

KIRK IN THE HILLS
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
A SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS
DECEMBER 19, 2021



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 Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

— Luke 2:10-11



What is Lessons and Carols? Quite simply it's just as the name suggests- scripture lessons interspersed with carols. But it is more than that, isn't it?

Have you ever been so immersed in reading a book that you do everything you can to stay in that world just a little while longer? You read the back cover one more time, or glimpse at the preface, or go straight to the sequel. If there isn't a sequel, do you wander the woods of Narnia, or ponder the sounds of Elvish in your mind. The story sticks with you; and maybe that day you might converse a little more grandly or do something chivalrous or sing a little more sweetly that song on the radio.

The story gets into your lens, your viewpoint for a couple hours, if not days; and if your story is a movie, what about the soundtrack? There's a haunting melody that gets stuck in your head- and you don't mind that you can't get it out.

Well, the story of Christ's coming into the world, is one that sticks with you, because it's not just the characters in Jerusalem, Nazareth, Rome, or Bethlehem, it is much bigger than that. Lessons and Carols follows the story of God's promise to mankind through scripture from the fall of man through the birth of Jesus, illuminated by carols, anthems and congregational hymns. The service originated in England and is most strongly associated with the Choir of King's College Chapel, Cambridge University, which broadcasts its Service of Nine Lessons and Carols every Christmas Eve. With the increase in hymnody in the latter part of the 19th century, the church sought to attract pubgoers by introducing carols to replace revelry with worship. The carol, which had been mostly secular in nature, then became a vehicle to share the story of Jesus coming into the world. Dean Milner-White, who began the tradition of the service at King's College in 1918, said of the service that its 'main theme is the development of the loving purposes of God ...' seen 'through the windows and the words of the Bible.'

The story of Christ's coming into the world isn't just Bethlehem and the manger. It is the story of Adam and Eve, Abraham and Isaac, Solomon and David, Ruth and Boaz, and the list goes on for generations. The beauty of this story is that it isn't frozen in time two thousand years ago. It started before the world began, it is still being written here and now, and it will continue long after we are here, because that is how amazing God's love is for us. The story of God's love for us is this epic tale that is glimpsed when we suspend in this tiny moment of the birth of Jesus.

As the Chancel Choir and Youth Choirs lead us in today's Lessons and Carols, we get to immerse ourselves just a little while longer. Let a piece of scripture, let a melody, let God get stuck in your head and heart this morning.



THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

9:00 & 10:30 a.m., Sanctuary Service

GATHERING

THE CARILLON

OPENING VOLUNTARY

A Christmas Prelude

Charles Callahan

CANDLE LIGHTING LITANY *from Awake, Transform, Reveal, Be Born Anew*

Michael Burkhardt

The Ford family, 9:00 a.m. ~ The Slivinski Family, 10:30 a.m.

At every beginning there is a yearning.

O Emmanuel, surprise us by your coming.

Be born anew in our hearts.

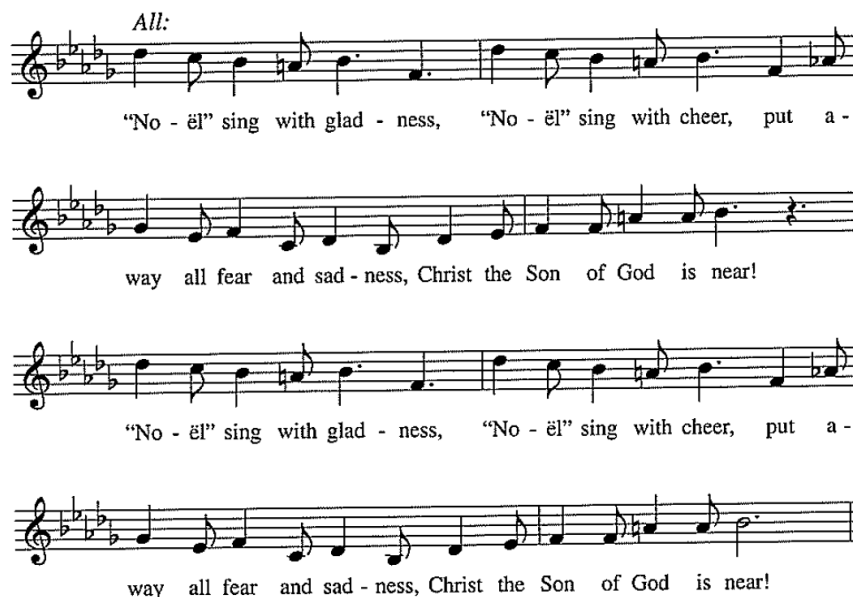
O Emmanuel, surprise us by your coming.

