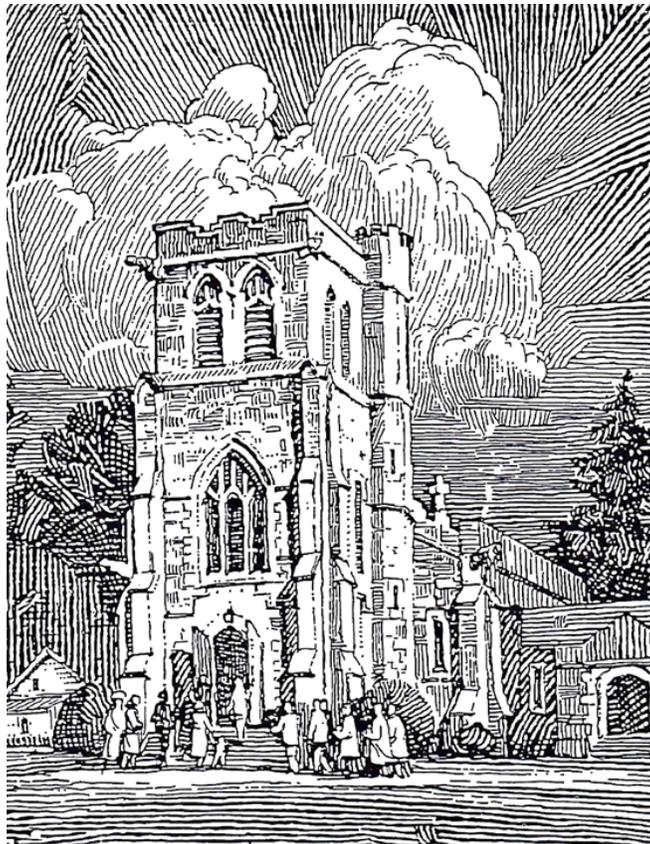


A Service of
Lessons AND Carols
for
Christmas Eve



December 24, 2020 at Four O' Clock in the Afternoon

**The Episcopal Church of the Messiah
P.O. Box 248, Rhinebeck NY 12572
www.rhinebeck-episcopal.org**

A Note about this service

Our service of Lessons and Carols finds its history within the Cathedral tradition of Anglican liturgy and church music. At Christmas Eve in 1880, the Bishop of the Diocese of Truro (England), the Rt. Rev. E.W. Benson, conducted a service he had composed of nine lessons and carols. The lessons were read by various officers of the Cathedral, ranking from lowest to highest, ending with a reading, not surprisingly, by the Bishop himself.

This format was adapted in 1918 by the Dean of King's College, Cambridge, Dr. Eric Milner-White. The Dean took the 'Truro Lessons and Carols', composed a Bidding Prayer (the same used this afternoon, with slight variation for custom and the times), and added it to the liturgy. This format has been sung in the College Chapel every year but one since the end of the First World War. In 1954, it received its first broadcast on English television, and since the 1960s has been broadcast every Christmas. It, along with the annual Christmas message from the Queen, has become a well-beloved tradition of the English people and of those living in the British Commonwealth. This service has also become a seasonal tradition in other parts of the Anglican Communion, the Episcopal Church being part of that Communion.

While our service today is a wonderful meeting of word and music, Dr. Milner-White's intention with his 'liturgical composition' was truly to proclaim the word of God. He wrote this about the service:

Its liturgical order and pattern is the strength of the service; the main theme is the development of the loving purposes of God, from the Creation to the Incarnation, through the windows and words of the Bible: the scriptures, not the carols, are the backbone.

**A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols
for
Christmas Eve**

December 24, 2020 at Four o'clock in the Afternoon

Voluntaries: *In the bleak midwinter*
El Tutu/Saltarello
Three English Carols
Good King Wenceslas

Gustav Holst, arr. Andrew Burton
Italian Carol/ Italian medieval dance tune
arr. Joy Plaisted
Piae Cantiones 1582, arr. Kim Robertson

Joy Plaisted, Harp

Hymn *O Come All Ye Faithful*

Adeste fideles

Welcome

Father Richard

The Bidding Prayer

Reverend Gwyneth

Dear People of God: As we celebrate Christmas, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger. Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against God until the glorious redemption brought to us by the holy Child Jesus, and let us look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise. But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for our country and the communities where we live. And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as for all of us who live under the threat of violence, war or illness. Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore. And now, to sum up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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.

