

A VIRTUAL FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

Christmas in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 2020

In 1919, Eric Milner-White, Dean of King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England drew up a form for the **FESTIVAL SERVICE OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS** you experience this evening. As he perceived it, the strength of the Festival lay in the lessons, and to a lesser degree, the carols. But clearly, Christian worship and faith gain their momentum and strength from the many and various repetitions of the story that is at the heart of the matter. The music naturally and super-naturally reveals and enhances the Word to our senses, allowing us to almost touch the ever-awakening spectrum of colors and creative energies that surround this marvelous story.

Set in the formula of story-telling, this 'Once upon a time . . .' still sparks an amazing interest and remains an event of wonder and beauty for listeners around the globe. The popularity and fame of the Lessons and Carols are largely due to annual radio and television broadcasts at Christmas by the esteemed choir of men and boys at King's College in Cambridge. The words of the carols have a long history as do some of the recognizable melodies. In order to keep a freshness in the singing and by way of introducing new music, there are often introduced newer settings of these carols, some of which you will hear this evening.

But it *is* the story that is most important. With an ever-growing knowledge and awareness of many distinctive traditions, there is still a common thread that is found as the story unfolds – a thread that somehow revives a capacity for hope and wonder. The 'Once upon a time' in one way or another becomes *now* and *for us*.

The Cathedral staff and congregation wish a sense of hope and wonder for you this season. By hearing this Christmas story once more in one of the most beautiful ways we can imagine, we trust that you are reminded that worship and adoration are in response to the remarkable Gift that brings salvation to all people, everywhere.

*"Let every heart prepare Him room . . .
and heaven and nature sing!"*

*We wish for you a joyful, peaceful, warm, and safe
Christmas and Holiday Season,
and a very blessed New Year!*

The Cathedral Church of the Nativity
321 Wyandotte Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
Please visit our website at www.nativitycathedral.org
for more Cathedral happenings. Thanks!

PRELUDE

Harp and Flute

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear	Ernie and Becky Brock
The Holly and the Ivy	Ernie and Becky Brock
Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella	Anthony Scott Watson
He is Born, the Divine Christ Child	Ernie and Becky Brock
Ding Dong! Merrily on High / Good King Wenceslas	Ernie and Becky Brock

PROCESSIONAL CAROL

Once in Royal David's City H. J. Gauntlett, descant by Sir David Willcocks (1919-2015)

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 mean and lowly Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

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;
Where like stars his children crowned All in white shall wait around.
(C. F. Alexander)

THE BIDDING PRAYER

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmas our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels: in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and with the shepherds and wise men, adore the Child lying in his Mother's arms.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scriptures the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child; and in company with the whole Church let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; and let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick in body and in mind and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all who do not know the loving kindness of the Lord.

CHOIR

Adam Lay in Bondage

Boris Ord (1897-1961)

Adam lay y bounden, Bounded in a bond;
Four thousand winter Thought he not too long.
And all was for an apple, An apple that he took,
As clerkes finden Written in their book.

Ne had the apple taken been, The apple taken been,
Ne had never our Lady A-been heavené queen.
Blessed be the time That apple taken was,
Therefore we moun singen, Deo gratias! (*Anon. 15th cen.*)

SECOND LESSON

Genesis 22:15-18

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

And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, By myself have I sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, that I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is on the seashore. And your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by all your descendants shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.

CHOIR

My Dancing Day

Gerald Near (b. 1942)

Tomorrow shall be my dancing day: I would my true love did so chance
To see the legend of my play, To call my true love to my dance:
Sing O my love; This have I done for my true love.

Then was I born of a virgin pure, Of her I took fleshly substance;
Thus was I knit to man's nature, To call my true love to my dance:
Sing O my love; This have I done for my true love.

In a manger laid and wrapped I was, So very poor, this was my chance,
Betwixt an ox and a silly poor ass, To call my true love to my dance:
Sing O my love; This have I done for my true love.

(c. 14th century English)

THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 9:2-7

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the 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 will be upon his shoulder: and his name will be called:

“Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.”

Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth, and forever more. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

CHOIR

Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming

Hugo Distler (1908-1942)

Lo! how a Rose e'er blooming From tender stem hath sprung,
Of Jesse's lineage coming, As men of old have sung.
It came a Flow'ret bright Amid the cold of winter,
When half-spent was the night.

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, The Rose I have in mind.
With Mary we behold it, The Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, She bore to men a Savior,
When half-spent was the night.

