CHRISTMAS LESSONS AND CAROLS DECEMBER 28, 2025 10:00 AM



ST. DAVID'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND SCHOOL 43600 RUSSELL BRANCH PKWY ASHBURN, VA 20147 WWW.SDLIFE.ORG

A HISTORY OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

"A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was introduced by Eric Milner-White in 1918 to bring a more imaginative approach to worship. The service includes readings from the Bible. The opening carol is always 'Once in Royal David's City', and there is always a new, specially commissioned carol."

-King's College

The first "Lessons and Carols" service was held on Christmas Eve of 1880, in a temporary wooden structure that later became the Cathedral in Truro. It was devised by E.W. Benson, the first Bishop of Truro and later the Archbishop of Canterbury.

In the aftermath of World War 1, Eric Milner-White, Dean of King's College, Cambridge, reshaped the service as a more uplifting alternative to an Evensong on Christmas Eve. He wrote the Bidding Prayer that is still used today and began the festival with "Once in Royal David's City." The service quickly became a cherished tradition, adopted by schools, chapels, and churches worldwide.

As the preface to the King's College Festival's Order of Service states,

"Wherever the service is heard and however it is adapted, whether the music is provided by choir or congregation, the pattern and strength of the service...derive from the lessons. 'The main theme is the development of the loving purposes of God ...' seen 'through the windows and the words of the Bible'. The centre of the service is still found by those who go 'in heart and mind' and who consent to follow where the story leads."

St. David's presents a Festival of Six Lessons and Carols, adapted from the King's College order of service to fit our congregation. We invite you to listen to the diverse voices of St. David's through scripture and song.

Merry Christmastide!

PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL: "Once in Royal David's City" *Irby* (H102)





WELCOME
INTRODUCTION TO TODAY'S WORSHIP

The Rev. Stephen P. Hagerty

BIDDING PRAYER

Beloved in Christ, in this season of Christmastide, let it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem, to see 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 his holy Child; and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace 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 the 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 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:

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.

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.

It is customary for there to be no sermon at Lessons and Carols, the gospel being proclaimed by the lessons themselves.

LESSONS & CAROLS

LESSON ONE: Genesis 3:1-15

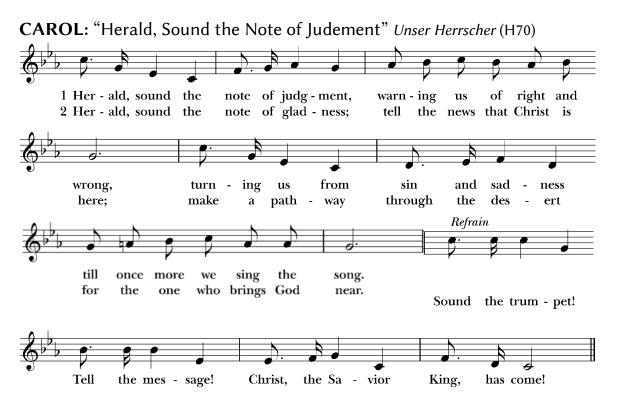
Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden.

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.**



LESSON TWO: Isaiah 40:1-11

God comforts his people and calls on them to prepare for redemption.

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

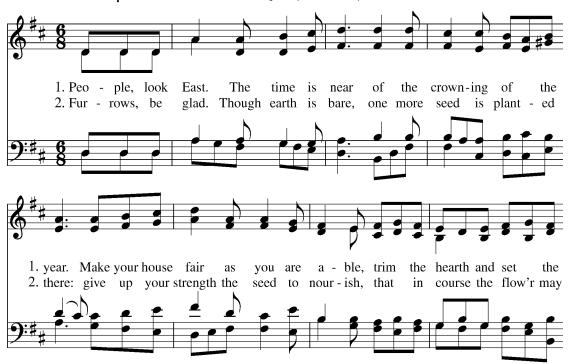
A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever.

