



Christ Church
Cathedral
Ottawa

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Sunday | December 21st | 2025

4 pm | A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols for Christmas

Welcome

A service of Lessons and Carols for Christmas was first developed in 1880 by Bishop Edward Benson of Truro (who eventually became the Archbishop of Canterbury). A later adaptation by King's College, Cambridge, became widely known. Christ Church Cathedral Ottawa has further adapted this iconic Christmas liturgy, using readings and carols to narrate the story of God's loving purpose in creation, from the Spirit of God, which moved over the waters at the beginning of time, and the covenant God made with humankind, to the abandonment of that covenant and the hope-filled promise of humankind's redemption by the Holy Child of Bethlehem.

This service is offered by Christ Church Cathedral as a gesture of peace and goodwill to the people of the Nation's Capital.

Please do not hang coats on the end of the pews,
and please do turn off or set mobile devices to silent mode.

*Our diocese was founded on the homeland of the Anishinaabe Algonquins.
May we dwell on this land with respect and peace.*

Order of Service

Preludes | *The Holy Boy* | John Ireland
| *Es ist ein Ros entsprungen* | Johannes Brahms
| *In dulci jubilo (BWV 751)* | J.S. Bach

Hymn | *Once in Royal David's City*

Please join in singing verses 3-6.

- 3. And through all his wondrous childhood he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly maiden, in whose gentle arms he lay.
Christian children all must be mild, obedient, good as he.**
- 4. For he is our childhood's pattern, day by day like us he grew,
he was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew:
and he feeleth for our sadness and he shareth in our gladness.**
- 5. And our eyes at last shall see him, through his own redeeming love,
for that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
and he leads his children on, to the place where he is gone.**
- 6. Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;
when like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.**

A Bidding Prayer

First Lesson | *Genesis 1:1-25 abridged* | *God creates the earth and heavens and
all living creatures*

Carol | *Behold, the great Creator* | arr. Philip Moore

*Behold, the great Creator makes a house of clay; a robe of human form takes for ever from
this day. Hear this, the wise eternal Word as Mary's infant cries; a servant is our mighty Lord,
and God in cradle lies. Glad shepherds run to view this sight, a choir of angels sings; wise men
from far with pure delight adore the King of kings. These wonders all the world amaze and*

shake the starry frame; the host of heaven stand to gaze, and bless the Saviour's name. Join then, all hearts that are not stone, and all our voices prove to celebrate the holy one, the God of peace and love.

Second Lesson | *Genesis 1:26-2:1 | God creates and blesses humankind*

Carol | *The truth from above* | *Ralph Vaughan Williams*

This is the truth sent from above, the truth of God, the God of love, therefore don't turn me from your door, but hearken all both rich and poor. The first thing which I do relate is that God did man create; the next thing which to you I'll tell woman was made with man to dwell. Thus we were heirs to endless woes, till God the Lord did interpose; and so a promise soon did run that he would redeem us by his Son. And at that season of the year our blest Redeemer did appear; He here did live, and here did preach, and many thousands he did teach. Thus he in love to us behaved, to show us how we must be saved; and if you want to know the way, be pleased to hear what he did say.

Third Lesson | *Genesis 17:1-8; 22:18 | God makes a covenant with humankind through Abram*

Carol | *Jesus Christ the apple tree* | *Elizabeth Poston*

The tree of life my soul hath seen, Laden with fruit and always green: The trees of nature fruitless be Compared with Christ the apple tree. His beauty doth all things excel: By faith I know, but ne'er can tell The glory which I now can see In Jesus Christ the apple tree. For happiness I long have sought, And pleasure dearly I have bought: I missed of all; but now I see 'Tis found in Christ the apple tree. I'm weary with my former toil, Here I will sit and rest awhile: Under the shadow I will be, Of Jesus Christ the apple tree. This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, It keeps my dying faith alive; Which makes my soul in haste to be With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

