



he Original Christmas Service of Nine Lessons and Carols was drawn up by Bishop E.W. Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury, for use in the wooden shed, which then served as his cathedral in Truro, on Christmas Eve 1880. A.C. Benson recalled: 'My father arranged from ancient sources a little service for Christmas Eve - nine carols and nine tiny lessons, which were read by various officers of the Church, beginning with a chorister, and ending, through the different grades, with the Bishop.' The suggestion had come from G.H.S. Walpole, later Bishop of Edinburgh.

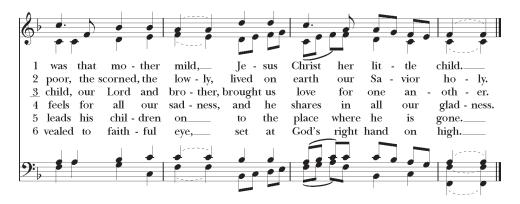
The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, as we know it today, was adapted by The Very Reverend Eric Milner-White for use at King's College Chapel, Cambridge on Christmas Eve 1918. In his words, 'The main theme is the development of the loving purposes of God ...' seen 'through the windows and words of the Bible'. Local interests appear in the bidding prayer and personal circumstances give point to different parts of the service. Many of those who took part in the first service surely must have recalled those killed in the Great War - 'all those who rejoice with us but on another shore and in a greater light'. The center of the service is still found by those who 'go in heart and mind' and who consent to follow where the story leads.

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

December 20, 2020

Hymn





Words: Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895) and James McCrady (b. 1938) Music: IRBY; John Gauntlett (1805-1876)

The Bidding Prayer

BLOVED IN CHRIST, in this season of Christmas, 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 this holy Child; and let us look forward in hope to the time when all creation is renewed and all people are brought into God's Kingdom of peace and righteousness.

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 cold, 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:

¶ Officiant and People

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,
for ever and ever. Amen.

9 Officiant

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. ¶People Amen.



Invitatory Carol

In the bleak midwinter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold him Nor earth sustain; Heaven and earth shall flee away When he comes to reign: In the bleak midwinter A stable place sufficed The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ.

Enough for him, whom cherubim Worship night and day,
A breast-ful of milk
And a manger-ful of hay;
Enough for him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

What can I give him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part,
Yet what I can I give him,
Give my heart.

Words: Christina Rossetti (1830–1894) Music: Harold Darke (1888–1976)



THE FIRST LESSON Genesis 3:1-15

GOD ANNOUNCES IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN THAT THE SEED OF WOMAN SHALL BRUISE THE SERPENT'S HEAD

OW THE SERPENT WAS MORE SUBTILE than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Adam lay ybounden
Bounden in a bond;
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.

And all was for an appel,
An appel that he took,
As clerkes finden
Written in a book.

Ne had the appil taken been, The apple taken been, Ne had never our lady Abeen heavenë queen.

Blessed be the time
That appil taken was,
Therefore we mun singen,
Deo gracias.

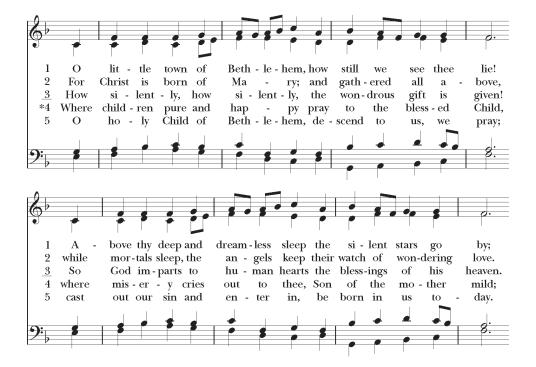
Words: Anonymous; Fifteenth-Century English Music: Peter Warlock (1894–1930)



THE PROPHET MICAH FORETELLS THE GLORY OF LITTLE BETHLEHEM

BUT THOU, BETHLEHEM EPHRATAH, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

Hymn





Words: Philips Brooks (1835-1893) Music: Forest Green; Traditional English



THE PEACE OF CHRIST IS FORESHOWN

ND THERE SHALL COME FORTH A ROD out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring – News of great joy, news of great mirth, News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore. Amen.

Words: Traditional English Music: Traditional English Carol; arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)



THE ANGEL GABRIEL SALUTES THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

ND IN THE SIXTH MONTH the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

The angel Gabriel from heaven came, his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame; 'All hail!' said he, 'thou lowly maiden Mary, Most highly favoured lady,' *Gloria!*

'For know a blessed Mother thou shalt be, all generations laud and honour thee, thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold. Most highly favoured lady,' *Gloria!*

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
'To me be as it pleaseth God, she said,
'My soul shall laud and magnify His Holy Name.'
Most highly favoured lady,' Gloria!

Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn, and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say:

Most highly favoured lady,' Gloria!