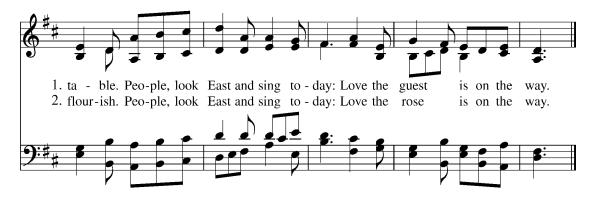
Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities

of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

Reader: The Word of the Lord **People: Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: "People Look East" *Besançon* (WLP 724)





LESSON THREE: Isaiah 7:10-15

God promises that a child shall be conceived who will be known as "God with us."

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, "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: "In the Bleak Midwinter" Cranham (H112)





LESSON FOUR: Luke 1:26-38

The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear a Son of the most high.

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord **People: Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: "Wexford Carol" Irish Folk Melody

Good people all, this Christmas-time, Consider well, and bear in mind, What our good God for us has done, In sending His beloved Son.

With Mary holy, we should pray
To God with love this Christmas day;
In Bethlehem upon that morn,
There was a blessed Messiah born.

Let all your songs and praises be, Unto His heav'n'ly majesty; And evermore, amongst our mirth, Remember Christ our Savior's birth.

That night the Virgin Mary, mild, Was safe deliver'd of a child; According unto heav'n's decree, Man's sweet salvation for to be.

LESSON FIVE: Luke 2:21-35

Jesus is named and presented in the temple.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

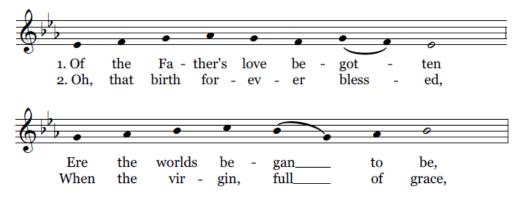
Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

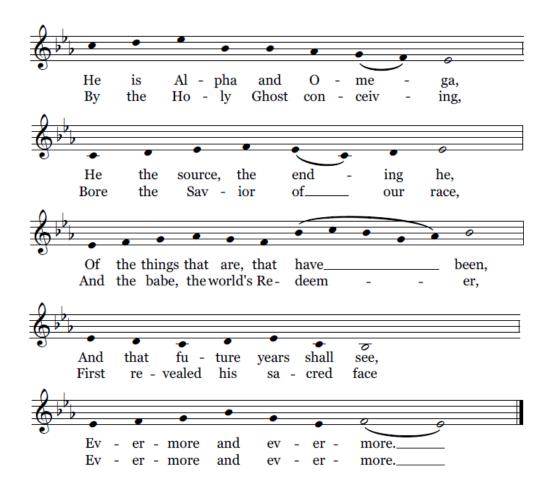
"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul, too."

Reader: The Word of the Lord **People: Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: "Of the Father's Love Begotten" English Carol





LESSON SIX: John 1:1-18

The Word was made flesh and we have seen his glory.

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, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me." From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is the only Son, himself God, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Reader: The Word of the Lord **People: Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: "The Holly and the Ivy" English 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.

Refrain:

O, the rising of the sun, And the running of the deer The playing of the merry organ, Sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a blossom, As white as lily flower, And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, To be our dear Savior. *Refrain* The holly bears a berry, As red as any blood, And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ, To do poor sinners good. *Refrain*

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. Refrain

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Deacon: Christ Jesus has gathered the Church in unity through the Holy Spirit. With sure and certain hope, let us pray for the Church and for the World saying: Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

The celebrant and people respond to each prayer as the members of the parish lead the prayers from their pews.

Celebrant: Maker of all things, in the beginning, you created heaven and earth. In the fullness of time, you restored all things in Christ. Redeem, restore and renew our broken world with your grace and mercy.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Holy Trinity of Love, you desire the unity of all people. Set aflame the whole Church with the fire of your Spirit and inspire us to live in the world where we seek to be united in your love.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Life of the world, you breathed new life into the flesh you first created. By your Spirit, breathe new life into all the children of this earth, especially those who are grieving, suffering or in despair. Turn hatred into love, sorrow into joy, and war into peace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

God of compassion, through your Spirit you supply every human need. Heal the sick, comfort the distressed, befriend the friendless, and free the forgotten. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

We commend to your mercy all who have died. We pray that they may rest in the comfort of your saving embrace; and that we may share with them in your eternal kingdom.

