



*"For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given"*

Isaiah 9:6

**A Service of Lessons and Carols**

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### About this service:

Tonight's service is an adaptation of the Christmas Carol Service traditionally held at King's College, Cambridge, England, on December 24<sup>th</sup>.

*Lessons and Carols* was first held on Christmas Eve, 1918. The lessons for tonight have been used for almost 100 years to recall God's promise to send a Savior, as well as that promise's fulfillment.

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HYMN: CW 50

Once in Royal David's City

### Exhortation and Prayer

M: Dear people of God, in this Christmas season, it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us – the Christ Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of this town and for all those in our own congregation.

And, because this pleases our Lord, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, and the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, those who do not love him, and those who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died

## The Blessing

M: May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life.

And the blessing of God Almighty – the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – be upon you and remain with you always.

C: **Amen.**

HYMN: CW 62

Joy to the World

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Join us tomorrow morning at 10:00 a.m. for  
our Christmas Day worship.

Merry Christmas!



## O Little Town of Bethlehem

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 wondering 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 giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heaven.  
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.

## Extinguishing of the Candles

M: Our hearts look to Christ, the Light of the world, who came at  
Bethlehem.  
Our hearts look to Christ, the Light of the world, who comes to us  
in his Word.  
Our hearts look to Christ, the Light of the world, who will come  
again.  
C: **Amen.**

We extinguish our candles.

## Prayer for Christmas Eve

M: When all was still in the middle of the night, your eternal Word, O  
Lord, descended from the almighty throne to dwell among us. May  
we receive him in the peace of forgiven hearts and proclaim your gra-  
cious goodwill to all people on earth, for he is God with us, Immanu-  
el, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now  
and forever.  
C: **Amen.**

in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise him each  
day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we  
are united with one another.

To sum up all these petitions, let us pray as Christ himself taught us.  
C: **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 de-  
liver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the  
glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## The Seed of the Woman will Crush the Serpent's Head

FIRST LESSON: Genesis 3:8-15

HYMN: CW 42 (verses 1-4) Come, Your Hearts and Voices Raising

## A Great Light to Break the Darkness

SECOND LESSON: Isaiah 9:2,6,7

HYMN: CW 61 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

## A Branch from the Stem of Jesse

THIRD LESSON: Isaiah 11:1-9

HYMN: CW 22 O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide  
*Sung by duet*

## A Shepherd Born in Bethlehem

FOURTH LESSON: Micah 5:2-4

HYMN: CW 53 (verses 2,3,5,6) To Shepherds as They Watched by Night

## Arise, Shine, for Your Light has Come

**FIFTH LESSON: Isaiah 60:1-6**

**HYMN: CW 80 (verses 1-3)**

**Angels from the Realms of Glory**

## **The Angel Gabriel Visits Mary**

**SIXTH LESSON: Luke 1:26-35, 38**

**HYMN: CW 52**

**On Christmas Night All Christians Sing**

## **The Birth of Jesus**

**SEVENTH LESSON: Matthew 1:18-25**

**HYMN: CW 54**

**Where Shepherds Lately Knelt**

## **The Shepherds Visit the Manger**

**EIGHTH LESSON: Luke 2:8-20**

**CHOIR: That First Nowell**

High in the heavens a star burning bright  
Brought the good news that first Christmas night.  
The angels were singing of peace and good will;  
They told of a Savior, a promise fulfilled.  
In excelsis Deo! In excelsis Deo! Gloria, Gloria Deo!

That first Nowell on a night long ago  
Was to certain poor shepherds on hillsides below.  
They were tending their sheep in the cold winter air  
When the song of the angels rang out ev'rywhere:  
Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!  
Come and rejoice in the news that we tell!

High in the heavens a star burning bright  
Tells us again it's Christmas tonight!  
The angels are singing of peace and good will;  
The promise of Christmas will stay with us still.

In excelsis Deo! In excelsis Deo! Gloria, Gloria Deo!

Nowell! Nowell! Nowell! Nowell!  
Gloria in excelsis Deo!

**OFFERING:** *Moved by God's love in Christ, we offer him our first and best gifts, purely out of thanks to him. As the offering is collected, please sign the friendship register and share it with others in your pew.*

**ADDRESS**

## **LIGHTING OF CANDLES**

### **The Mystery of the Incarnation**

As the organ begins to play, the pastor lights his candle from the Christ candle. The ushers light their candles from the pastor's candle, and proceed to offer light to the first person in each pew. Please tilt the unlit candles to light them from the lit candles.

After all the candles are lit, pastor will invite everyone to stand and sing.

### **Silent Night! Holy Night**

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.

**NINTH LESSON: John 1:1-5,10-14**