

# The Church of the Holy Trinity

Rittenhouse Square

## Christmas Eve

### The Festival of Lessons & Carols

8:00 PM



December 24, 2025

The Festival of Lessons and Carols was first celebrated at King's College, Cambridge on Christmas Eve, 1918. It was an adaptation of a similar service that had been written for the cathedral at Truro in 1880. The lessons were reordered in 1919, and what follows are the lessons that have been used since that time. At King's College, the Festival is a Christmas Eve service, and the lessons, and music, move deliberately from the season of Advent into Christmastide. Many other parishes have adopted the tradition, occasionally modifying it as needed.

## FESTIVAL of LESSONS & CAROLS

### Prelude

*Three settings of 'In dulci jubilo'*

Dietrich Buxtehude,  
Johann Sebastian Bach,  
Marcel Dupré

### THE ENTRANCE RITE

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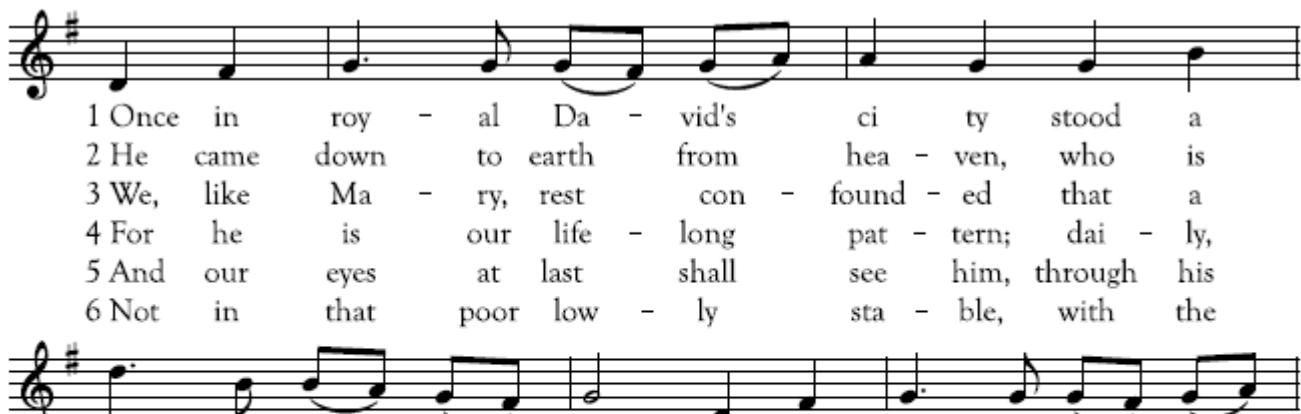
*All rise in body or in spirit at the tolling of the bells.*

### Entrance Hymn 102

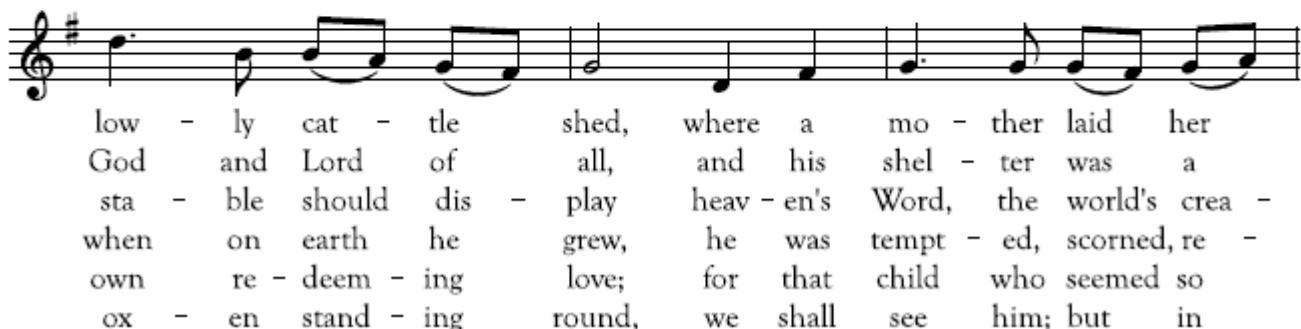
Irby

*The choir alone sings stanzas 1-2.*

*The congregation joins on stanzas 3-6.*



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's ci ty stood a  
2 He came down to earth from hea - ven, who is  
3 We, like Ma - ry, rest con - found - ed that a  
4 For he is our life - long pat - tern; dai - ly,  
5 And our eyes at last shall see him, through his  
6 Not in that poor low - ly sta - ble, with the



