

# NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS



FROM ST. FRANCIS-IN-THE-WOOD  
3 PM, SUNDAY DECEMBER 12, 2021

*Please join in the words and carols in **bold type***

## **Prelude**

## **Welcome**

*the Venerable Stephanie Shepard*

## **A Bidding for Christmas**

My sisters and brothers in Christ, in this season when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the angels and go in heart and mind to Bethlehem to see the Son of God lying in a manger. As we mark once more the mystery of the Word made flesh, let us join with the song of angels and saints and make this place ring with our carols and hymns of praise.

But first, let us remember the poverty of the birth of the Prince of Peace, and pray for the poor, the cold, the hungry, and those among us who find that there is no room for them at the inn. Let us remember the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt, and pray for the oppressed, refugees, the isolated, and those on the edges of our society. Let us remember that the Lord of Glory experienced the pain of life and death, and pray for the sick, the anxious, the weary, and the bereaved. And remembering the promise that he shall reign for ever and ever, let us pray for the rulers of the nations, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church, that we may be a sign that God's rule on earth has already begun. With joy in our hearts, let us hear again the story of the birth of Christ, and join with Mary and Joseph, with shepherds and wise men, and with all our forebears in faith in offering our worship.

## **The Candles on the Advent Wreath**

Light looked down and saw darkness.

**"I will go there," said Light.**

Peace looked down and saw disharmony.

**"I will go there," said Peace.**

Joy looked down and saw grief.

**"I will go there," said Joy.**

Love looked down and saw hatred.

**"I will go there," said Love.**

So the Lord of Light, the Prince of Peace,  
the Bearer of Joy, and the King of Love came down and dwelt with us.

## The First Lesson and Carol

**1** *Genesis 1:1-3 & 26-31a*

*a good beginning*

Nancy Powers

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, <sup>2</sup> the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup> Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' <sup>27</sup> So God created humankind in God's image, in the image of God the Lord created them; male and female God created them.

<sup>28</sup> God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.' <sup>29</sup> God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. <sup>30</sup> And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. <sup>31</sup> God saw everything that was made, and indeed, it was very good.

**1** Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

**Joyful, joyful, we adore thee,  
God of glory, Lord of love;  
Hearts unfold like flowers before thee,  
opening to the sun above.  
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness,  
drive the dark of doubt away:  
Giver of immortal gladness,  
fill us with the light of day.**

**All thy works with joy surround thee,  
earth and heaven reflect thy rays;  
Stars and angels sing around thee,  
centre of unbroken praise.  
Field and forest, vale and mountain,  
flowery meadow, flashing sea,  
Chanting bird and flowing fountain  
call us to rejoice in thee.**

**Thou art giving and forgiving,  
ever blessing, ever blest,  
Well-spring of the joy of living,  
ocean depth of happy rest!  
Thou our Father and our Mother,  
all who live in love are thine;  
Teach us how to love each other,  
lift us to the joy divine.**

## **The Second Lesson and Carol**

**2 Genesis 3:1-10**  
Graeme Watson

*a rift between God and humanity*

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, 'Did God say, "You shall not eat from any tree in the garden"?' <sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; <sup>3</sup> but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" <sup>4</sup> But the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not die; <sup>5</sup> for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup> But

the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' <sup>10</sup> He said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.'

**2 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.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!**

**Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,  
who orders all things mightily;  
to us the path of knowledge show,  
and teach us in her ways to go.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!**

**Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O come, great Lord of might,  
who to your tribes on Sinai's height  
in ancient times once gave the law,  
in cloud and majesty and awe.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!**

**Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,  
from every foe deliver them  
that trust your mighty power to save,  
and give them victory o'er the grave.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!**

**Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

**O come, O Dayspring from on high  
and cheers us by your drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadow put to flight.**

**Rejoice! Rejoice!**

**Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

## The Third Lesson and Carol

**3** *Isaiah 3:2 & 6-7*

*the promise of reconciliation*

John Moonen

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**3** O Little Town of Bethlehem

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;  
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**For Christ is born of Mary; and, gathered all above,  
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.  
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth,  
and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth.**

**How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given  
as love imparts to human hearts the blessings of God's heaven!  
No ear may hear his coming; but in this world of sin,  
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.**

## The Fourth Lesson and Carol

**4** *Isaiah 11:1-3a*

*A new hope for everyone*

Elizabeth Ferguson

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. <sup>2</sup> The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. <sup>3</sup> His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; <sup>4</sup> but with righteousness he shall judge the poor.

#### **4 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 seers of old have sung.  
It came, a blossom 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 us a Saviour,  
when half spent was the night.**

**O Flower, whose fragrance tender  
with sweetness fills the air,  
dispel in glorious splendour  
the darkness everywhere;  
true man, yet very God,  
from sin and death now save us,  
and share our every load.**

#### **The Fifth Lesson and Carol**

**5 Luke 1.26–38**

*trusting God in the impossible*

Penny Collette

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her

and said, 'Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.' <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. <sup>31</sup> And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> 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 ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.' <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I am a virgin?' <sup>35</sup> The angel said to 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 holy; he will be called Son of God. Then Mary said, 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.' Then the angel departed from her.