Fourth Lesson | *Isaiah 1:2-4, 16-17 | Humankind forsakes the covenant with God*

Carol | *Wither's Rocking Hymn* | *Ralph Vaughan Williams*

Sweet baby, sleep! What ails my dear? What ails my darling thus to cry? Be still, my child, and lend thine ear To hear me sing thy lullaby. My pretty lamb, forbear to weep; Be still, my dear; sweet baby, sleep. A little infant once was he, And strength in weakness then was laid Upon his virgin mother's knee, That power to thee might be conveyed, Sweet baby, then forbear to

weep; Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep. The wants that he did then sustain Have purchased wealth, my babe, for thee; And by his torments and his pain Thy rest and ease secured be. My baby, then, forbear to weep; Be still, my babe; sweet baby, sleep.

Hymn | *It came upon the midnight clear*

***It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, to all good will from heaven's most gracious king!"
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.***

***Still through the cloven skies they come with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.***

***Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
beneath the angel-strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
and we amid our wars hear not the words of peace they bring:
O listen now, and still your strife to hear the angels sing.***

***For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,
when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold:
when the new heaven and earth shall own the Prince of Peace their King
and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.***

Fifth Lesson | *Isaiah 9:2b, 6; 11:5-9* | *Isaiah announces redemption through God's Messiah*

Carol | *In the bleak midwinter* | *Philip Moore*

*In the bleak midwinter Frosty wind made moan, Earth stood hard as iron, Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, Snow on snow, In the bleak midwinter Long ago. Our God,
heav'n cannot hold him Nor earth sustain; Heav'n and earth shall flee away When he comes to reign;
In the bleak midwinter A stable-place sufficed The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ. Enough
for him, whom Cherubim Worship night and day, A breastful of milk And a mangerful of hay;
Enough for him, whom angels Fall down before, The ox and ass and camel Which adore. Angels
and archangels May have gathered there, Cherubim and seraphim Throng'd the air, But only
his mother In her maiden bliss Worshipped the Beloved With a kiss. What can I give him, Poor*

as I am? If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb, If I were a wise man I would do my part, Yet what I can I give him, Give my heart.

Sixth Lesson | *Luke 1:26-38 | The angel Gabriel greets the Virgin Mary*

Carol | *Gabriel's Message* | G. Brown

The angel Gabriel from heaven came, His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame, "All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary! Most highly favoured Lady," Gloria! For known a blessed mother thou shalt be, All generations laud and honour thee, Thy son shall be Emmanuel by seers foretold, Most highly favoured Lady, Gloria! Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head, "To me be as it pleaseth God," she said, "My soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name." Most highly favoured Lady, Gloria! Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn, and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say, Most highly favoured Lady, Gloria!

Seventh Lesson | *Luke 2:1-7 | The Messiah is born in Bethlehem*

Carol | *Away in a manger* | Esther Bersweden

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed, the little Lord Jesus lay 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 thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky, and stay by my side until morning is nigh. Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay close by me for ever, and love me, I pray. Bless all the dear children in thy tender care, and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

Hymn | *While shepherds watched*

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

Eighth Lesson | *Luke 2:8-16 | The Messiah's birth is proclaimed by angels*

Carol | *Angelus ad pastores ait | Hieronymus Praetorius*

*Angelus ad pastores ait: Annuntio vobis gaudium magnum, quia natus est vobis hodie
Salvator mundi. Alleluia. | The angel said to the shepherds: I bring you tidings of great joy, for
the Saviour of the world has been born for you today. Alleluia.*

Ninth Lesson | *John 1:1-14 | The timeless Messiah brings redemption to the whole
world*

