

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS
Mora United Methodist Church
December 24, 2020

PRELUDE

In 1880 E. W. Benson, then Anglican Bishop of Truro, England, composed a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, based on ancient sources, for Christmas Eve. In 1918 it was adapted for the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, by its Dean, Eric Milner-White. The Nine Lessons given here have been customarily used in recent years at King's College. The service has been edited for United Methodist congregations.

Call to Worship

On this night, Christ is born! Now the Savior has appeared!
On this night, the heavenly chorus resounds! All creation rejoices!
On this night, the church throughout the world joins their cry:
Glory to God in the highest! Alleluia!

THE OPENING PRAYER

Open us, O God, to hear again the message of the angels, and to go in heart and mind with the shepherds to Bethlehem to see the glorious redemption you have brought to pass through the Newborn lying in a manger. And in the words that Christ himself has taught us let us pray.

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,
But deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ADVENT CANDLE

Gravning Family (Daryl, Trisha, Zander, James)

Speaker 1: Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel. "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will **hope**." May the God of **hope** fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with **hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Speaker 2: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of **Peace**. Of the greatness of his government and **peace** there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Speaker 3: And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great **joy** for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

Speaker 4: For God so **loved** the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. *Jesus Christ is the true reason for **hope, peace, joy, and love** in this season and forever.*

*Speaker 1: As we light the **Christ** candle, celebrating the end of Advent and the arrival of **Christ** and Christmas, let us remember how our savior came once as a lowly baby, that the world through him might be saved, and how he will return one day in glory.*

Speaker 2: The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Speaker 3: When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk-in darkness but will have the light of life.”

CAROL

O Holy Night

Ellen Timmers

FIRST LESSON

Genesis 3:8 –15

Pat Gorham

God announces in the Garden of Eden Adam and Eve's punishment for their rebellion and that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

CAROL: UMH 196

Come, Thou Long–Expected Jesus

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.

2. Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.

SECOND LESSON

Genesis 22:15 –18

Carmel Gorham

God promises to Abraham that by his descendants all the nations of the earth shall obtain blessing.

CAROL UMH 211, verses 1, 2, 4, 7

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

1 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 thee, O Israel.

2 O come, thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
to us the path of knowledge show and cause us in her ways to go
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

4 Oh come thou Root of Jesse’s tree, an ensign of thy people be,
before thee rulers silent fall; all peoples on thy mercy call.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

7 O come, Desire of nations bind all peoples in one heart and mind.
From dust though brought us forth to life; deliver us from early strife.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel.

THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 9:2, 6–7

Lily Hanson

The prophet announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness.

CAROL UMH 216 Verses 1,2

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

1 Lo, how a rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesses's lineage coming, as those of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter, when half spent was the night.

2 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.

FOURTH LESSON

Isaiah 11:1–4a, 6–9

Valerie Prax

The king is coming and will usher in a reign of justice for the poor and peace for all of God's creation.

CAROL UMH 230

O Little Town of Bethlehem

1. 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.

2. 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!

3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given;
so God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his 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.

4. 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!

FIFTH LESSON

Luke 1:26 –35, 38

Ruth Smith

The angel Gabriel announces to the virgin Mary that she will give birth to God's promised Son whose kingdom shall never end.

CAROL UMH 211, verses 3,5,6

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

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

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee o Israel.

5 O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home.
The captives from their prison free, and conquer death's deep misery.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee o Israel.

6 O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thy justice here;
disperse the bloomy couds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee o Israel.

SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2:1 –7

Gayle Bergloff

On a Silent Night Jesus is born!

Liturgical Dance Ian Stegeman

Soloist Robin Stegeman

SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:8 –16

Taylor Bumann

The shepherds go to see the Savior of the world, lying in a manger.

CAROL UMH 245 verse 1,2

The First Noel

1 The first Noel 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.

Refrain:

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
born is the King of Israel.

2 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. (Refrain)

EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1 –11

Don Ripperton

The wise men follow a star to find the child Jesus, the King of the Jews.

CAROL UMH 254

We Three Kings

1 We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of light,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

2 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
gold I bring to crown him again,
King forever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign. [Refrain]

3 Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising, voices raising,
worshiping God on high. [Refrain]

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb. [Refrain]

5 Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
sounds through the earth and skies. [Refrain]

NINTH LESSON

John 1:1 –14

Mike Prax

John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

Candle Lighting Service

CAROL UMH 239

Silent Night, Holy Night

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,
heavenly 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.

4. Silent night, holy night,
wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

Eternal God, by the birth of Jesus Christ you gave yourself to the world.
Grant that, being born in our hearts, he may save us from all our sins, and restore within us the image and likeness of our Creator, to whom be everlasting praise and glory, world without end. Amen

CAROL UMH 246

Joy to the World

1. 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.

2. Joy to the world, the Savior 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.

3. 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.

4. 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, and wonders of his love.

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit bless you now and forever. Amen.