CHRIST CHURCH

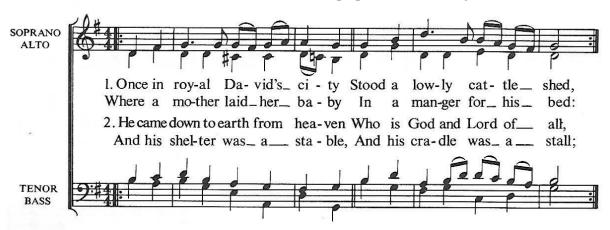


A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

The Fourth Sunday of Advent, 2025

Verse 1: The Soloist: Alex Ragsdale, *treble* Verse 2: The Choir

Verses 3 – 6: The Choir & Congregation (all standing)





- 3. And through all his wondrous childhood
 He would honour and obey,
 Love and watch the lowly maiden,
 In whose gentle arms he lay:
 Christian children all must be
 Mild, obedient, good as he.
- 4. 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.
- 5. 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.
- 6. 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.

THE BIDDING PRAYER (The people remain standing)

Beloved in Christ, at this Christmas-tide let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in the manger.

Therefore 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.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all God's people; for the unity and mission of the church he came to build, and especially in this our diocese.

And because this would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in Christ's name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know or love not the Lord Jesus, or have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God 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 the Lord Jesus we are one for evermore.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

All:

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.

THE INVITATORY (The people sit)

CAROL: God Bless the Master

Folk Song; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

God bless the master of this house, with happiness beside Where'er his body rides or walks His God must be his guide His God must be his guide. God Bless the mistress of this house With gold chain on her breast Where'er her body sleeps or wakes, Lord send her soul to rest, Lord send her soul to rest. God Bless your house, your children too, Your cattle and your store, The Lord increase you day by day And send you more and more And send you more and more.

from Sussex Mummers Carol

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

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.

CAROL: Adam lay ybounden

Peter Warlock

Daniel Wallace, baritone

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

And all was for an apple, An apple that he took, As clerkës finden Written in their book. Né had the apple taken been, The apple taken been, Né had never Our Lady A been Heav'ne Queen.

Blessèd be the time That apple takèn was. Therefore we moun singen: Deo gratias!

(tr. from Middle English by Edith Rickert, 1914)



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

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

CAROL: Were You There On That Christmas Night

Natalie Sleeth

Junior Choir

Were you there, 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 see, 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 praised him aloud at his birth?

Did you hear how the choirs of angels sang at the glory of the sight?

Did you hear how the bells of heaven rang all through the night?

Did you know, 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?

CAROL: Sing Noel Natalie Sleeth

Shepherds, shepherds hear the story: Christ is born in Bethlehem, Rise and go to see His glory, leave your flock to welcome Him! Sing noel, O sing noel, O sing noel, for Christ is born!

Angels, angels, heavenly chorus, Christ has come to earth today! Bright the star that shines before us, pointing clear to all the way! Sing noel, O sing noel, O sing noel, for Christ is born!

Wisemen, wisemen, treasure bringing to the manger bed afar, Joyful praises ever singing, follow now the guiding star.

Sing noel, O sing noel, O sing noel, for Christ is born!

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

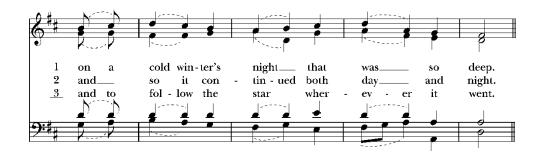
The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

CAROL: The First Nowell

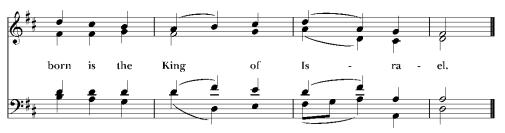
arr. David Willcocks

Choir and Congregation









6 Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord; that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought.

Refrain



The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

And 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. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. 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.

CAROL: Sussex Carol

On Christmas night, all Christians sing To hear the news, the angels bring 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

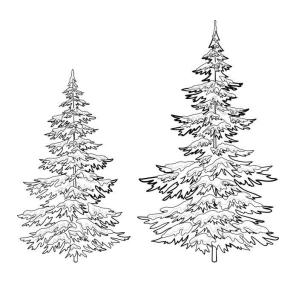
Then why should men on Earth be sad? Since our Redeemer made us glad? Why should men on Earth be sad? Since our Redeemer made us glad? When from our sin He set us free All for to gain our liberty

Traditional English Carol; arr. Bob Chilcott

When sin departs before His grace Then life and health come in its place When sin departs before His grace Then life and health come in its place Angels and men with joy may sing For all to see the newborn King

All out of darkness we have light Which made the angels sing this night 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.

