

# GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

# A Protestant church in the worldwide Anglican Communion.

# A Service of Christmas Lessons and Carols

December 26, 2021



#### Canticle

A Song of True Motherhood Julian of Norwich

God chose to be our mother in all things \*

and so made the foundation of his work,

most humbly and most pure, in the Virgin's womb.

God, the perfect wisdom of all, \*

arrayed himself in this humble place.

Christ came in our poor flesh \*

to share a mother's care.

Our mothers bear us for pain and for death; \*

our true mother, Jesus, bears us for joy and endless life.

Christ carried us within him in love and travail, \*

until the full time of his passion.

And when all was completed and he had carried us so for joy, \*

still all this could not satisfy the power of his wonderful love.

All that we owe is redeemed in truly loving God, \*

for the love of Christ works in us; Christ is the one whom we love.

# Opening Hymn

# Hark the Herald Angels Sing



#### THE LESSONS AND CAROLS

#### First Lesson

# Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

Adam and Eve disobey God's command and disrupt the order and goodness of creation.

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.' And to the man he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it", cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'

## Carol

## O little town of Bethlehem

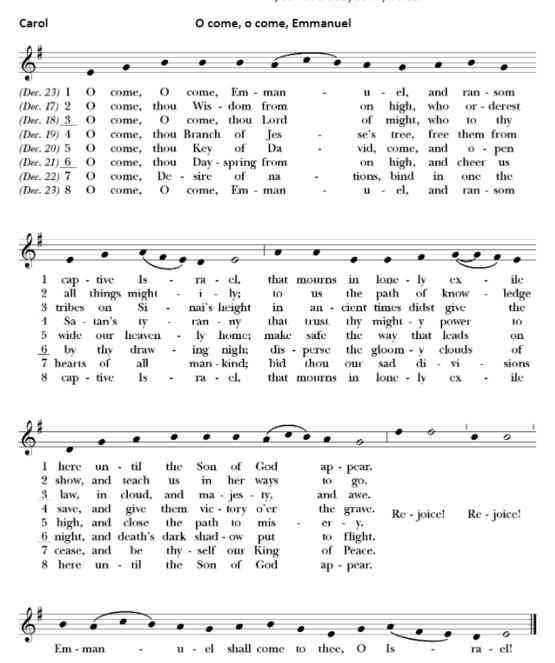


## Second Lesson

## Genesis 22:15-18

God promises that, through Abraham, all the peoples of the world will 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.'



# Third Lesson

# Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The people who walk in darkness receive the promise of the Messiah.

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 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.

# Carol

# God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen



## Fourth Lesson

# Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9

The Messiah will come from the root of Jesse to restore the peace of creation.

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

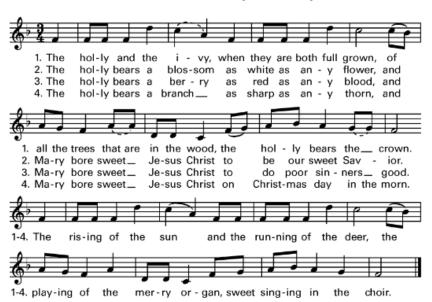
The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

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. 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.

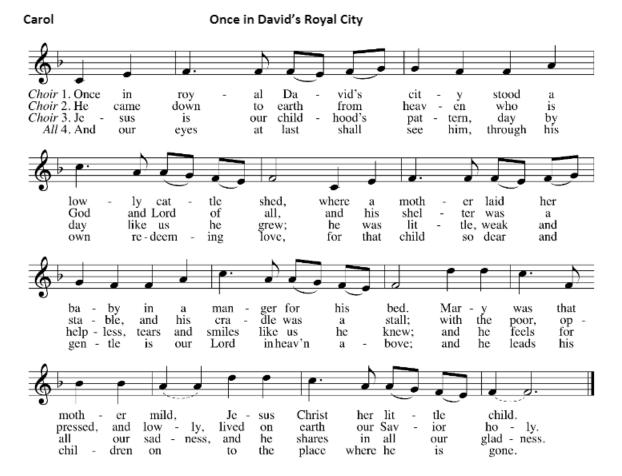
# Carol

# The Holly and the Ivy



An angel appears to Mary and announces that she will bear a child.

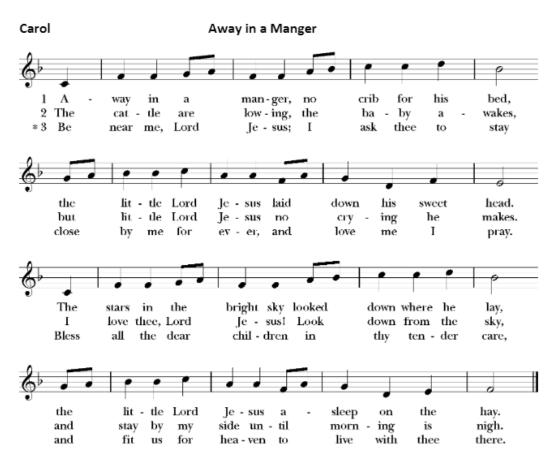
In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' But she was much perplexed by 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 favour 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 for ever, 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. 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.