(You may add your own prayers silently or aloud) Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

Source of peace, your Spirit restores our anxious spirits and comforts our weary souls during this time of so many challenges. Give all those who govern and hold authority wisdom and a heart for justice. We pray for all victims of war, especially those in Ukraine and the Middle East. In our labor, give us rest; in our temptation, give us strength; in our sadness, give us solace. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Celebrant: Faithful and loving God, you sent your Spirit to empower the first disciples to be witnesses to your truth. Empower us, embolden us, and all who believe, to speak your Word in love so that the world may know the life and love of Jesus Christ through our very lives and our good works. **Amen.**

CONFESSION OF SIN

Deacon: Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God.

OFFERTORY "SING WE NOW OF CHRISTMAS" Noël Nouvelet

St. David's is entirely funded by the generosity of God manifested through its parishioners and community. If you would like to support our many ministries, please consider contributing to the offering plate, or online by scanning this QR code with your phone camera.



THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Celebrant: The Lord be with you. **People:** And also with you.

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

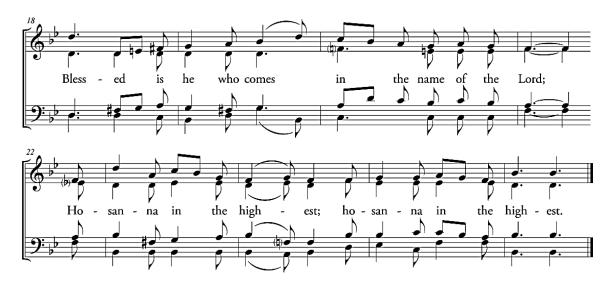
People: We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready the creation. Your spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being; sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love. And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:





The Celebrant continues with the Eucharistic Prayer:

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God. To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God.

Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself, yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love.

Then, the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you.

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ, crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice. Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and Blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth

and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made. In the fullness of time bring us, with St. David all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

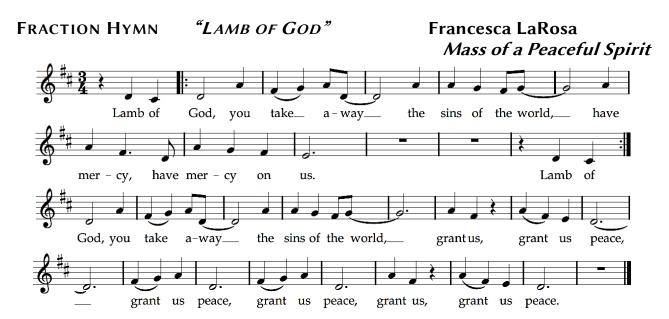
THE LORD'S PRAYER

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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.

Celebrant: Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; **People:** Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.



This is the table, not of the Church, but of the Lord. It is made ready for those who love him and for those who want to love him more. So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little, you who have been here often and you who have not been here long, you who have tried to follow and you who have failed. Come, because it is the Lord who invites you. It is his will that those who want him should meet him here. These are the Gifts of God for the People of God.

The congregation remains seated until an usher invites them forward for Communion. Jesus invites the whole world to be in a relationship with him. All baptized persons of any denomination are welcome to our Lord's Table where bread and wine are blessed and broken and shared in remembrance of Christ Jesus our Lord. If you would like a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. A healing minister will be near the entrance to provide healing prayers for anyone who would like a prayer for themselves or someone else during the distribution of the Holy Eucharist. All are welcome.

"A NEW YEAR CAROL" Levy Dew, B. Britten COMMUNION

Here we bring new water From the well so clear, For to worship God with this Happy New Year.

Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, The water and the wine; The seven bright gold wires, And the bugles that shine.

Sing reign of Fair Maid, With gold upon her toe, Open you the West Door And turn the Old Year go.

Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, The water and the wine; The seven bright gold wires, And the bugles that shine.

Sing reign of Fair Maid, With gold upon her chin, Open you the East Door And let the New Year in.

Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, The water and the wine; The seven bright gold wires, And the bugles that shine.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours. Take us, renew us and remake us. What we have been is past; what we shall be, through you, still awaits us. Lead us on. Take us with you. Amen.

BLESSING

RECESSIONAL "DING DONG! MERRILY ON HIGH" Branle de L'Official



DISMISSAL

Deacon: Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia, Alleluia!

People: Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia!

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