

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

December 24, 2025

✠ A Service of Lessons and Carols on the Eve of Christmas ✠

THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION

THE PRAYER OF INVOCATION AND THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Isaiah and Caitlin, and August Garrett

THE CAROL

***Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence**

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly-minded, for with blessing in His hand,
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary, as of old on earth He stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood,
He will give to all the faithful His own self for heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
That the pow'rs of hell may vanish as the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six-winged seraph; cherubim, with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Lord Most High!"
"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Lord Most High!"

Genesis 2:4-9, 15-25—God creates Adam and Eve to live in the Garden of Eden so that with their descendants they may glorify God and enjoy living in His presence.

“These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. “Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

THE CAROL

***O Come, All Ye Faithful**

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!

(chorus)

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
O sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest!

(repeat chorus)

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing!

(repeat chorus 2x)

TEXT: Latin Hymn; ascribed to John Francis Wade; translated by Frederick Oakely
MUSIC: John Francis Wade

THE SECOND LESSON

CORDEUS ANDERSON

Genesis 3:1-15—Adam and Eve sin against God and are cast from the Garden of Eden.

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And 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. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” The 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. I 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.”

THE CAROL

What Child Is This?

What Child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

Why lies He in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce Him through; the cross be borne for me, for you:
Hail, hail the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own Him;
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone Him.
Raise, raise the song on high, the Virgin sings her lullaby:
Joy, joy for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary.

TEXT: William C. Dix MUSIC: Traditional English melody, 16th century

THE THIRD LESSON

SARA HARRIS

Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-7—The Prophet foretells the coming of the Messiah.

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations. 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. You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil. For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire. For 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. Of 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.”

THE CAROL

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver, born a Child, and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever, now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit, raise us to Thy glorious throne.

Come, Thou long expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear Desire of ev'ry nation, Joy of ev'ry longing heart.

TEXT: Charles Wesley MUSIC: Rowland H. Prichard; arranged by Robert Harkness

THE FOURTH LESSON

DYLAN BALLINGER

Isaiah 11:1-9—The peace that the child will bring is foretold.

“There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. 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. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, 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.”

THE CAROL

*Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming

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.

The shepherds heard the story, proclaimed by angels bright,
How Christ, the Lord of glory, was born on earth this night.
To Bethlehem they sped,
And in the manger found Him, as angel heralds said.

This Flower, whose fragrance tender with sweetness fills the air,
Dispels with glorious splendor the darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God,
From sin and death He saves us and lightens every load.

O Savior, child of Mary, who felt our human woe;
O Savior, King of glory, who dost our weakness know,
Bring us at length, we pray,
To the bright courts of heaven and to the endless day.

German hymn, ca. 1500 St. 1-2 tr. by Theodore Baker, 1894; St. 3-4 tr. by Harriet R. Spaeth, 1875;
St. 5 tr. by John C. Mattes, 1914. German melody, 15th cent. Arr. by Michael Praetorius, 1609, alt.

THE FIFTH LESSON

SCOTT AND HALEY WEINHOLD

Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:18-25—The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary, and Joseph, that Mary will bear the son of the Most High as the prophets foretold.

"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, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern 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 you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will 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.” And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” And the angel answered 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 behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God.” And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Now 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. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But 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. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.”

THE CAROL

***O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.

(chorus)

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel

Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death’s dark shadows put to flight.

(repeat chorus)

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things, far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in her ways to go.

(repeat chorus)

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife and quarrels cease, fill all the world with heaven's peace.

(repeat chorus 2x)

TEXT: Latin Hymn, Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, 1710; translated by John M. Neale
MUSIC: Adapted from Plainsong by Thomas Helmore

THE SIXTH LESSON

ANDREW FRANKS

Luke 2:1-7—Luke tells of the Birth of Jesus.

“In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And 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, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And 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.”

THE CAROL

***Angels We Have Heard on High/ Hark! the Herald Angels Sing**

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echo back their joyous strains.

(chorus)

Glo- - -ria in excelsis Deo,
Glo- - -ria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem, and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

(repeat chorus)

See within a manger laid Jesus, Lord of heav'n and earth!
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, with us sing our Savior's birth.

(repeat chorus)

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With th'angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."

Hail the heav'n born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, ris'n with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King."
"Glory to the newborn King."

TEXT: Traditional French carol MUSIC: Traditional French melody/
TEXT: Charles Wesley, altered MUSIC: Felix Mendelssohn; arranged by William H. Cummings

THE SEVENTH LESSON

EMILY SLOAN

Luke 2:8-20—The Angels herald the birth to the Shepherds.

"And in the same 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, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto 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 baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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 those 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 baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them."

THE CAROL

*Angels from the Realms of Glory

Angels, from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation's story, now proclaim Messiah's birth:

(chorus)

Come and worship, come and worship,
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds, in the fields abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light:

(repeat chorus)

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great Desire of nations, ye have seen His natal star:

(repeat chorus)

Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
Suddenly the Lord, descending, in His temple shall appear:

(repeat chorus)

TEXT: James Montgomery MUSIC: Henry T. Smart

THE EIGHTH LESSON

SLAYD CASEY

Matthew 2:1-18—The wise men are led by the star to the birthplace of Jesus.

Now after 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 saw his star when it rose 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 the Christ was to be born. They told him "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

*“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”.*

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And 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”. After 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. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And 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. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him”. And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet “Out of Egypt I called my son”.

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

*“A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted,
because they are no more”.*

THE CAROL

The First Noel

The first Noel, the angel did say,
was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star shining in the east, beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

And by the light of that same star three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went.

This star drew nigh to the northwest, O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay, right over the place where Jesus lay.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

Then entered in those wise men three, full rev'rently upon their knee,
And offered there in His presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
That hath made heav'n and earth of naught, and with His blood mankind hath bought.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.

TEXT: Traditional English carol MUSIC: W. Sandy's Christmas Carols, 1833; arranged by John Stainer

THE NINTH LESSON

GEORGE BOOMER

+The Lighting of the Candles

John 1:1-14—John unfolds the great mystery of the Word of God being made flesh and dwelling among us.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

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

THE CAROL

Silent Night! Holy Night!

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.

TEXT: Joseph Mohr; translated by John F. Young MUSIC: Franz Grüber

THE BENEDICTION AND CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE

*Christ has come,
Christ is coming again.
Hallelujah!

THE CAROL OF GREAT JOY THAT CHRIST HAS COME

* Joy to the World

Joy to the world! the Lord is come; let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,
And heav'n and nature sing, and heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Savior reigns; let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as the curse is found.

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.

TEXT: Isaac Watts MUSIC: George Frederick Handel, arranged by Lowell Mason

*The congregation will stand

If you do not have a church home,
we invite you to join us for weekly worship,
Sundays at 10:15 am

We wish you a joyous Christmas!