## **5 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

**Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new born King,  
peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled."  
Joyful all ye nations rise,  
join the triumph of the skies;  
with the angelic host proclaim,  
"Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King."**

**Christ by highest heaven adored;  
Christ, the everlasting Lord;  
late in time behold him come,  
offspring of a virgin's womb.  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
hail, incarnate deity,  
pleased as one of us to dwell,  
Jesus our Emmanuel!  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King."**

**Hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!  
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings,**

**risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by,  
born that we no more may die,  
born to raise each child of earth,  
born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing,  
"Glory to the new-born King."**

## **The Sixth Lesson and Carol**

**6** *Luke 2.1–7*

*the birth of Jesus*

Gary Chan

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup> This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup> He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

### **6** *Away in a Manger*

**Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

**The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love you, Lord Jesus — look down from on high  
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay  
close by me for ever and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in your tender care,  
and fit us for heaven to live with you there.**

## The Seventh Lesson and Carol

7 Luke 2.8-20

*Glory in the darkness*

Theresa Odishaw

<sup>8</sup> In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup> to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!'

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' <sup>16</sup> So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

7 While Shepherds Watched their Flocks

**While shepherds watched their flocks by night  
all seated on the ground,  
the angel of the Lord came down and glory shone around.**

**"Fear not," said he, for mighty dread  
had seized their troubled mind.  
"Glad tidings of great joy I bring to you and humankind.**

**"To you in David's town this day  
is born of David's line  
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord; and this shall be the sign:**

**"The heavenly babe you there shall find  
to human view displayed,  
all meanly wrapped in swaddling bands, and in a manger laid."**

**Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith  
appeared a shining throng  
of angels praising God, who thus addressed their joyful song:**

**"All glory be to God on high, and to the world be peace;  
good will henceforth from heaven to earth begin and never cease."**

## **The Eighth Lesson and Carol**

**8 Matthew 2:1-12**

*the wise find the truth*

Chris Stringer

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.' <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, 'In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup> "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel."

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.' <sup>9</sup> When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup> On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and

myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

## **8 The First Nowell**

**The first nowell 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.**

***Nowell, nowell, nowell, nowell,  
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.**

***Nowell...***

**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.**

***Nowell...***

**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.**

***Nowell...***

**Then entered in those wise men three,  
full reverently upon their knee,  
and offered there in his presence  
their gold and myrrh and frankincense.**

***Nowell...***

**Then let us all with one accord  
sing praises to our heavenly Lord,  
who has made heaven and earth of nought,  
and with his blood salvation bought.**

***Nowell...***

# The Ninth Lesson and Carol

*Please stand as you are able*

**9 John 1.1–14**

*Love comes down to earth*

The Ven. Stephanie Shepard

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

**9 Joy to the World**

**Joy to the world, the Lord is come!  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare Him room,  
And Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven and nature sing,  
And Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.**

**Joy to the earth, the Saviour reigns!  
Let all 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.**

## **Incarnation Litany**

*Please sit or stand to pray.*

In joy and humility let us pray to the creator of the universe, saying, "Lord, grant us peace."

By the good news of our salvation brought to Mary by the angel, hear us, O Lord.

**Lord, grant us peace.**

By the mystery of the Word made flesh, hear us, O Lord.

**Lord, grant us peace.**

By the birth in time of your timeless Son, hear us, O Lord.

**Lord, grant us peace.**

By the manifestation of your radiant glory to the shepherds and magi, hear us, O Lord,

**Lord, grant us peace.**

By the obedience of the maker of the world to Mary and Joseph of Nazareth, hear us, O Lord.

**Lord, grant us peace.**

By the baptism of the Son of God in the river Jordan, hear us, O Lord.

**Lord, grant us peace.**

Grant that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our Saviour Jesus Christ; hear us, O Lord.

**Lord, grant us peace.**

## Collect and Lord's Prayer

Almighty God,

**you wonderfully created and yet more wonderfully restored our human nature. May we share the divine life of your Son Jesus Christ, who humbled himself to share our humanity, and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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, the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## Closing Carol: Silent Night

*During the singing of this carol, you are invited to light a taper from your neighbour.*

**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 Saviour is born,  
Christ the Saviour 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.**

## **Final Blessing**

The Word became light. the Word became history.  
the Word became conflict, the Word became indomitable Spirit,  
and sowed its seeds upon the mountain, near the river and in the valley,  
and those of good will heard the angels sing.

Tired knees were strengthened, trembling hands were stilled,  
and the people who wandered in darkness saw the light.

The Word became the seed of justice and we conceived peace.  
The Word made justice to rain and peace came forth from the furrows of  
the land and we saw its glory in the eyes of the poor transformed into real  
men and women.

And those who saw the star opened up for us the path we now follow<sup>i</sup>.

May the God of infinite goodness scatter the darkness in your life  
and brighten your heart with holiness;  
and the blessing of God Almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## **Postlude**

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<sup>i</sup> Adapted from Julia Esquivel's poem "Threatened by Resurrection"