Soloist:

Christ the Lord is coming! Sing this happy morn
of the Word Incarnate in whom we are reborn!

Please join the choir singing the refrain:

All:



"No - ël" sing with glad - ness, "No - ël" sing with cheer, put a -
way all fear and sad - ness, Christ the Son of God is near!
"No - ël" sing with glad - ness, "No - ël" sing with cheer, put a -
way all fear and sad - ness, Christ the Son of God is near!

Let us pray.

We welcome your presence now with the lighting of these
candles whose flames brings warmth to winter and fill
this place with the glow of hope, peace, joy and love. **Amen.**

* *Please rise in body or spirit at the ringing of the tower bell.*

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Psalm 96:1-2

Sing to the Lord a new song;

sing to the Lord, all the earth!

Sing to the Lord and bless God's name;

tell the good news of salvation from day to day.

*** PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

Once in Royal David's City

Irby, arr. David Willcocks

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.

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 meek, 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.**

**For he is our childhood's pattern,
Day by day like us he grew,
He was little, weak and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us he knew,
And he feeleth for our sadness,
And he shareth in our gladness.**

**And our eyes at last shall see him,
Through 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 is 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.**

Please be seated following the processional hymn.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *from The Book of Common Worship*

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen.**

ANTHEM

The Gift of Love

Sue Ellen Page

Prepare our hearts and minds.
Father, help us to prepare some room in our hearts
for the coming of your gift of Love.
Father, help us to prepare a world that waits in doubt and fear.
Father, help us to prepare the world for the coming
of the gift of Love,
for the coming of your Son, for the coming of your love to us.

Junior Girls' Choir

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUR FAITH IN ACTION

Officer Nominations Class of 2024

Brian Sliwinski

THANKSGIVING

*** HYMN 144**

In the Bleak Midwinter

Cranham

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Our giving is an offering to God. All offerings, whether made in the worship service or outside of it, are part of our worship of God and are used to support the Kirk's ministry here and in other parts of the world.

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

ANTHEM

People, Look East

Besançon, arr. Barry Rose

People, look East. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able;
trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look East and sing today: Love, the Guest is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
that in course the flower may flourish.
People look East and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Angels, announce to man and beast
Him who cometh from the East.
Set every peak and valley humming
with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look East and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Junior and Senior Girls' Choir

SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

FIRST LESSON

Adam and Eve disobey God

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

HYMN 121

O Little Town of Bethlehem

St. Louis and Forest Green

Please remain seated to sing as indicated:

arr. Michael Burkhardt

Stanza 1 - Chancel Choir

Stanza 2 - All

Stanza 3 - All

Stanza 4 - Chancel Choir

SECOND LESSON

God's promise to Abraham

Genesis 22:15-18

HYMN 129

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Es ist ein Ros'

Please remain seated to sing following the extended introduction.

THIRD LESSON

A great light in the darkness

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

* HYMN 123 (Stanzas 1 & 5)

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

Carol

Please rise in body or spirit to sing.

FOURTH LESSON

A little child will lead them

Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9

ANTHEM

The Dream Isaiah Saw

Glenn L. Rudolph

Lions and oxen will sleep in the hay,
leopards will join with the lambs as they play,
wolves will be pastured with cows in the glade,
blood will not darken the earth that God made.

*Little child whose bed is straw,
take new lodgings in my heart.
Bring the dream Isaiah saw:
life redeemed from fang and claw.*

Peace will pervade more than forest and field:
God will transfigure the Violence concealed
deep in the heart and in systems of gain,
ripe for the judgment the Lord will ordain.

