

The Nativity of Our Lord ~ Christmas Eve

Service of Lessons and Carols

December 24, 2021



This evening's order of worship is based on The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, first heard at King's College Chapel in Cambridge, England on Christmas Eve 1918. The hymns serve to highlight the theme of the readings which point to the love of God in sending His Son, Christ Jesus, as the Savior of the world.

Prelude

Words of Welcome



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y Stood a
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en, Who is
 3 For He is our child - hood's pat - tern, Day by
 4 And our eyes at last shall see Him, Through His



low - ly cat - tle shed, Where a moth - er laid her
 God and Lord of all, And His shel - ter was a
 day like us He grew; He was lit - tle, weak, and
 own re - deem - ing love; For that child so dear and



ba - by In a man - ger for His bed: Mar - y
 sta - ble, And His cra - dle was a stall; With the
 help - less, Tears and smiles like us He knew; And He
 gen - tle Is our Lord in heav'n a - bove; And He



was that moth - er mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
 poor and mean and low - ly Lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 feels for all our sad-ness, And He shares in all our glad-ness.
 leads His chil-dren on To the place where He is gone.

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*Stand***Invocation**

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

G Amen.

Exhortation and Prayer

P Almighty Dear people of God, in this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us – the Christ-Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after

our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy Child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ, and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of this community and for all those in our own congregation.

And, because this would please our Lord, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, or who do not love him, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Finally, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise him each day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we are united with one another.

To sum up all of these petitions, let us pray as Christ himself taught us.

☞ 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.

Please be seated.

The First Lesson

Genesis 3:8–15

⁸And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" ¹⁰And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." ¹¹He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" ¹²The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." ¹³Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴The LORD God said to the serpent,

"Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;
on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.

¹⁵I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."

Hymn: Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord

LSB 352 sts. 1, 5-6



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, Who has truly
kept His word And at last to us did send
Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.

5 Bruise for me the serpent's head
That, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to You in faith,
Safely kept through life and death.

6 Then when You will come again
As the glorious king to reign,
I with joy will see Your face,
Freely ransomed by Your grace.

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The Second Lesson

Genesis 22:15-18

¹⁵And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven ¹⁶and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, ¹⁷I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, ¹⁸and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

Hymn: Of the Father's Love Begotten

LSB 384 sts. 1-3



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten Ere the worlds be -
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed, When the vir - gin,
 3 This is He whom seers in old time Chant - ed of with



gan to be, He is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
 full of grace, By the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
 one ac - cord, Whom the voic - es of the proph - ets



He the source, the end - ing He, Of the things that are, that
 Bore the Sav - ior of our race, And the babe, the world's Re -
 Prom - ised in their faith - ful word. Now He shines, the long - ex -



have been, And that fu - ture years shall see
 deem - er, First re - vealed His sa - cred face
 pect - ed; Let cre - a - tion praise its Lord



Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 Ev - er - more and ev - er - more.

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The Third Lesson

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

² The people who walked in darkness
 have seen a great light;
 those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness,
 on them has light shined.

⁶For to us a child is born,
 to us a son is given;
 and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
 and his name shall be called

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace
 there will be no end,
 on 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 forevermore.
 The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

LSB 380



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
 2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righ-teous-ness!



Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 Late in time be - hold Him come, Off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
 Light and life to all He brings, Ris'n with heal - ing in His wings.

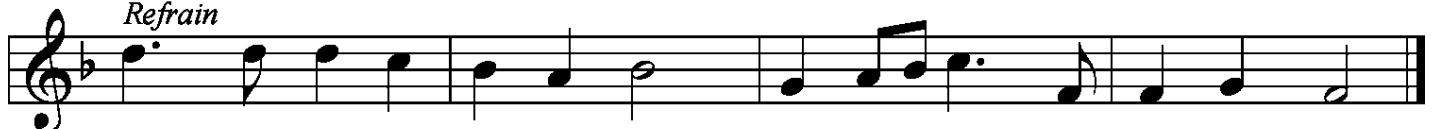


Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, Join the tri - umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see, Hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty!
 Mild He lays His glo - ry by, Born that man no more may die,



With the an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
 Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec - ond birth.