low - ly cat - tle shed, where a mo - ther laid her  
God and Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a  
sta - ble should dis - play heav - en's Word, the world's crea -  
when on earth he grew, he was tempt - ed, scorned, re -  
own re - deem - ing love; for that child who seemed so  
ox - en stand - ing round, we shall see him; but in

ba - by in a man - ger for his bed: Ma - ry was that mo - ther  
 sta - ble, and his cra - dle was a stall; with the poor, the scorned, the  
 -a - tor, cra - dled there on Christ - mas Day, yet this child, our Lord and  
 -ject - ed, tears and smiles like us he knew. Thus he feels for all our  
 help - less is our Lord in heaven a - bove; and he leads his chil - dren  
 hea - ven, where his saints his thrones sur - round: Christ, re - vealed to faith - ful

mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.  
 low - ly, lived on earth our Sa - vior ho - ly.  
 bro - ther, brought us love for one an - oth - er.  
 sad - ness, and he shares in all our glad - ness.  
 on\_\_\_\_ to the place where he is gone\_\_\_\_  
 eye,\_\_\_\_ set at God's right hand on high\_\_\_\_

## Bidding Prayer

Presider Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight 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 him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make this place glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city. 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 all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

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 gather up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

All 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 for ever and ever. Amen.

Presider The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. **Amen.**

*Please be seated.*

Carol *Up! Good Christen folk, and Listen* George Ratcliffe Woodward

Ding-dong, ding:  
Ding-a-dong-a-ding:  
Ding-dong, ding-dong:  
Ding-a-dong-ding.

1. Up! good Christen folk, and listen  
How the merry church bells ring,  
And from steeple  
Bid good people  
Come adore the new-born King:

2. Tell the story how from glory  
God came down at Christmastide,  
Bringing gladness,  
Chasing sadness,  
Show'ring blessings far and wide.

3. Born of mother, blest o'er other,  
Ex Maria Virgine,  
In a stable  
('Tis no fable),  
Christus natus hodie.

G.R. Woodward

# THE LESSONS

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## First Lesson: Genesis 3:8-15

Read by Andy Gutknecht

*God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.*

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. But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" 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 from 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 from 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 tricked me, and I ate."

The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon 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 hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

Thanks be to God.

Carol

*Adam lay ybounden*

Carson Cooman

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Adam lay y'bounden,                      | Ne had the apple taken been,            |
| Bounden in a bond,                       | The apple taken been,                   |
| Four thousand winters                    | Nay had never our lady                  |
| Thought he not too long.                 | Abeen heavenly queen.                   |
| And all was for an apple                 | Blessed be the time                     |
| An apple that he took                    | That apple taken was,                   |
| As clerkes finden written in their book. | Therefore we moun singen 'Deo gracias!' |

## Second Lesson Genesis 22:15-18

Read by Sally Griffith

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.*

The angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, 'By myself I have sworn, says the LORD: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice.'

Thanks be to God.

Carol

*In dulci jubilo*

Robert Pearsall

In dulci jubilo (*In sweet jubilation*) let us our homage show;  
Our heart's joy reclineth In praesepio (*in the manger*)  
And like a bright star shineth Matris in gremio. (*on his mother's lap*)  
Alpha es et O. (*you are Alpha & Omega*)

O Jesu parvule! (*O infant Jesus*) I yearn for thee alway!  
Hear me, I beseech thee, O puer optime (*O best of boys*)!  
My prayer, let it reach thee, O princeps gloriae (*O prince of glory*),  
Trahe me post te. (*Draw me after you*)

O patris caritas (*O love of the Father*), O nati lenitas (*O gentleness of the Son*),  
Deeply were we stained Per nostra crimina (*by our sins*);  
but thou hast for us gained Coelorum gaudia (*the joys of heaven*).  
O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia, where (*where are those joys*), if that they be not there?  
There are angels singing Nova cantica (*new songs*)  
There the bells are ringing In regis curia (*in the king's court*)  
O that we were there!

**Third Lesson:** Isaiah 9:2-7

*Read by Mark Ritter*

*The Prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.*

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. You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the trampling warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 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 onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Thanks be to God.

