

A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

December 14, 2025

The 3rd Sunday of Advent

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, first held on Christmas Eve 1918, was conceived by Eric Milner-White. At 34, he had just been appointed Dean of King's College, an appointment influenced by his experience as an army chaplain which led him to believe the Church of England required more imaginative worship.

The service offers a flexible format for presenting the Christmas Story through word and music.

PRELUDE *Behold, A Rose Breaks Into Bloom* by Johannes Brahms

OPENING HYMN *Once in Royal David's City* ELW #269

THE BIDDING PRAYER

Beloved in Christ, this is the day it is our duty and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels, and to go in heart and mind to Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass, the Babe, lying in the manger. Let us hear from Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purpose of God from the first days until the glorious redemption brought to us by this Holy Child; and let us make this house of prayer glad with our carols of praise. Let us pray for the needs of the whole world, and for all God's people; for peace upon the earth, for love and unity within the Church, and for goodwill among all peoples. Let us remember the poor, the cold, the hungry, the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children. Lastly, let us remember all those who rejoice with us, and all the saints who have gone before us 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 that Christ himself has taught us.

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.

THE BLESSING

May the almighty God bless us with divine grace, may Christ give us the joy of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the Spirit of Love bring us all. **Amen.**

CHOIR ANTHEM *In the Bleak Midwinter* by Phil Kadidlo

FIRST LESSON

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

Reading from: Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHOIR ANTHEM *King Jesus Hath A Garden*
by Charles Wood/Richard Shephard

SECOND LESSON

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Reading from: Genesis 22:15-18

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SOLO *I Wonder As I Wander* by John Jacob Niles
Corinne Rhodes

THIRD LESSON

The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

Reading from: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

ELW #256

FOURTH LESSON

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

Reading from: Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHOIR ANTHEM *Lo How A Rose* by Michael Praetorius/David Shand

FIFTH LESSON

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Reading from: Luke 1:26-35, 38

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

The Angel Gabriel

ELW #265

SIXTH LESSON

Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

Reading from: Luke 2:1-7

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHOIR ANTHEM

Away In A Manger

by Mark Schweizer

SEVENTH LESSON

The shepherds go to the manger.

Reading from: Luke 2:8-16

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

Go tell It On The Mountain

ELW #290

EIGHTH LESSON

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Reading from: Matthew 2:1-11

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHOIR ANTHEM

What Child Is This?

by Evelyn Larter

NINTH LESSON

John unfolds the great mystery of the great incarnation.

Reading from: John 1:1-14

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CHOIR ANTHEM *Christmas Joy* by Mark Schweizer, arr. David Jansen

Please stand as you are able.

PRAYER

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with thy spirit.

P: Let us pray.

O God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only son, Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May he who by his incarnation, gathered into one, things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

O Come All Ye Faithful

ELW #283

DISMISSAL Go in Peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

In Dulci Jubilo

by J. S. Bach

This worship service is from St. James Music Press.

Please leave your offering in the plate on your way out.

The flowers sponsor this week is: Corinne Rhodes, in loving memory of her mother, Gwen.

The wine and bulletins sponsors are: Donna & Mike Berenotto, in loving memory of their daughter, Danielle.

We are glad for your presence today.

We hope you come again soon!

Special thank you to Scott Breiner for putting together this beautiful worship experience; instrumentalist Andrew Ehrhardt; and to all our readers and choir participants!