Words: Traditional Basque Carol; para. Sabine Baring–Gould (1834–1924) Music: Traditional Basque Carol; arr. Robert Lehman (2020)



THE FIFTH LESSON LUKE 1:39-56

THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY SALUTES HER COUSIN ELISABETH

ND MARY AROSE IN THOSE DAYS, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." And Mary said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever." And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

I sing of a maiden
That is makeless;
King of all kings
To her son she ches.

He came all so still
Where his mother was,
As dew in April
That falleth on the grass.

He came all so still

To his mother's bower,

As dew in April

That falleth on the flower.

He came all so still
Where his mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she:
Well may such a lady
God's mother be.

Words: Anonymous; Fifteenth-century English Music: Patrick Hadley (1899–1973)



Saint Luke tells of the birth of Jesus

Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the house and lineage of David: To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Carol

Here betwixt ass and oxen mild, Sleep, sleep, sleep my little child.

Angels from on high hover in the sky, Keeping watch above the incarnate God of love.

Here in the crib, secure from harms, Sleep, sleep in your mother's arms.

Here betwixt rose and lily white, Sleep, sleep, sleep my son tonight.

On this fair night of holy joy, Sleep, sleep, sleep my little boy.

> Words: French, 13th century Music: French, 13th century; arr. Leo Sowerby (1895–1968)



The shepherds go to the manger

ND THERE WERE IN THE SAME COUNTRY shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

Carol

What is this lovely fragrance wafting
Like to the scents of flowers in spring!
Shepherds, O tell us, whence such beauty,
Hear you not heavenly caroling?

What is this light so fair, so tender
Breaking upon our wondering eyes?
Never the Morning Star so radiant
Followed his course o'er eastern skies.

Shepherds, O haste with eager footsteps, Seek the Saviour, born today. Low at his feet we lay our treasure, Heart's adoration, love for aye.

> Words: French Traditional; tr. Ysobel Music: French Traditional; arr. Healey Willan (1880–1968)



The Wise Men are led by the star to Jesus

Tow when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled, that mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead;
Before their light the stars grew dim, and wandering hunters heard the hymn: 'Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born, In excelsis gloria.'

Within a lodge of broken bark
the tender babe was found,
A ragged robe of rabbit skin
enwrapped his beauty round;
But as the hunter braves drew nigh,
the angel song rang loud and high:
'Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born, In excelsis gloria.'

The earliest moon of wintertime is not so round and fair as was the ring of glory on the helpless infant there.

The chiefs from far before him knelt with gifts of fox and beaver pelt.

'Jesus your King is born,

Jesus is born, In excelsis gloria.'

O children of the forest free,
O sons of Manitou,
the Holy Child of earth and heaven
is born today for you.
Come kneel before the radiant Boy
who brings you beauty, peace, and joy.
'Jesus your King is born,
Jesus is born, In excelsis gloria.'

Words: attr: Jean de Brébeuf, 1642 Music: Traditional French, arr. Robert Lehman



SAINT JOHN UNFOLDS THE GREAT MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION

In the BEGINNING WAS THE WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

¶ All remain standing and join in singing the following Hymn, overleaf

Hymn





Words: John Francis Wade (1711-1786) Music: Adeste fideles; attr. John Francis Wade

The Rector's Greeting

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.

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 any flower;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our sweet Saviour.

The holly bears a berry
As red as any blood;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To do poor sinners good.

The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas Day in the morn.

The holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all.

Words: Traditional English Music: Traditional English Carol; arr. Robert Lehman (2020)



A Collect for Christmas

Thee, O Christ, Word of the Father, we offer our lowly praises and humble thanks. For love of our human race, thou didst most wonderfully choose to be made man, and to take our nature as nevermore to lay it by; that we might be regenerate and born again by thy life-giving Spirit, and restored in the image of God, to whom, one blessed and undivided Trinity, be all honor, might, majesty, and glory, both now and for ever. ¶People Amen.

The Christmas Blessing

AY HE WHO BY HIS INCARNATION gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward grace and goodwill; And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and abide with you for ever. People Amen.

Hymn



Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) Music: Mendelssohn; Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Participants in the Service

OFFICIANT

The Rev. Andrew John Archie Rector

READERS

Lucia del Pilar FIRST LESSON

Representative of the Youth Ministry

Dr. Mark Throdahl SECOND LESSON

Master of the St. Paul's Guild

Andrew Martin THIRD LESSON

Representative of the Flower Guild

Virginia Rowe FOURTH LESSON

Representative of the Altar Guild

William Wallace FIFTH LESSON

Representative of the Usher Corps

Elizabeth Panke SIXTH LESSON

Junior Warden

Joseph Sheehan SEVENTH LESSON

Senior Warden

The Rev. Andrew John Archie EIGHTH LESSON

Rector

The Rt. Rev. Deon Kevin Johnson NINTH LESSON

Bishop of Missouri

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