

A Festival of Christmas Lessons & Carols



The First Sunday after Christmas December 27th 2020

**The Reverend John Beach
Priest-in-Charge**

*Welcome to St. John's Episcopal Church and thank you for worshipping with us today!
The foundation of the Episcopal faith is built on the Word of God, as recorded in the Bible, and the celebration of Holy Eucharist (also known as Holy Communion, the Mass) with the sharing of the bread and wine. Our Sunday worship is centered on these two aspects of our faith as expressed through hymns, readings and prayers.*

*This worship booklet contains all the written parts of our worship. We invite you to respond aloud the parts in bold and stand (if you are able) where you see the *.*

Opening Hymn

#427 ~ *When Morning Gilds the Skies*

When morning gilds the skies, my heart, awaking cries,
may Jesus Christ be praised! When evening shadows fall,
this rings my curfew call, may Jesus Christ be praised!

When mirth for music longs, this is my songs of songs,
may Jesus Christ be praised! God's holy house of prayer
hath none that can compare whit: may Jesus Christ be praised!

No lovelier antiphon in all high heaven is known
than, Jesus Christ be praised! There to the eternal Word
the eternal psalm is heard: may Jesus Christ be praised!

Ye nations of mankind, in this your concord find:
may Jesus Christ be praised! Let all the earth around
ring joyous with the sound: may Jesus Christ be praised!

Sing, suns and stars of space, sing, ye that see his face,
sing, Jesus Christ be praised! God's whole creation o'er,
both now and evermore shall Jesus Christ be praised!

Bidding Prayer

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

The Lord's Prayer *

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, and deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

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.**

First Lesson: Genesis 2:4b-9, 15-25

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 plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also 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 till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You may freely 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 die.'

Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he 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;
this one shall be called Woman,
for out of Man this one was taken.'

Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

First Carol

#93 ~ 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: 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 you is now residing, yonder shines the infant Light;
Come and worship, Come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King!

Sages, leave your contemplations; brighter visions beam afar:
seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen his natal star;
come and worship, come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King!

Saints before the altar bending, watching long in hope and fear,
suddenly the Lord, descending, in his temple shall appear: come and worship,
Come and worship, worship Christ, the newborn King!

Second Lesson: Genesis 22:15-18

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."

Second Carol

#324 ~ 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 descending comes, our 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 heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descending from the realms of endless day
that powers of hell may vanish, as the shadows pass 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!”

Third Lesson: Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people,
says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,
and cry to her
that she has served her term,
that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the LORD’s hand
double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:
‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.’

A voice says, ‘Cry out!’
And I said, ‘What shall I cry?’
All people are grass,
their constancy is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
when the breath of the LORD blows upon it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand for ever.
Get you up to a high mountain,
O Zion, herald of good tidings;
lift up your voice with strength,
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,

lift it up, do not fear;
say to the cities of Judah,
‘Here is your God!’
See, the Lord GOD comes with might,
and his arm rules for him;
his reward is with him,
and his recompense before him.
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;
he will gather the lambs in his arms,
and carry them in his bosom,
and gently lead the mother sheep.

Third Carol

#105 ~ *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen*

God rest you merry, gentlemen, let nothing you dismay;
remember Christ our Savior was born on Christmas day,
to save us all from Satan’s power when we were gone astray.

*Refrain: O tidings of comfort and joy, Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy*

From God our heavenly Father a blessed angel came
and unto certain Shepherds brought tidings of the same:
how that in Bethlehem was born the Son of God by name.

“Fear not, then,” said the angel, “Let nothing you affright;
this day is born a Savior of a pure Virgin bright,
to free all those who trust in Him from Satan’s power and might.”

Now to the Lord sing praises, all you within this place,
and with true love and charity each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas All other doth deface.

Fourth Lesson: Isaiah 11: 1-3a; 4a; 6-9

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.
With righteousness he shall judge the poor,
and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;
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.

Fourth Carol

#81 ~ *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 Savior, when half spent was the night.

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

Fifth Lesson: Luke 1: 26-35; 38

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." 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.

Fifth Carol

#87 ~ 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!

Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come, offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the incarnate Deity.
Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Mild he lays his glory by, born that man no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.
Risen with healing in his wings, light and life to all he brings,
hail, the Sun of Righteousness! hail, the heaven-born Prince of Peace!

Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King!

Sixth Lesson: Luke 2:1-20

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.

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. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Sixth Carol

#96 ~ Angels We have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night,
And the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see? What glad tidings did you hear?

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, 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.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

See him in a manger laid whom the angels praise above;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while we raise our hearts in love.

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Seventh Lesson: Luke 2:21-39

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.'

Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.'

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.'

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth.

Seventh Carol

#115 ~ What Child is This, Who, Laid to Rest

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;

Refrain: This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds 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.

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him;
the King of Kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone him.

Eighth Reading: Hebrews 1:1-12

Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

For to which of the angels did God ever say,

'You are my Son;
today I have begotten you?'

Or again,
'I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son?'

And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,
'Let all God's angels worship him.'

Of the angels he says,
'He makes his angels winds,
and his servants flames of fire.'

But of the Son he says,
'Your throne, O God, is for ever and ever,
and the righteous sceptre is the sceptre of your kingdom.
You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness beyond your companions.'

And,
'In the beginning, Lord, you founded the earth,
and the heavens are the work of your hands;
they will perish, but you remain;
they will all wear out like clothing;
like a cloak you will roll them up,
and like clothing they will be changed.
But you are the same,
and your years will never end.'

Eighth Carol:

#83 ~ *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (verses 1-3)

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;

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:

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of Heaven above!
Glory to God In the highest:

Ninth Lesson: John 1:1-14

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.

Ninth Carol

#99 ~ *While Shepherds Kept their Watching*

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;
go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth.

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born, and
God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

Closing Prayer and Blessing

Closing Hymn

#100 ~ *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 heaven and nature sing,

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns: let us our 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, wonders of his love.

Weekly Prayer List

Maureen Burke, Annelies Caggiano, Gia Capello, Carolyn Chadsey, Don DiGiacomo, Oriol Pi-Sunyer, Jim Dockery, Jim & Tim Eldridge, Claire Errico, Joanne Felci, Ruth Garrett, Peggy Gibbs, Gary Goodwin, Estelle Heath, Bruce Higgins, Michele Hoelzl, Janet Horrigan, Jeanne Kelly-Smith, (Baby) Autumn Ladder-Bush, Dennis Lancaster, Janet Lancaster, Lisa Lancaster, Matt, Lori M., Linda Marquis, Harriet Miraglia, Gisela Moore, Jeanine Morris, Fran Muise, Sara Murray, Debbie Rossetti, Bill St. Clair, David St. Clair, Nancy Scarry, Jeanne Seaboyer, Bo Shaw, Ray Shaw, Malcolm Silva, Gail Smith, Victoria Smith, Linda Sullivan, Meghan Tapley, Walter T., Susan Webb, Rachel W., and Candace Wormstead

In loving remembrance: Helen & Laurence Davis, Rev. James H. Davis, Phillip & Helen Lavoie, Bryan Scott Lavoie, Natalie Lavoie, and Robert & Dorothy Whitney

Participants in this Service:

The Rev. John Beach, Priest-in-Charge
Stephen Sikorski, Church Musician ~ John Rogalski, Worship Leader

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