Officiant: The Lord be with you.
People: **And with thy Spirit.**
Officiant: Let us pray:

O God, who makest 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.**

The First Lesson:

Genesis 3: 8-15, 17-19

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 God 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. And unto Adam God said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Reader: Here ends the First Lesson.

Carol: *Remember, O thou man* (*Melismata, 1611*)

Thomas Ravenscroft

Remember, O thou man
O thou man, O thou man
Remember, O thou man
Thy time is spent
Remember, O thou man
How thou cam'st to me then,
And I did what I can,
Therefore repent.

Remember God's goodness
O thou man, O thou man
Remember God's goodness
And promise made.
Remember God's goodness
How his only son he sent,
Our sins for to redress:
Be not afraid.

To Bethlehem they did go
O thou man, O thou man
To Bethlehem they did go,
This thing to see,
To Bethlehem they did go,
To see whether it was so,
Whether Christ was born or no,
To set us free.

In Bethlehem was he born
O thou man, O thou man,
In Bethlehem was he born,
For mankind dear.
In Bethlehem was he born
For us that were forlorn,
And therefore took no scorn,
Our sins to bear.

The Second Lesson:

Genesis 22: 15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all 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.

Reader: Here ends the Second Lesson.

Voluntary: *Veni Emmanuel*

15th Century French melody

The Third Lesson:

Isaiah 9: 2; 6-7

The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

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.

Reader: Here ends the Third Lesson.

Carol: *E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come*

Paul O. Manz

Peace be to you and grace from him
Who freed us from our sins,
Who loved us all and shed his blood
That we might saved be.

Sing holy, holy to our Lord,
The Lord, Almighty God,
Who was and is and is to come;
Sing holy, holy, Lord!

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein,
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below,
For Christ is coming, is coming soon,
For Christ is coming soon!

E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come,
And night shall be no more;
They need no light nor lamp nor sun,
For Christ will be their all!

The Fourth Lesson:

Isaiah 11: 1–3a; 4a; 6–9

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. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Reader: Here ends the Fourth Lesson.

Voluntary: *God rest you merry, Gentlemen*

18th century English carol

The Fifth Lesson:

Luke 1: 26–35; 38

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 favor 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 for ever; 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.

Reader: Here ends the Fifth Lesson.

Carol: *Ding Dong! Merrily on high*

French, arr. Charles Wood

Ding dong! Merrily on high
In heaven the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! Verily the sky
Is riven with angel singing.

Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
E'en so here below below,
Let steeple bells be swungen,
And i-o, i-o, i-o
By priest and people sungen.

Pray you dutifully prime
Your matin chime, ye ringers;
May you dutifully rhyme
Your evetime song, ye singers.

The Sixth Lesson:

Luke 2: 1; 3-7

St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one to their own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judæa, 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.

Reader: Here ends the Sixth Lesson.

Voluntary: *What child is this*

English Tudor carol

The Seventh Lesson:

Luke 2: 8-16

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 Savior, 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 all people. 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.

Reader: Here ends the Seventh Lesson.

Carol: *Christmas Lullaby*

John Rutter

Clear in the darkness a light shines in Bethlehem:
Angels are singing, their sound fills the air.
Wise men have journeyed to greet their Messiah;
But only a mother and baby lie there.

*Ave Maria: Hear the soft lullaby the angel hosts sing.
Ave Maria, Maiden, and mother of Jesus our King.*

Where are his courtiers, and who are his people?
Why does he bear neither scepter nor crown?
Shepherds his courtiers, the poor for his people,
With peace as his scepter and love for his crown.

What through your treasures are not gold or incense?
Lay them before him with hearts full of love.
Praise to the Christ child, and praise to his mother
Who bore us a Savior by grace from above.

The Eighth Lesson:

Matthew 2: 1-12

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judæa 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 Judæa: 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 treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Reader: Here ends the Eighth Lesson.