Now and for ever, Amen.



The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And 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 favored, 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 forever; 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 Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

CAROL: Angels We Have Heard On High

Angels we have heard on high Sweetly singing o'er the plains, And the mountains in reply Echo back their joyous strains. Oh... Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong? What the gladsome tidings be, Which inspire your heavenly song? Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Traditional French Carol; arr. Dan Forrest

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!
See Him in a manger laid
Jesus, Lord of heaven and earth!
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid,
With us sing our Savior's birth
Gloria in excelsis Deo!



St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out 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: Silent Night

Franz Gruber; arr. Rhonda L. Polay

Jennifer Mello, mezzo-soprano

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!
Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

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!

Sleep in heavenly peace.

Joseph Mohr, 1818



The shepherds go to the manger.

And 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: The Shepherd's Farewell (from L'Enfance du Christ)

Hector Berlioz

Thou must leave thy lowly dwelling, the humble crib, the stable bare. Babe, all mortal babes excelling, content our earthly lot to share. Loving father, Loving mother, shelter thee with tender care!

Blest are ye beyond all measure, thou happy father, mother mild! Guard ye well your heav'nly treasure, the Prince of Peace, The Holy Child! God go with you, God protect you, guide you safely through the wild!

-Paul England (from the French)



Choir and Congregation



THE EIGHTH LESSON - A Warden

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now 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 treasurers they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

CAROL: Jesus Child

John Rutter

Have you heard the story that they're telling 'bout Bethlehem, Have you heard the story of the Jesus child? How he came from heaven and was born in a manger bed? Mary was his virgin mother pure and mild.

Sing alleluia, brothers, sing alleluja, sisters, Worship the Jesus child and praise his mother mild. 'Glory to God' the angel hosts are singing: Listen to the story of the Jesus child.

Jesus child, lying at Bethlehem, Sleeping safe at Mary's knee, Save my soul and bring me to paradise, Let me join the angles singing glory to thee.

Sing alleluia, brothers, sing allelula, sisters, Worship the Jesus child and praise his mother mild. 'Glory to God' the angel hosts are singing: Listen to the story of the Jesus child. Have you hard the story of the kings from the orient, Following the star that's shining over his head? Offering their precious gifts of gold, myrrh and frankincense, Kneeling with the ox and ass before his bed?

Sing alleluia, brothers, sing allelula, sisters, Worship the Jesus child and praise his mother mild. 'Glory to God' the angel hosts are singing: Listen to the story of the Jesus child.

Brothers, let us celebrate the birth of the Jesus child, Sisters, come and welcome him, the new-born King; Praise the Lord who sent him down from heaven at Christmas time; Young and old and rich and poor, his praises sing.

Sing alleluia, brothers, sing allelula, sisters, Worship the Jesus child and praise his mother mild. 'Glory to God' the angel hosts are singing: Listen to the story of the Jesus child.



THE NINTH LESSON - The Rector

St. John i

St. 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 all people. 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 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 one 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 he gave power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, not 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.

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN: O Come All Ye Faithful

Adeste fideles, arr. Willcocks





Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be glory given; Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;

Refrain

CHRISTMAS GREETING

THE OFFERING

VOLUNTARY: I Wonder As I Wander Applachen Folksong; arr. Gwyneth Walker Diana Greene, piano