*Little child whose bed is straw,
take new lodgings in my heart.
Bring the dream Isaiah saw:
justice purifying law.*

Nature reordered to match God's intent,
nations obeying the call to repent,
all of creation completely restored,
filled with the knowledge and love of the Lord.

*Little child whose bed is straw,
take new lodgings in my heart.
Bring the dream Isaiah saw:
knowledge, wisdom, worship, awe.*

Text by Thomas H. Troeger

FIFTH LESSON

An angel appears to Mary

Luke 1:26-35, 38

CANTICLE

A New Magnificat

Carolyn Jennings

Hannah:
My heart exults in the Lord;
my strength is exalted in the Lord.
My mouth derides my enemies;
I rejoice in God's salvation

Mary:
My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
who looks upon a lowly handmaid with favor.
All generations shall call me blessed.

Congregation:



Hannah:

There is none holy like the Lord;
there is no rock like our God.
Let not your mouth be arrogant,
for the Lord is a god of all knowledge.

Mary:

For God who is mighty has done great things for me,
and holy is God's name.
And God's mercy is giv'n to God's people
from generation to generation.

Congregation:



Hannah:

The bows of the mighty are broken,
but the feeble put on strength.
Those who were full are hungry,
and those who were hungry are filled.

Mary:

Strong is the arm of the Lord,
who has scattered the proud in their hearts;
God has put down the mighty
and lifted those of low degree.

Hannah:

The Lord kills and brings to life.
God brings low and also exalts.
God lifts up the poor from the dust
to sit with rulers and inherit a seat of honor.

(Choir):

For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's
and on them God has set the world.

Mary:

Strong is the arm of the Lord,
who has scattered the proud in their hearts.
God has filled the hungry,
and the rich have been sent empty away.

Congregation:



Hannah:
 God will guard the faithful flock,
 and human might shall not prevail.
 The Lord will judge the earth;
 and will exalt the pow'r of God's anointed.

Mary:
 For the Lord has helped the servant Israel
 in remember of God's love and mercy,
 which was promised to Sarah and Abraham,
 and to their children's children forever.

Congregation:



Hannah:
 Alleluia!

Mary:
 Alleluia!

Choir:
 Amen.

SIXTH LESSON

Mary gives birth in Bethlehem

Luke 2:1-7

CAROL

Away in a Manger

Mueller

Please remain seated and sing:

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
 the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.
 The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
 the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

ANTHEM

Were You There on That Christmas Night

Natalie Sleeth

Were you there on that Christmas night, when the world was filled with a holy light? Were you there to behold when the wonder foretold came to earth?	Did you hear how the choir of angels sang at the glory of the sight? Did you hear how the bells of heaven rang all through the night?
Did you see how they hailed him King with the gifts so rare that they chose to bring? Did you see how they bowed as they praise him aloud at his birth?	Did you know it was God's own Son, the salvation of the world begun? Did you know it was love that was sent from above to the earth?

The Senior Boys' and Girls' Choirs

SEVENTH LESSON

Angels announce the Messiah

Luke 2:8-16

HOMILY

Hometowns: The Field in Bethlehem

Dr. Nate Phillips

* HYMN 119

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Mendelssohn

Stanza 1 – Harmony

Stanza 2 – Harmony

Stanza 3 – Unison

EIGHTH LESSON

Magi come from the East

Matthew 2:1-11

CAROL

We Three Kings of Orient Are

Kings of Orient

Please remain seated and sing:

**We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
filed and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.
O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to they perfect light.**

NINTH LESSON

And the Word became flesh

John 1:1-14

ANTHEM

Star Carol

John Rutter

Sing this night, for a boy is born in Bethlehem,
Christ our Lord, in a lowly manger lies:
Bring your gifts, come and worship at his cradle.
Hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!

See his star shining bright in the sky this Christmas night!

Follow me joyfully; hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!

Angels bright come from heaven’s highest glory,
bear the news with its message of good cheer:
“Sing, rejoice, for a King is come to save us.
Hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!”