*All rise in body or in spirit to sing.*

*Introduction*

1 On this day earth shall ring  
 2 His the doom, ours the mirth;  
 3 God's bright star, o'er his head,  
 4 On this day an - gels sing;

with the song child - ren sing to the Lord, Christ our King,  
 when he came down to earth Beth - le - hem saw his birth;  
 Wise Men three to him led; kneel they low by his bed,  
 with their song earth shall ring, prais - ing Christ, hea - ven's King,

born on earth to save us; him the Fa - ther gave us.  
 ox and ass be - side him from the cold would hide him.  
 lay their gifts be - fore him, praise him and a - dore him.  
 born on earth to save us; peace and love he gave us.

*Refrain*

Id - e - o - o - o, Id - e - o - o - o,  
 Id - e - o glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o!

*"Ideo gloria in excelsis Deo!" is Latin for "Therefore, glory to God in the highest!"*

Please be seated

*The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.*

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. 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. 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; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; 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 around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling 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 asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

Thanks be to God.

### Carol

There is a flower sprung of a tree,  
The root thereof is called Jesse,  
A flower of price,  
There is none such in paradise.

This flower is fair and fresh of hue,  
It fadeth never, but ever is new;  
The blessed branch this flower on grew  
Was Mary mild that bare Jesu,  
A flower of grace;  
Against all sorrow it is solace.

The seed hereof was Goddes sand (*gift*),  
That God himself sowed with his hand,  
In Nazareth that holy land,  
Amidst her arbour a maiden found;  
This blessed flower  
Sprang never but in Mary's bower.

### *There is a Flower*

John Rutter

When Gabriel this maid did meet  
With 'Ave Maria' he did her greet;  
Between them two this flower was set  
And safe was kept, no man should wit (*know*),  
Till on a day

In Bethl'em it could spread and spray.

When that fair flower began to spread,  
And his sweet blossom began to bed (*bud*),  
Then rich and poor of every land  
They marvelled how this flower might spread,  
Till kinges three  
That blessed flower came to see.

Angels there came from heaven's tower,  
To look upon this freshele flower,  
How fair he was in his colour,  
And how sweet in his savour,  
And to behold  
How such a flower might spring in gold.

(John Audelay - 15<sup>th</sup> cent.)

*The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him 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 ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" 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. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with 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.

Thanks be to God.

**Carol**

*A maiden most gentle*

Andrew Carter

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing:  
of Mary the mother of Jesus our King,  
Ave Maria.

The archangel Gabriel foretold by his call the Lord of  
creation, and Savior of all.  
Ave Maria.

How blessed is the birth of her heavenly child,  
who came to redeem us in Mary so mild.  
Ave Maria.

Three kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,  
and marveled in awe at the babe in her care.  
Ave Maria.

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray,  
sing praise to the Savior, sing endless Ave.  
Ave Maria.

(Andrew Carter)

*Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.*

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. 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. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 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.

Thanks be to God.

*All rise in body or in spirit to sing.*

“O Little Town of Bethlehem” was written by Phillips Brooks (our second Rector) for the Sunday School at The Church of Holy Trinity in 1868, after he had visited Bethlehem in 1865. The fourth stanza was not included in the hymnal until 1940 and is still missing from many hymnals. Brooks’ organist, Lewis H. Redner, wrote the original tune for these words. The hymn was first published in 1874 and the tune was named St. Louis.

### Carol 79

St. Louis

*The Choir sings stanza 3.*

1 O lit - tle town of Beth-le-hem, how still we see thee lie!  
 2 For Christ is born of Ma - ry; and gath-ered all a - bove,  
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won-drous gift is given!  
 \*4 Where child - ren pure and hap - py pray to the bless-ed Child,  
 5 O ho - ly Child of Beth-le-hem, de - scend to us, we pray;

1 A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;  
 2 while mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won-dering love.  
 3 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.  
 4 where mis - er - y cries out to thee, Son of the mo - ther mild;  
 5 cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.

1 yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light;  
 2 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth!  
 3 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,  
 4 where char - i - ty stands watch-ing and faith holds wide the door,  
 5 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad tid - ings tell;

1 the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.  
 2 and prais - es sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.  
 3 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.  
 4 the dark night wakes, the glo - ry breaks, and Christ - mas comes once more.  
 5 O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!

### Seventh Lesson: Luke 2:8-16

Read by Benjamin Leiby

*The Shepherds go to the manger.*

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 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: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’

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.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

Thanks be to God.