Refrain



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born King!"

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The Fourth Lesson

Micah 5:2-4

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
 who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,

from you shall come forth for me
 one who is to be ruler in Israel,
 whose origin is from of old,
 from ancient days.

³Therefore he shall give them up until the time
 when she who is in labor has given birth;
 then the rest of his brothers shall return
 to the people of Israel.

⁴And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
 in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
 And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
 to the ends of the earth.

Hymn: What Child Is This

LSB 370



1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, On Mar - y's lap is
 2 Why lies He in such mean es-tate Where ox and ass are
 3 So bring Him in - cense, gold, and myrrh; Come, peas - ant, king, to



sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet While
 feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear; for sin - ners here The
 own Him. The King of kings sal - va - tion brings; Let



shep - herds watch are keep - ing? This, this is
 si - lent Word is plead - ing. Nails, spear shall
 lov - ing hearts en - throne Him. Raise, raise the



Christ the king, Whom shep - herds guard and an - gels sing;
 pierce Him through, The cross be borne for me, for you;
 song on high, The vir - gin sings her lul - la - by;



Haste, haste to bring Him laud, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Hail, hail the Word made flesh, The babe, the son of Mar - y!
 Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mar - y!

The Fifth Lesson

Matthew 1:18–25

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). ²⁴When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, ²⁵but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

Hymn: Away in a Manger

LSB 364

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed,
2 The cat - tle are low - ing, the ba - by a - wakes,
3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask Thee to stay

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head.
But lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing He makes.
Close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
I love Thee, Lord Je - sus! Look down from the sky,
Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der care,

The lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
And stay by my cra - dle till morn - ing is night.
And take us to heav - en to live with Thee there.