Sixth Lesson Luke 2:1-7

Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem where Mary gives birth to her child.

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.



Seventh Lesson Luke 2:8-16

Angels appear to shepherds in the fields and announce the birth of the Messiah.

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 Saviour, 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 favours!'

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to 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.



# Eighth Lesson

#### Matthew 2:1-11

Magi from the East comes seeking the Messiah and offer gifts to the baby 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.



The Word of God becomes flesh and lives among us, full of grace and truth.

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.



## THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The People stand or kneel.

Let us pray to God, who came among us in the birth of Jesus. Gracious God, as a star rose, and drew people from great distances to Bethlehem that they might greet the Christ-child; Draw us, your Church, and all of your people to you – that we might be the Church and the People who you call us to be. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

As you gave Mary your Holy Spirit, filling her with the delight of your Presence; Fill us with your Spirit, and renew our lives. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

As Gentiles streamed to Jesus' Light, and Kings to the brightness of his rising; Draw our nation, our President, and all in authority, to His brightness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** 

As angels sang 'glorias' to you and proclaimed peace on earth, and goodwill among all peoples; Bring us your peace, and bring an end to and terror and strife. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** 

As shepherds were drawn away from their flocks by night; Draw those who do not know you yet to the knowledge and love of you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

As Jesus was born in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn; Be especially present with those who have nowhere to lay their head, those who are vulnerable, and those who are hungry. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

As the Holy Family gathered together in Bethlehem, and traveled together to far off lands; Bless all families, especially the families of our parish, and protect those who travel. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.** 

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

For all those who are sick or infirmed or who have asked for our prayers: Ena, Michelle, Jeff, Cindy, Samantha, Thor, Rosy, Liz, Janice, Jennifer, Nina, Frank, Barbara, Helen, Matthew, Jennie, Katherine, Reggie, Pam, Karen, Ollie, Jasmine, Allen, Donna, Tom, Darrell, Frankie, Sue, Dominique, Lianne, Lori, Michael, Eric, Leslie, Elliott, Neville, Bud, Sue, Mike, Deanna, Connie, Jenny, John, Helen, Charlotte, Adele, Joan, Jackie, James, Elizabeth, Yvonne, Jeff Lamb Family, Teresa.

That they may receive your healing touch. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For those whose lives are approaching death, and for those who have died, that they and their loved ones may receive the comfort of your loving embrace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

O Lord our God, may the Light and Hope of this season, and of your Son's Incarnation, reassure our hearts that you are among us, that you hear our prayer, and that you will be with us always, even to the end of the age. In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, we pray. **Amen.** 

# The Lord's Prayer

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 and ever. Amen



# Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

# Thanks be to God!

# The Prayers of this Congregation

For all refugees, especially those at our southern border; for the farmers across our country who are struggling; for Bonnie Perry, our Bishop, for Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury; Michael Curry, our Presiding Bishop; Wendell N. Gibbs, Jr., our retired bishop; Moises Quezada Mota, Bishop of the Diocese of the Dominican Republic; Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA Presiding Bishop; Donald P. Kreiss, ELCA Bishop, SE Michigan Synod; Craig Satterlee, ELCA Bishop, NW Lower Michigan Synod; Stewart Wood, our retired bishop; and our whole diocesan household, including Canterbury MSU in East Lansing, Church of the Great Commission in Dona Lila DR, St. George's in Milford; for Gretchen, our Governor; Joseph, our President; Kamala, our Vice Presidnt; and all members of Congress.

For Ena Pederson, Michelle, Jeff, Samantha, Cindy, Thor, Rosy, Liz Moorehouse, Janice Kibler, Jennifer Holland, Nina DiGaetano, Frank & Barbara Davenport, Donna Hanes, Helen Stein, Matthew Bishop, Jennie Berube, Katherine Domienik, Reggie Chrzanowski, Pam Sherry, Karen Blackburn, Ollie Denham, Jasmine Gardner, Allen David Clay, Tom Krell, Darrell Banks, Frankie Dion, Sue Schlanbusch, Dominique Czupski, Lianne Neumann, Lori Dodge, Michael Thomas, Eric & Leslie Mix, Elliott, Neville Thompson, Bud Denham, Sue Treend, Mike Zubas, Deanna Mejia, Connie Harvey, Jenny Kirby, John Schober, Charlotte Kalligeros, Adele Akasheh, Joan Walsh, Jackie Falconer, James Sikes, Elizabeth Gage, Yvonne Hawkins, Jeff Lamb Family, Teresa Davidson.

Please note: Names will remain on the prayer list for one month.

In order to add someone or keep someone on the prayer list, please call the office.

Do you know someone who is ill? Please contact the office and we will add them to the prayer list.

# **WARMING CENTER January 16-23**

Warming Center is not rotating among churches this year, but our help is still needed to provide food for their guests. \$5 gift cards donations to local fast food restaurants are being requested and there is a wish list that can be found on the bulletin board in the hallway.

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Clergy Emerita: The Rev. Deacon Betty Brogan
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