See, he lies in his mother’s tender keeping,
Jesus Christ in her loving arms asleep.
Shepherds poor, come to worship and adore him,
offer their humble gifts before the son of Mary.

Let us all pay our homage at the manger,
sing his praise on this joyful Christmas night.
Christ is come, bringing promise of salvation!
Hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!

SENDING

* LITANY

Please rise in body or spirit.

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.

Glory to God in the highest!

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

Glory to God in the highest!

For a child has been born for us, a Son has been given to us.

Glory to God in the highest!

He is Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Glory to God in the highest!

To us is born in the city of David a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord.

Glory to God in the highest!

And the Word became flesh and lived among us.

Glory to God in the highest!

*** HYMN 133**

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste Fideles

Stanza 1 – Harmony

Stanza 2 – Harmony

Stanza 3 – Unison

Stanza 4 – Unison

*** CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

*** CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing. . . .**

CLOSING VOLUNTARY

Joy to the World

Michael Burkhardt

Assisting with musical leadership for worship this morning are: Treble Boys' Choir; Junior Girls' Choir; Senior Girls' Choir; Senior Boys' Choir; Chancel Choir; Judy Premin, and Rebecca Eaddy, soloists; Carol Beth Litkouhi, flute; Julian Grabarek, piano; Dennis Curry, carillon and organ; and Nicole Joseph, soloist, Interim Director of Music, and director of children's choirs.

Notes on worship and music

During today's worship we turn the corner from Advent and are heading toward Christmas. We have been preparing to celebrate Christ's coming 2000 years ago and for his coming again in the future. These elements continue as we look forward.

Through the late 19th century, the singing of Christmas carols was normally performed by singers visiting people's houses, and carols – generally considered to be secular in content – had been excluded from Christian worship. In the 1870s, Christmas carols began to be sung in British cathedrals. “. . . Right Rev. Edward White Benson, at that time Bishop of Truro, conducted the first formal service of "Nine

Lessons and Carols" on Christmas Eve (24 December) 1880. Benson, concerned at the excessive consumption of alcohol in Cornish pubs during the festive season, sought a means of attracting revelers out of the pubs and into church by offering a religious celebration of Christmas."

Today's worship is intended to help you look toward the past to the Old Testament prophecies and move forward into the birth of Christ.

Two texts deserve special attention today:

The Rev. Dr. Thomas Troeger, a minister in both the Episcopal and Presbyterian denominations and retired from Yale, has written the engaging text for *The Dream Isaiah Saw*. Take a couple minutes and read the text closely. It's been set to music by Glenn Rudolph who has composed music for the Kirk in the past.

Another text, *A New Magnificat*, takes some scriptural knowledge to totally understand. You might pick up the Bible or find the text on your phone to read Hannah's song (I Samuel 2) and compare it to Mary's song (Luke 1), also known as the Magnificat. What similarities do you find between the Old Testament and New Testament texts?

Dr. Nate Phillips will present a homily, *Hometowns: The Field of Bethlehem*. How many references to Bethlehem do you hear in today's worship? Now "Hurry to Bethlehem and see the son of Mary!"

Stephen Ministers are available for personal, confidential prayer in Melrose Chapel (to the left, when facing forward in the sanctuary) immediately following service each Sunday. If you or someone you know is in need of prayer please contact Nancy Lau at 248-835-6691.



Coffee Hour - Join us for fellowship in Heritage Hall from 10:00 -11:00 a.m. each Sunday!

Tour Kirk in the Hills each Sunday! Those interested in a brief tour are asked to meet in the Baptistry, to the right of the Chancel, after the 10:30 a.m. service. See an usher for direction or further details.

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About today's cover art

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Influenced by her knowledge of Byzantine iconography, this Bulgarian artist enjoys unveiling the messages of Biblical events through her art. She studied the philosophy of Byzantine pictorial art and later obtained a degree in Theology. This image, created in 2012, is oil paint on a wood panel.

From left to right: Rev. Kelsey Sorge, Rev. Dr. Nate Phillips, Rev. Angela Ryo, Rev. Edwin Estevez



We envision a world where every heart experiences God's transforming love.



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