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The Sixth Lesson

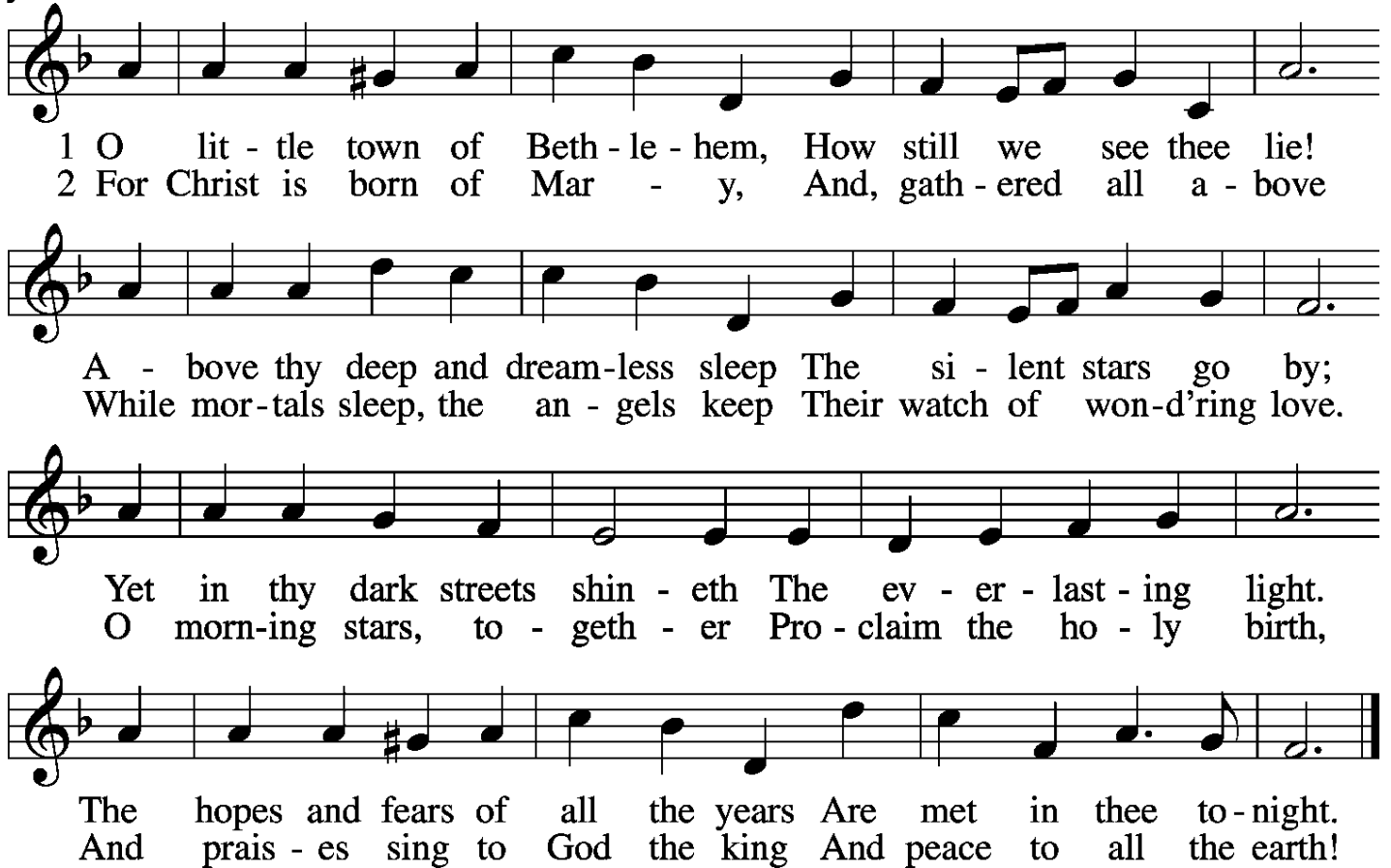
Luke 2:1–7

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave

birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem

LSB 361 sts. 1–2



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, And, gath - ered all a - bove

A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by;
While mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won-d'ring love.

Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn-ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth,

The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
And prais - es sing to God the king And peace to all the earth!

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The Seventh Lesson

Luke 2:8–20

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" ¹⁵When 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." ¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.



1 An - gels we have heard on high, Sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see Him whose birth the an - gels sing;



And the moun - tains in re - ply, Ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
 What the glad - some tid - ings be Which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
 Come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.

Refrain



Glo - - - - - ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o. Glo - - - - -



- - - - - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

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The Eighth Lesson

Matthew 2:1–12

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ²saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
 are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
 for from you shall come a ruler
 who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." ⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Hymn: As with Gladness Men of Old

LSB 397 sts. 1-3



1 As with glad-ness men of old Did the guid-ing star be-hold;
2 As with joy-ful steps they sped, Sav-ior, to Thy low-ly bed,
3 As they of-fered gifts most rare At Thy cra-dle, rude and bare,



As with joy they hailed its light, Lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;
There to bend the knee be-fore Thee, whom heav'n and earth a-dore;
So may we with ho-ly joy, Pure and free from sin's al-loy,



So, most gra-cious Lord, may we Ev-er-more be led by Thee.
So may we with will-ing feet Ev-er seek Thy mer-cy seat.
All our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'n-ly King.

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The Ninth Lesson

John 1:1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹²But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Sermon

Offering

Stand

Lighting of the Candles – As the candles are lit, please tip only the un-lit candle to receive the flame from the lit candle. To reduce the spilling of wax, please do not tip a lit candle.

Prayer

P O God, You make this most holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known the mysteries of that Light on earth we may also come to the fullness of His joys in heaven; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

P May he who by his incarnation gathered things earthly and heavenly into one, fill us with such joy that comes with the knowledge of the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life. And the blessing of God Almighty – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – be upon you and remain with you always.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

C Amen.

Hymn: Silent Night, Holy Night

LSB 363 sts. 1–3



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight; Glo - ries
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light Ra - dant



vir - gin moth-er and child. Ho - ly In-fant, so ten-der and mild,
stream from heav-en a - far, Heav'n-ly hosts sing, Al - le - lu - ia!
beams from Thy ho-ly face With the dawn of re-deem - ing grace,



Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, Sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
Christ, the Sav - ior, is born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.

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Postlude

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