## Carol

Young Jesus Sweit

Robert Convery

O my deir hert, young Jesus sweit,  
 Prepare thy creddil in my spreit,  
 And I sall rock thee in my hert  
 And never mair from thee depart.

But I sall praise thee evermore  
 With sangis sweit unto thy gloir;  
 The knees of my heart sall I bow,  
 And sing that richt Balulalow!

(James, John, and Robert Wedderburn)

All rise in body or in spirit to sing.

## Carol 94

Winchester Old

*Descant*

2 "Fear not," said he, for might - y dread had seized their trou - bled mind;  
 6 "All glo - ry be to God on high and on the earth be peace;

1 While shep - herds watched their flocks by night, all seat - ed on the ground,  
 2 "Fear not," said he, for might - y dread had seized their trou-bled mind;  
 3 "To you, in Da - vid's town, this day is born of Da - vid's line  
 4 "The heaven - ly Babe you there shall find to hu - man view dis - played,  
 5 Thus spake the ser - aph, and forth-with ap-peared a shin - ing throng

2 "Glad tid - ings of great joy I bring to you and all man - kind.  
 6 good will hence - forth from heaven to men be - gin and nev - er cease."

1 the an - gel of the Lord came down, and glo - ry shone a - round.  
 2 "Glad tid - ings of great joy I bring to you and all man - kind.  
 3 the Sa - vior, who is Christ the Lord; and this shall be the sign:  
 4 all mean - ly wrapped in swath-ing bands, and in a man - ger laid."  
 5 of an - gels prais - ing God, who thus ad - dressed their joy - ful song:

6. All glory be to God on high and on the earth be peace;  
 good will henceforth from heaven to men begin and never cease.

Please be seated.

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 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.’ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: “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.”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 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.’ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east 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 and of incense and of myrrh.

Thanks be to God.

Carol

*Here is the little door*

Herbert Howells

Here is the little door, lift up the latch, oh lift!  
 We need not wander more but enter with our gift;  
     Our gift of finest gold,  
     Gold that was never bought or sold;  
     Myrrh to be strewn about his bed;  
     Incense in clouds about his head;  
     All for the child that stirs not in his sleep,  
     But holy slumber holds with ass and sheep.

Bend low about his bead, for each he has a gift;  
 See how his eyes awake, lift up your hands, o lift!  
     For gold, he gives a keen edged sword  
     (Defend with it thy little Lord!)  
     For incense, smoke of battle red,  
     Myrrh for the honored happy dead;  
     Gifts for his children, terrible and sweet,  
     Touched by such tiny hands and oh such tiny feet.

(Frances Chesterton)

All rise in body or in spirit.

**Ninth Lesson:** John 1:1-14

Read by The Rev. Rachel Wenner Gardner

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. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. 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.

Thanks be to God.

**Carol 83**

*Adeste fideles*

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O  
2 God from God, Light from Light e - ter - nal,  
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
\*4 See how the shep-herds, sum - moned to his cra - dle,  
\*5 Child, for us sin - ners poor and in the man - ger,

1 come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
2 lo! he ab - hors not the Vir - gin's womb;  
3 sing, all ye ci - ti - zens of heaven a - bove;  
4 leav - ing their flocks, draw - nigh to gaze;  
5 we would em - brace thee, with love and awe;

1 come, and be - hold him, born the King of an - gels;  
 2 on - ly - be - got - ten Son of the Fa - ther;  
 3 glo - ry to God, glo - ry in the high - est;  
 4 we too will thith - er bend our joy - ful foot - steps;  
 5 who would not love thee, lov - ing us so dear - ly?

*Refrain*

O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a -

dore him, O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord.

6 Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
 born this happy morning;  
 Jesus, to thee be glory given;  
 Word of the Father,  
 now in flesh appearing;

*Refrain*

## The Collect of the Day

*Presider* The Lord be with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Presider* Let us pray.

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting.

*All*

Amen.

## Welcome

## The Offertory

During the anthem we will be passing the offering plates. If you prefer to give online, you can text CHT DONATE to 73256 or scan the QR Code to the right. Your generous gifts go to support our Open Hearts Café, the magnificent Music Programs by our Choir, our amazing staff and this beautiful building.