Carol | *Verbum caro factum est | Tamsin Jones*

*Noel! This night there is a child y-born That sprang out of Jesse's thorn, We must sing and say
therefor: Verbum caro factum est. Jesus is the childes name And Mary mild is his dame All
sorrow is turned to game. Verbum caro factum est. It fell upon the high midnight The stars
they shone both fair and bright The angels sang with all their might: Verbum caro factum est.
Now kneel we down upon our knee And pray we to the Trinity, Our help, our succour for to be:
Verbum caro factum est. Noel! Noel! Noel!*

Offertory Hymn | *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:***

Refrain:

***O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!***

***God of God, Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God, Begotten, not created:*** *Refrain*

***See how the shepherds, Summoned to his cradle,
Leaving their flocks, draw nigh with lowly fear;
We too will thither Bend our joyful footsteps:*** *Refrain*

***Lo! star-led chieftains, Magi, Christ adoring,
Offer him incense, gold, and myrrh;
We to the Christ Child Bring our hearts' oblations:*** *Refrain*

***Child, for us sinners Poor and in the manger,
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
Who would not love thee, Loving us so dearly?*** *Refrain*

***Sing, choirs of Angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God In the Highest:*** *Refrain*

***Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born on Christmas morning,
Jesu, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing:*** *Refrain*



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Closing Prayer

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ is Emmanuel, God With Us, help us to know his presence among us and to be so transformed by his power, that in our worship, our words and our actions we may reflect something of the glory of the light of the world to those with whom we share our lives, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing

Be steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and untiring in love all the days of your life; and the blessing of God, the Creator, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Hymn | *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, the 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."***

Postlude | *Finale – Symphonie 1 | Louis Vierne*

Officiant | The Very Reverend Beth Bretzlaff
Reader 1 | Ron Medas
Reader 2 | Jeannette Ezechiel
Reader 3 | Ewan Ibey
Reader 4 | Jane Morris
Reader 5 | Shawn Wenuk
Reader 6 | Ann Chaplin
Reader 7 | Henry Schultz
Reader 8 | Katherine Spencer-Ross
Reader 9 | The Reverend Canon Doug Richards

Organists | James Calkin | Nick Veltmeyer
Directors | James Calkin | Andrew McAnerney
Sung by | Boys Choir | Girls Choir | Lay Clerks

Duty Wardens | John Serrati | Katherine Spencer-Ross

Christmas | New Year's Day | Epiphany

Christmas Eve | Wednesday | December 24th

7 pm Story, Carols, and Choral Eucharist

10 pm Festal Eucharist with Brass

Christmas Day | Thursday | December 25th

8.30 am Holy Eucharist | 10.30 am Choral Eucharist with Children's Story

First Sunday after Christmas | December 28th

8.30 am Holy Eucharist | 10.30 am Sung Eucharist

The Naming of Jesus | Thursday | January 1st

Noon Choral Eucharist and Festive Reception with The Most Reverend Dr. Shane Parker,
Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada

The Epiphany of the Lord | Sunday | January 4th

8.30 am Holy Eucharist | 10.30 am Sung Eucharist

Wednesday | Thursday | January 7th | 8th

12.05 pm Iona Creation Eucharist | Iona Contemplative Prayer

The Baptism of the Lord | Sunday | January 11th

8.30 am Eucharist | 10.30 am Holy Baptism and Choral Eucharist

Christ Church Cathedral Ottawa

Anishinaabe aking ate awaso kikinawadjichigan | A place of prayer on Algonquin territory

The Anglican Cathedral in the Nation's Capital

Cathedral of the Canadian Forces Anglican Military Ordinariate

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Deacon Residentiary | The Reverend Dr. Jarrett Carty

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Lay Readers | Daniel Jerusalemiec | Ted Livingstone

Director of Music and Organist | James Calkin (ext. 201)

Associate Director of Music | Andrew McAnerney (ext. 121)

Music Associate | Nick Veltmeyer

Algonquin Teacher in Residence | Albert Dumont (Oshki Nodin)

Church Wardens | Jane Morris | Katherine Spencer-Ross

Director of Operations and Development | Nicholas Galambos (ext. 171)
