Plank

### **Musical Direction**

John Bailey, Organist & Choirmaster  
Matt Presson, Producer

### **St. Alban's Christmas Choir**

William Andrews  
Bob Boettger  
Alison Boughrum  
Valerie Colbert

Charles Emerich  
Mary Emerich  
Jenny Fowles  
Phyllis Grayson

Sarah Hicks  
Bruce Langhorne  
Steve Lee  
Julia Lloyd

Kevin Lloyd  
Mary Pylipow  
Jane Shoemaker  
Jan Steever

### **Instrumentalists**

Amelia Amadio, guitar  
John Bailey, organ/piano  
Ben Haden, trumpet

Jordi Harrison, clarinet  
Laurie Harrison, flute

Barbara Krumdieck, cello  
Matt Presson, guitar/clarinet  
David Wilson, violin

### **We give thanks for all the children and youth participants in the carols and pageant scenes:**

Alexa, Amelia, Anthony, Asa, Braydon, Caroline, Chris, Dorothy, Elise, Eloise, Emily, Evie, Finn, Grace, Henry, James, Jaxon, Lilli, Lipe, Logan, Lydia, Madison, Margaret, Mati, Oliver, Quinn, Reaghan, Robert, Sophie, Teddy, Tess, and Vera.

**We also give thanks for the Flower Guild and all of the volunteers and staff working behind the scenes to make the service happen.**