



Lessons and Carols

CHRISTMAS EVE
WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 24, 2025
6:00PM
10:00PM



TRINITY
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Tonight we gather for a service that has been shaping the worship of God's people for well over a century. The "Service of Lessons and Carols" was first put together in 1880 by Archbishop Edward White Benson while he was serving as Bishop of Truro in Cornwall, England. His intention was simple. In a season often filled with distraction and overindulgence, he longed for people to be drawn out of the Cornish pubs and into the presence of Christ through the beauty of Scripture and song.

In 1918 the service was adapted and held in King's College Chapel in Cambridge by Dean Eric Milner-White, and from there it spread across the world. Since 1928 the BBC has broadcast it nearly every year, first on radio and later on television, so that countless believers could hear again the story of redemption told from Genesis to the Gospels in the words of Scripture and the music of God's people.

As we enter into this service tonight, we join our voices with a great cloud of witnesses across time and place. May the Lord use these readings and carols to draw our hearts away from lesser things and to lift our eyes toward the Savior who has come, Christ the Lord.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined.

For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Alleluia!

Once In Royal David's City

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Words: Cecil Frances Alexander, 1848 | Music: IRBY, Henry J. Gauntlett, 1849

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 the mother mild
Jesus Christ her little Child

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 Savior holy

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

And our eyes at last shall see him
Thro' 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 has gone

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
When like stars his children crowned
All in white shall wait around

The Invocation

concluding with:

***O Source of all good,
what shall I render to Thee for the gift of gifts,
Thine own dear Son,
begotten, not created,
my redeemer, surety, substitute,
His self-emptying incomprehensible,
His infinity of love beyond the heart's grasp.***

Herein is wonder of wonders:

***He came below to raise me above,
was born like me that I might become like Him.***

Herein is love:

***when I cannot rise to Him, He draws near on wings of grace,
To raise me to Himself.***

***O God, take me in spirit to the watchful shepherds,
and enlarge my mind;***

***let me hear good tidings of great joy,
and hearing, believe, rejoice, praise and adore,
my eyes uplifted to a reconciled Father.***

***Let me with Simeon clasp the new-born Child to my heart,
embrace Him with undying faith,
exulting that He is mine and I am His.***

***In Him Thou hast given me so much
that heaven can give no more. Amen!***

The First Scripture Reading | Genesis 3:3-15

God tells sinful Adam and Eve the consequences of their disobedience, but also promises that one day the serpent will be defeated; this is the first proclamation of the gospel.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Words: Latin antiphons, 12th cent.; Latin hymn, 1710; tr. John Mason Neale, 1851 | Music: VENI EMMANUEL; plainsong, 13th cent.; arr. Thomas Helmore, 1856

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear.

**Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.**

O come Thou Rod of Jesse free
Thine own from Satan's tyranny
From depths of hell Thy people save
And give them vic-try o'er the grave

O come Thou Dayspring come and cheer,
Our spirits by Thine Advent here.
and drive away the shadows of night,
And pierce the clouds and bring us light

O come Desire of nations bind,
all peoples in one heart and mind
Bid Thou our sad divisions cease,
And be thyself our King of Peace.

The Second Scripture Reading | Genesis 22:15-19

*God promises Abraham that through his family all nations will be blessed,
pointing to Christ the Savior.*

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Words: Latin hymn; Attr; to John Francis Wade, 1751; Tr. Frederick Oakeley, 1841 | Music: ADESTE FIDELES; John Francis Wade, Cantus Diversi, 1751

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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;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
glory to God,
all glory in the highest;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning:
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father,
late in flesh appearing;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him;
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!

**For you alone are worthy,
For you alone are worthy,
For you alone are worthy,
Christ the Lord!**

The Third Scripture Reading | Isaiah 9:2-7

God promises that a child will be born who will bring light, peace, and an everlasting kingdom.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

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Words: Phillips Brooks, 1868 | Music: ST. LOUIS; Lewis H. Redner, 1868

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 wond'ring 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 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.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels,
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!

The Fourth Scripture Reading | Isaiah 11:1-9

God promises a Spirit-filled King from Jesse's family who will rule with justice and bring peace to all creation.

