



A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Welcome to our carol service!

Normally this service would be held in church, that isn't possible at the moment so we are doing things a little differently. We worship a God who was born as a baby into poverty, in the midst of great political upheaval and persecution, He's with us as we adapt in these challenging times.

The service of Nine Lessons and Carols started in 1918 as a new way to share the Christmas Story, since then it has become a staple part of the Christmas celebrations of millions of people. We have nine readings from the Bible, telling the story of the people of God and the birth of Jesus. The readings are interspersed with traditional Christmas carols, prayers and sometimes poetry or other readings.

For our service today the readings and prayers have been recorded by members of St Luke's and St John's from home and then edited with beautiful Carols made available to us by singers from St Martin in the Fields and there for you to sing along to!

We do hope it's a blessing to you.

Opening Carol - Once in Royal David's City

Welcome

Introduction

At Christmas time we delight again to hear the story of the journey to Bethlehem, the song of the angels, the surprise of the shepherds, and their joy as they found Jesus in the manger.

But lest we forget he was born to poverty,
we remember at this season all who are hungry or cold.
And lest we forget he became a refugee,
we remember now the stranger and the lonely among us.
And lest we forget he felt the pain of life and death,
we remember now those who are ill, or anxious, or bereaved.
And because we know he came for our salvation,
let us in heart and mind go once again to Bethlehem,

to hear the message of the angels and
worship afresh the Son of God.

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First Reading: Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

The fall of humankind

Collect

Lord our God,
on the first day of creation
you made the light that scatters all darkness.
Let Christ, the light of lights,
hidden from all eternity,
shine at last on your people
and free us from the darkness of sin.
Fill our lives with joy
as we welcome your Son at his coming.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.
Amen.

Carol - O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Second Reading: Genesis 22:15-18

God promises Abraham that through him all the nations of the world will be blessed.

Carol - Ding Dong! Merrily on High

Third Reading: Isaiah 9:2,6,7

The prophecy of the Messiah's birth

Carol - In the Bleak Mid-Winter

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

The prophets foretell the peace that Christ will bring

Poem - Christmas Bells by Henry Wadsworth-Longfellow

Collect

Eternal God,
in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn
but the sword of righteousness,
no strength known

but the strength of love:
So mightily spread abroad your Spirit,
that all peoples may be gathered under the banner
of the Prince of Peace,
as children of one Father;
to whom be dominion and
glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Fifth Reading: Luke 1:26-38

The Annunciation to Mary

Collect

**Heavenly Father,
who chose the Blessed Virgin Mary
to be the mother of the promised Saviour:
fill us your servants with your grace,
that in all things we may embrace your holy will
and with her rejoice in your salvation;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

Carol - The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

Sixth reading: Luke 2:1-7

The birth of Jesus

Collect

**Holy Jesus,
to deliver us from the power of darkness
you humbled yourself to be born among us
and were laid in a manger.
Let the light of your love always shine in our hearts,
and bring us at last to the joyful vision of your beauty,
for you are now alive and reign
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
God for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Carol - Silent Night

Seventh reading: 7. Luke 2: 8-16

The angels appear to the shepherds

Carol - While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night

Eighth reading: Matthew 2:1-11

Wise men are led by the star to Jesus

Collect

Creator of the heavens,
who led the Magi by a star
to worship the Christ-child:
guide and sustain us,
that we may find our journey's end
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Carol - What Child is This

Ninth reading: John 1:1-14

The Incarnation of the Word of God

Prayers

Carol - Hark the Herald Angels Sing

The Blessing

May the Father,
who has loved the eternal Son
from before the foundation of the world,
shed that love upon you his children.

Amen.

May Christ,
who by his incarnation gathered into one
things earthly and heavenly,
fill you with joy and peace.

Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
by whose overshadowing
Mary became the Godbearer,
give you grace to carry the good news of Christ.

Amen.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Carol - God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

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