THE CHRISTMAS COLLECT

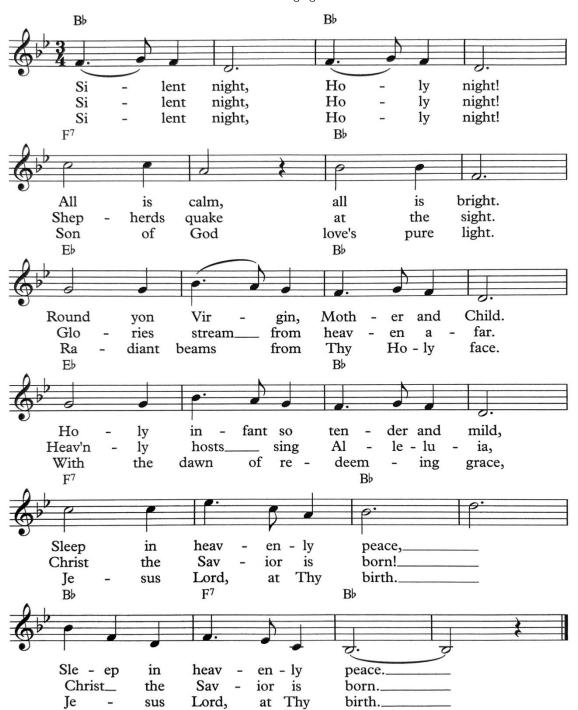
Officiant The Lord be with you. People And with thy spirit.

Officiant Let us pray.

O God, who hast caused this holy night to shine with the illumination of the true Light: Grant us, we beseech thee, that as we have known the mystery of that Light upon earth, so may we also perfectly enjoy him in heaven; where with thee and the Holy Spirit he liveth and reigneth, one God, in glory everlasting. **AMEN.**



Choir and Congregation



THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING

HYMN: Hark! the Herald Angels Sing



ORGAN VOLUNTARY: In dulci jubilo

arr. Wilber Held

Christmas Services at Christ Church

Wednesday, December 24th - Christmas Eve 4:00 PM - Family Eucharist with Church School Pageant

> 8:00 PM - Festive Choral Eucharist Come early for our Carol Sing at 7:30 pm

Thursday, December 25th - Christmas Day 9:00 AM - Holy Eucharist

December 28th - The First Sunday after Christmas 8:00 AM - Holy Eucharist; 10:00 AM - Choral Eucharist

January 4th - The Second Sunday after Christmas 8:00 AM - Holy Eucharist; 10:00 AM - Choral Eucharist

Christ Church Staff & Leadership

11th Bishop of Newark The Rt. Rev. Carlye J. Hughes The Rev. Chris Streeter Rector Karrie Miller Parish Administrator Joseph H. Mello Director of Music Diana Greene Organist / Pianist Deborah Mello Youth Choir Director Sexton Luz D. Quintero The Rev. Jenny Streeter Christian Formation Susan Mittelstadt Children's Ministries

The Choirs of Christ Church

<u>Sopranos</u>: Laura Aroune, Jessica Caruso, Janet Jenkins, Deborah Mello, Danise Tellefsen, Susan Tummillo, Linda Scott, Shannah Yerofeyev

<u>Altos</u>: Jane Butz, Mary Eldridge, Amy Helfrick, Kathy Hoyer, Lynn Murphy, Teresa Kroeger, Lisa Martin, Arlene Ralph

<u>Tenors</u>: John Cuozzo, Greg Guinsler, Harvey Kunnemann, Nicholas Orechio, John Sandfort, Curtis Wilson, Alex Zander

<u>Basses</u>: John Beesley, Preston Davis, Tim Evans, Mark Hoyer, Evan Hutchens, Don Martin, Chris Streeter, Daniel Wallace

Junior Choir: Gabby Attenello, Sara Hackelberg, Alexander Ragsdale, Lily Ragsdale, Abigail Streeter

Instrumentalists

Stacey Guest, violin Annelie Fahlstadt, violin Andrea Santora, viola Loni Bach, cello James Scanlan, contrabass

The Vestry Of Christ Episcopal Church, Newton

Mary Ann Risley, warden, Geri Livengood, warden,
Bob Charlton, treasurer
Danise Tellefsen, clerk of the vestry
Vanessa Compton, Sarah Jaqueth, Pauline Josephs, Caroline Silva,
Lou Slamer, Patricia Taggert, Cate Terwilliger
The Rev. Chris Streeter, rector

The congregation is cordially invited to a Reception in Holley Hall immediately following the service for refreshments and to greet the performers

To make a donation or to pay your pledge online, please visit www.christchurchnewton.org and click on the "Make a Contribution" tab.

Scan the QR Code with your phone and you will be directed to our online giving portal.



A Child † Abigail Streeter

A Chorister † Sara Hackelberg

An Acolyte † Tracy Zillmer

A Lector † Tim Evans

The Altar Guild Director † Alex Zander

The Youth Choir Director † Deborah Mello

The Hospital Chaplain † The Rev. Randolph Parks

A Warden † Geraldine Livengood

The Rector † The Rev. Chris Streeter

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