

Sunday, December 19, 2021

Service of Lessons and Carols

A Festival of Lessons and Carols was first held on Christmas Eve 1918 at King's College, Cambridge. The series of Scripture Readings captures the ancient prophecies concerning the Promised Messiah, as well as the Savior's birth in fulfillment of those prophecies. The loving purposes of God shine forth as seen and heard through the holy words of Scripture both read and sung. All leads to the manger where the Baby lies protected by His earthly parents, praised by heavenly hosts of angels, adored and worshiped by neighboring shepherds and, in time, visited by Magi bearing prophetic gifts. May this annual service inspire you through Word and music to travel in your heart to the manger and worship the newborn King!

OPENING CAROL – LSB 357

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

**♫ 1. Come, O Come Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to Thee, O Israel!**

**♫ 5. O come, Thou Key of David, come,
And open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,
And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to Thee, O Israel!**

INVOCATION

P: In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: In the morning, O Lord, You hear my voice;

C: In the morning I prepare a sacrifice for You and watch.

P: My mouth is filled with Your praise,

C: And with Your glory all the day.

P: In the evening, O Lord, I commend my life to You.

C: In the evening I rest in the peace of Your love.

P: O Lord, open my lips,

C: And my mouth will declare Your praise. Amen.

P: Let us pray together:

C: Lord God, bless Your Word wherever it is proclaimed and heard throughout the world.

P: Make it a Word of power and peace to redeem all who do not trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

C: Hear us, Lord!

P: Make it a Word of grace and hope to restore and equip Your saints for the work of sharing the Good News.

C: Hear us, Lord!

P: Make it a Word of joy as You send forth Your truth to all the nations.

C: Hear us, Lord!

P: Let Your Word achieve the purpose for which You send it and bring many to Your salvation.

C: In the name of Jesus. Amen!

FIRST LESSON

***The ancient prophet foretells
the coming of the Savior.***

Isaiah 9:2, 6, 7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

CAROL – LSB 412

“The People That in Darkness Sat”

**♪ 1. The people that in darkness sat
A glorious light have seen;
The light has shined on them
Who long In shades of death have been,
In shades of death have been.**

**♪ 4. His name shall be
The Prince of Peace,
The Everlasting Lord,
The Wonderful, the Counselor,
The God by all adored,
The God by all adored.**

SECOND LESSON

***The ancient prophet describes the peace
that Christ brings.***

Isaiah 11:1-6

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

CAROL – LSB 342

“What Hope! An Eden Prophesied”

- ♪ 1. What hope! An Eden prophesied
Where tame live with the wild;
The lamb and lion side by side,
Led by a little child!**
- ♪ 2. A shoot will sprout from Jesse’s stem,
A branch from David’s line,
A prince of Peace in Bethlehem;
The fruit of God’s design.**

THIRD LESSON

The angel Gabriel announces to Mary the birth of Jesus.

St. Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail." "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

CAROL

"Mary, Mary"
Adult Choir

FOURTH LESSON

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

St. Luke 2:1-7

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

CAROL

“Gentle Mary Laid Her Child”

Adult Handbells

FIFTH LESSON

The Shepherds go to the manger.

St. Luke 2:8-20

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

CAROL
"Born This Night"
Adult Choir

SIXTH LESSON

The Magi are led by a star to Jesus.

St. Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.

He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child.

As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

CAROL

“Where is He?”

Adult Choir

PLEASE RISE

SEVENTH LESSON

***St. John unfolds the great
mystery of Christ’s incarnation.***

P: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to You, O Christ.

CAROL – LSB 383

“A Great and Mighty Wonder”

♪ 2. The Word becomes incarnate
And yet remains on high,
And cherubim sing anthems
To shepherds from the sky.
Proclaim the Savior’s birth;
“To God on high be glory
And peace to all the

♪ 4. Since all He comes to ransom,
By all be He adored,
The infant born in Bethl’em,
The Savior and the Lord.
Proclaim the Savior’s birth;
“To God on high be glory
And peace to all the earth!”

SERMON

“Who’s Singing?”

Rev. Kurt Wenzelburger

APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life † everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Birthdays: Erv Aufdemberge (87 on 12/19),
James Kraatz (88 on 12/24)

Hospitalized: Rev. Bob Scott (*Faith Grand Blanc*),
Kaleigh D'Anna

Please pray for hope and healing for:

Andy, Sherrie Antoszewski, Dave Backers, Barbara, Don Bietler, Gayle Butzu, Laurie Butzu, Jim Caputo, Charla Cejmar, Mike Clore, Chris Curtice, Connie Davis, Joshua Etheridge, Joe Ferrari, Rich Gluski, Kathy Harding, Gloria Koch, Chuck Kraft, Barbara Limberger, Evelyn Marcath, Milt Miller, Landon Morrison, Melissa Murray, Tom Prokuda, Hope Watson, Aaron Wroblewski, Paul Wright

Pray for the family of: Bernice Meyer (Cindy Moschel's mom)
Lois Geppert (Gerald Geppert's wife)
Marilyn Gilfillan (Karen Gluski's cousin)
David Rush (Marianne's husband)

Please pray for:

- Protection for health care workers, all first responders, the poor, the sick, all who are most at risk.
- People around the world who are going thru internal conflicts. Pray for peace.
- Comfort and peace for the Oxford community.
- For those injured and their families in the Oxford shooting.

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.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

**♩ O Christ, Thou Lamb of God,
That takest away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**O Christ, Thou Lamb of God,
That takest away the sin of the world,
have mercy on us.**

**O Christ, Thou Lamb of God,
That takest away the sin of the world,
Grant us peace.**

CAROL

***"Jesus, Jesus, Rest Your Head"*
Adult Handbells**

CAROL

***"Will We Know Him?"*
Adult Choir**

CAROL

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

♪ 1. Prepare the royal highway;
The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley
A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory
Foretold in sacred story:
Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!

♪ 2. God's people, see Him coming:
Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him!
Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you!
No more shall doubt assail you!
Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!

♪ 3. Then fling the gates wide open
To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation
Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him!
All nations, now adore Him!
Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!

♪ 4. His is no earthly kingdom;
It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom
And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding
For kindness so abounding:
Hosanna to the Lord,
For He fulfills God's Word!

BENEDICTION

CLOSING CAROL – LSB 387

“Joy to the World”

**♪ 4. He rules the world with truth and grace
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders of His love.**