Voluntary: *Bring a torch, Jeanette Isabella*

French Carol, arr. Francis Miller

The Ninth Lesson:

John 1: 1-14

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 God; and without God was not any thing made that was made. In God 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 person 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 gave he power to become the children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of people, 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.

Reader: Here ends the Ninth Lesson.

Carol: *O magnum mysterium*

Morten Lauridsen

O magnum mysterium,
et admirabile sacramentum,
ut animalia viderent Dominum natum,
iacentem in praesepio!
Beata Virgo, cujus viscera
meruerunt portare
Dominum Iesum Christum.
Alleluia!

*O great sacred secret,
a holy thing to be wondered at --
that animals should see the Lord, newborn,
lying in a stable;
Blessed the Virgin whose womb
was worthy to carry
the Lord Jesus Christ.
Alleluia!*

The Homily

Father Richard

The Apostles' Creed

Reverend Gwyneth

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 Ghost,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

The prayers of the people were written by members of our Church School, and are read by Gilda Lyons, Director of Family Ministries at Messiah.

Concluding Collect

Father Richard

KeeP watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for thy love's sake. **Amen.**

Hymn: *Silent Night*

Stille Nacht

The Song of Simeon *Nunc dimittis*

Father Richard

Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, *
according to thy word;
For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, *
which thou hast prepared before the face of all people,
To be a light to lighten the Gentiles, *
and to be the glory of thy people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. **Amen.**

Officiant: **M**ay 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 upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Hymn: *Hark! The herald angels sing*

Mendelssohn

The Choir of the Church of the Messiah

Our adult choir of volunteers and professional voices sings at the 10:00 service each Sunday from September through May. The choir welcomes all those with musical experience, a love for singing, and the ability to commit to the choir's schedule. We are grateful to those members of our choir who were able to participate in recording the carols for this service:

Soprano

Kathy Evans
Katherine Rossiter
Anne Swain

Alto

AddieRose Forstman
Barbara Guy
Hailey McAvoy

Tenor

Jonathon Comfort
Maximillian Jansen
Brad Testerman

Bass

Cody Ray Caho
George Jahn
Wayne Paul

Timothy Lewis, Director of Music

Joy Plaisted, Harp

Our thanks to Benjamin Hamblen, a member of our parish, who produced this video program. To see more of Benjamin's work, go to his website: CNICmedia.com

Audio and Video production for the carols in this service was provided by Erik-Peter Mortensen

We thank Deborah Boedeker and Carolyn Dewald for their new translations of the Latin texts

The Organ at the Church of the Messiah

The organ at the Church of the Messiah was installed in 1921 by the celebrated E.M. Skinner Company of Boston. The company, which had a reputation for creating instruments of superb quality and great tonal beauty, built organs for prominent churches and universities including both the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine and St. Thomas Church in New York. A gift to the parish by Captain Vincent Astor, the organ was designed to play a key role in a comprehensive music program. The instrument is currently undergoing a complete restoration by Quimby Pipe Organs of Warrensburg, Missouri. We look forward to its return to the parish in time for a series of celebratory liturgies and recitals during 2021, its centennial year.

Our Sunday Services

We are currently gathering for our 10:00 am Sunday service via Zoom.
A recording of the service is available on YouTube later in the day.
To receive notice of upcoming services, please contact the parish office:
Rhinebeck.Episcopal@Gmail.com

Our Vestry

WARDENS Ed Goff (2022) Kris Perry (2021*)

TREASURER John Madden

VESTRY Stephen Frost (2021*) Eric Rivera (2021*)
Meg Devlin O'Sullivan (2021*) Dave Craft (2022)
Betty Mensch (2022) Martha Parke (2022)
Nancy Richard (2022, filling one-year unexpired term)
Meredith Hovey (2023) Mary Krembs (2023)
Joe Rauen (2023)
Peter Angarola (ex officio)
*(eligible for re-election)

Our Staff

The Reverend Richard R. McKeon, Rector
The Reverend Gwyneth MacKenzie Murphy, Priest Associate
Mr. Timothy Lewis, Director of Music
Dr. Gilda Lyons, Director of Family Programs
Ms. Nicole Close, Parish Administrator
Mr. Peter Thai, Parish Sexton

Contact Us

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