### Anthem

*The Shepherds Sing*

Conrad Susa

*Nova, nova ave fit ex Eva.* (News! News! 'Ave' has become [the second] Eve)  
The shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?  
My God, no hymn for thee?

*Nova, nova ave fit ex Eva.*  
My soul's a shepherd too: a flock it feeds  
Of thoughts, and words and deeds.  
The pasture is thy word; the streams thy grace  
Enriching all the place.

*Nova, nova ave fit ex Eva.*  
Shepherd and flock shall sing, and all my powers  
Outsing the daylight hours.  
Then we will chide the sun  
For letting night take up his place and right:

We sing one common Lord; wherefore he should  
Himself the candle hold.  
I will go searching, till I find a sun  
Shall stay, till we have done;  
A willing shiner, that shall shine as gladly  
As frost-nipt suns look sadly.

Then we will sing, and shine all our own day,  
And one another pay:  
His beams shall cheer my breast, and both so twine,  
Till ev'n his beams sing, and my music shine.

*Nova, nova, ave fit ex Eva.*

(George Herbert)

## The Prayers

Officiant God of star and stable, you lead us to wonder and to hope. You gather us together to hear your promise of love. As we gather, we offer our concerns and our dreams, our hopes and fears

*a moment of silence is held.*

Officiant Like the shepherds who sought the stable, we seek your promise of peace. We pray for your people broken by violence, those who live with fear, and those who live without hope. We pray for your courage and peace.

*a moment of silence is held.*

Officiant Like the wise ones who dedicated their gifts, we remember those in need. We pray for those who are lonely, hungry, or forgotten; for those who are ill in body and in spirit; for those who are confused or afraid. We pray for your joy and love, for all your people, especially those we remember now.

*a moment of silence is held*

Officiant Holy One, you came as a child, offering renewal of spirit and of living. May our prayers be a new beginning: for healing, truth, and trust. May we embody love that is forgiving, compassionate, and gracious. May we send back the angels' song of peace and joy. We pray these things in the name of Jesus who became the Christ.

All Amen.

**Carol 111** *The congregation sings verses 1 and 3*

*Stille Nacht*

1 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.

2 Silent night! Holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heaven afar,  
heav'nly hosts sing, "Alleluia!  
Christ the Savior is born!  
Christ the Savior is born!"

3 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!

## The Blessing

Presider May Almighty God, who sent his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, and brighten your heart with the light of his holiness.

All **Amen.**

Presider May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel.

All **Amen.**

Presider May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever.

All **Amen.**

## The Dismissal Hymn 87

Mendelssohn

1 Hark! the herald angels sing glo - ry to the new - born King!  
2 Christ, by high - est heaven a - dored; Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord;  
3 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!  
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb.  
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;  
Veiled in flesh the God - head see; hail the in - car - nate De - i - ty.  
Risen with heal - ing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,

with the an - gel - ic host pro - claim Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!  
 Pleased as man with us to dwell; Je - sus, our Em - man - u - el!  
 hail, the Sun of Right-eous - ness! hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

*Refrain*

Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing glo - ry to the new - born King!

## The Dismissal

*Presider* Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

## The Postlude

*Pæan*

John Cook

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Join us tomorrow as we celebrate  
*The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ*  
*The Holy Eucharist, Rite II*  
**10:00 AM**

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## PARTICIPANTS THIS EVENING

### **Officiants:**

The Rev. John Gardner  
The Rev. Rachel Wenner Gardner

### **Musicians & Choir:**

Benjamin Leiby, *Organist-Chairmaster*  
Wesley Parrott, *Assisting Organist*

#### **Soprano:**

Gail Caruso  
Stephanie DeMane  
Franny Geller  
Aimee Pilgermayer  
Erica Rose Smith

#### **Alto:**

Kathy Cammett  
Patricia Conrad  
Julianna Smith

#### **Tenor:**

Nathaniel Bear  
Samuel Evens  
Samuel Keeler  
Eddie Rubeiz

#### **Bass:**

Will Dowling  
Andrew Gutknecht  
Alex Mathews  
John Miles

### **Readers:**

Andy Gutknecht, Sally Griffith, Mark Ritter, Gail Caruso, Margaret Dowling, Jason Sagle

### **Ushers:**

David and Gwen Glenn

### **Acolytes:**

Quinn & Connor Gardner

### **Streaming:**

Boyden Gardner

**THE CHURCH OF  
THE HOLY TRINITY**  
RITTENHOUSE SQUARE