This Flow'r whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air
Dispels with glorious splendor The darkness ev'rywhere.
True man, yet very God! From sin and death He saves us
And lightens ev'ry load. (1, 2 – 15th cen.; 3 – 19th cen.)

FOURTH LESSON

Isaiah 11:1-9

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump 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 the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. With righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The suckling child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

CHOIR

I Sing of a Maiden

Patrick Hadley (b. 1955)

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.
(15th century)

FIFTH LESSON

Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be.

And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary: for you have found favor with God. And, behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" And 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 called holy, the Son of God."

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your Word."

And the angel departed from her.

HARP

'Interlude' from *Ceremony of Carols*

Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)

CHOIR

In the Bleak Mid-winter

Harold Darke (1888-1986)

In the bleak mid-winter, 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 mid-winter long ago.

Our God, Heav'n cannot hold Him, Nor earth sustain:
Heav'n and earth shall flee away When he comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter, A stable-place suffic'd
The Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubin, Worship night and day,
A breast full of milk, And a manger-full 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. (*Christina Rossetti; 1830-94*)

SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be enrolled. And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be enrolled with Mary his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came that she should be delivered. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

CHOIR

See Amid the Winter's Snow

John Goss (1800-1880)

See, amid the winter's snow, Born for us on earth below,
See, the tender Lamb appears, Promised from eternal years!
Hail, thou ever blessed morn! Hail, Redemption's happy dawn!
Sing through all Jerusalem: 'Christ is born in Bethlehem!'

Lo! within a manger lies He who built the starry skies,
He who, throned in height sublime, Sits amid the Cherubim.

Say, ye holy shepherds, say: What your joyful news today?
Wherefore have ye left your sheep On the lonely mountain steep?

'As we watched at dead of night, Lo! we saw a wondrous light;
Angels, singing "Peace on earth", Told us of the Saviour's birth.'
(*Edward Caswall*)

SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-16

The shepherds go to the manger.

And in that region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them; and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Be not afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and 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 among men with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

CHOIR While Shepherd's Watched their Flocks by Night *Winchester Old*

While shepherds watched their flocks by night, All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down, And glory shown around.

'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread Had seized their troubled mind);
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring To you and all mankind.

'The heavenly Babe you there shall find To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands, And in a manger laid.'

'All glory be to God on high, And to the earth be peace;
Goodwill from heav'n to men Begin, begin and never cease.'
(Nahum Tate)

EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-11

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the King, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it is written by the prophet: 'And you, O Bethlehem of Judah, are by no means the least among the rulers of Judah: for from you shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel.'"

COLLECT AND BLESSING

Almighty God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your 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 lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **AMEN.**

May he who by his Incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill;

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **AMEN.**

CAROL O Come, All Ye Faithful

Adeste Fideles, arr. Willcocks

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| 1 | 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, Christ the Lord! | 6 | Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
Glory to God In the highest:
O come, let us adore him, . . . |
| 2 | God of God, Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Come and behold him Born the King of Angels
Very God, Begotten, not created:
O come, let us adore him, . . . | 7 | Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to thee be glory giv'n:
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing
O come, let us adore him, . . . |

VOLUNTARY Organ Flourish on "Joy to the World"

Michael Dell (b. 1959)

PARTICIPANTS IN THE FESTIVAL

CATHEDRAL CHORAL SCHOLARS

Lauren Smith, soprano
Lauren Curnow, mezzo-soprano
Joseph Mozingo, tenor
Ian Murphy, bass-baritone

INSTRUMENTALISTS

Elaine Martin, flute Andrea Wittchen, harp

MUSICAL DIRECTOR AND ORGANIST

Stephen Williams, Canon for Ministry of Music and Performing Arts

LECTORS

Lauren Smith	Ian Murphy
Joseph Mozingo	Jacqueline Reader
Philip Blythe	James Reader
Lauren Curnow	

The Rev. Dale Grandfield, Canon Missioner
The Very Rev. Anthony R. Pompa, Dean and Rector

VERGER

Bill Yale

VIDEO AND ONLINE PRODUCTION BY

Paul Fox

Cathedral Arts



Our Dear Friends .. of course, we mourn that we are unable to offer Arts events during this season of pandemic. But we certainly look forward to a new season of health and wellness when we are restored to experiencing God's creation through live music-making. To those who continue to support our efforts through your lovely gifts, please know that we are forever grateful. And thank you for taking the time to watch this video, and for 'singing along'!