Away In A Manger

Words: Anon. and John Thomas McFarland, 1882 | Music: James Ramsey Murray, 1887

Away in a manger
No crib for His bed
The little Lord Jesus
Lay down His sweet head
The stars in the sky
look down where lay
The little Lord Jesus
Asleep on the hay

The cattle are lowing
The baby awakes
But little Lord Jesus
No crying he makes
I love you Lord Jesus
Look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle
'Til morning is nigh

Be near me Lord Jesus
I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever
And love me I pray
Bless all The dear children
In thy tender care
And fit us for Heaven
To live with thee there

The Fifth Scripture Reading | Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel tells Mary that she will bear a son, Jesus, who will reign forever as God's promised King.

Angels We Have Heard on High

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Words: Traditional French carol | Music: GLORIA; traditional French melody, arr. Edward Shippen Barnes, 1937

Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echo back their joyous strains.
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be,
which inspire your heav'nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see
him whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
gloria in excelsis Deo.

The Sixth Scripture Reading | Luke 2:1-7

Jesus is born in Bethlehem, fulfilling God's promise of a Savior who comes in humility.

Thou Who Wast Rich Beyond All Splendor

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Words: Frank Houghton, 1894-1972 | Music: French carol melody arr. Charles H. Kitson, 1939

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor,
all for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender,
Sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor,
All for love's sake becamest poor.

Thou who art God beyond all praising,
All for love's sake becamest man;
Stooping so low, but sinners raising
heav'nward by thine eternal plan.
Thou who art God beyond all praising,
All for love's sake becamest man.

Thou who art love beyond all telling,
Savior and King, we worship Thee.
Emmanuel, within us dwelling,
Make us what thou would'st have us be.
Thou who art love beyond all telling,
Savior and King, we worship thee.

The Seventh Scripture Reading | Luke 2:8-16

Angels announce to shepherds that Christ the Lord has been born, bringing good news of great joy for all people.

What Child Is This?

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Words: Traditional English carol; adapted by William C. Dix, ca. 1866 | Music: GREENSLEEVES; English melody, 16th c.

What child is this who, laid to rest,
on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet
with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies he in such mean estate,
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christians, fear;
for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through;
the cross be borne for me, for you:
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings
salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby:
joy, joy for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary.

The Eighth Scripture Reading | Matthew 2:1-12

Wise men from the east come to worship Jesus, showing that He is the King for all nations.

○ Holy Night

Words: Placide Cappeau, 1843, tr. John Sullivan Dwight, 1855 | Music: Adolphe Charles Adam, 1847

O holy night the stars are brightly shining
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn

Fall on your knees
O hear the angel voices
O night divine
O night when Christ was born
O night O holy night
O night divine

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming
With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming
Here came the wise men from Orient land
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger
In all our trials born to be our Friend

He knows our need
To weakness is no stranger
Behold your King
Before Him lowly bend
Behold your King
Before Him lowly bend

Truly He taught us to love one another
His law is love and His gospel is peace
Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother
And in His name all oppression shall cease
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we
Let all within us praise His holy name

Christ is the Lord
O praise His name forever
His power and glory
Evermore proclaim
His power and glory
Evermore proclaim

The Ninth Scripture Reading | John 1:1-14

The eternal Word of God became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth.

Silent Night

Words: Joseph Mohr, 1818 | Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1818

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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!
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.

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!
Wondrous star, lend thy light
With the angels let us sing
Alleluias to our King
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born.

God Sends Us Out With His Good Word | 1 Thess. 5:23-28

Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.... The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Merry Christmas!

Thanks be to God!
Merry Christmas!

Trinity Chamber Ensemble

Erik Reed, trumpet
James Wingo, euphonium
Melanie Woodard, piano

6pm Lessons & Carols

Hadleigh Dees, processional vocalist
Chris Cadieux, vocalist
Keil Cadieux, vocalist
Erik Reed, trumpet
Abby Casper, upright bass
John Dellavedova, drums
T.J. Warren, piano

10pm Lessons & Carols

Luke Carter, violin
Erik Reed, trumpet
Abby Casper, upright bass
T.J. Warren, piano



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