

# The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

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Truro  
Cathedral

Wednesday 23rd  
December 2020  
at 7.00 pm

## ABOUT THIS SERVICE

Welcome to this service as we come together to offer our praise to God who in the Incarnation comes among us as a child in a manger. This is the 140th year since the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was instituted by Bishop Benson, the first Bishop of Truro, and we have been holding these services here ever since. This year is different, though. Usually, we are able to have upwards of nine hundred people enjoying this wonderful occasion. This year, we have to operate with restricted numbers, and not have congregational singing either, which we know is hard and counter-intuitive. Nevertheless, we sincerely hope that you will find spiritual refreshment as you enjoy this act of worship, and, as we are live-streaming some of our services, we hope that many of you will be able to participate on-line.

Every year Truro Cathedral has to raise £1.3m. We receive no regular state funding and rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters. This year has been particularly financially difficult for the cathedral because of the Coronavirus pandemic. We would like to invite you to join us in the task of preserving the life, work and maintenance of this incredible building and all it represents for future generations by making a donation. This year we will be unable to take a collection during the last hymn; however there will be a 'retiring collection' at the west door of the cathedral and electronic donation stations are available within the cathedral if you would like to donate via 'contactless' means. And if you are watching on-line, do please consider making a donation by clicking the donate button and following the link. Thank you for your generous support.

In the time before the service begins you may like to offer the following prayer as part of your own preparation for worship, and for the days of Christmas that lie ahead. May we all at the cathedral wish you a very merry and blessed Christmas.

*We pray you, Lord, to purify our hearts,  
that they may be worthy to become your dwelling place.  
Let us never fail to find room for you,  
but come and abide in us,  
that we also may abide in you,  
for at this time you were born into the world for us,  
and live and reign, King of kings and Lord of lords,  
now and for ever. Amen.*

Please make sure that all mobile phones are turned off  
or set to silent mode.

*Please remain seated as the choir and clergy take their places.*

Hymn  
*sung by the choir*

*Solo* **Once in royal David's city  
Stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a mother laid her baby  
In a manger for his bed;  
Mary was that Mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little child.**

*Choir* **He came down to earth from heaven  
Who is God and Lord of all,  
And his shelter was a stable,  
And his cradle was a stall;  
With the poor and mean and lowly  
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.**

**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.**

**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;  
Where like stars his children crowned  
All in white shall wait around.**

*Words: C F Alexander*

*Melody: H J Gauntlett (1805-1876)  
Harmony: A H Mann; Descant: David Willcocks*

*Please remain seated*

Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmastide our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child: and let us make this Cathedral Church, dedicated to his most pure and lowly mother, glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth; for love and unity within the Church he came to build; and especially in this city and diocese of Truro, and this county of Cornwall.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us remember, in his name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore, and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom in the Lord Jesus, we are one for evermore.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven, in the words which Christ himself has taught us:

*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,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.

Carol  
*sung by the choir*

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining,  
It is the night of our dear Saviour's birth;  
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,  
Till he appeared, and the soul felt its worth.  
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,  
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!  
Fall on your knees! Oh, hear the angel voices!  
O night divine, O night when Christ was born.

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,  
With glowing hearts by his cradle we stand;  
So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming;  
Here came the wise men from the Orient land.  
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,  
In all our trials born to be our friend.  
He knows our need, He guardeth us from danger,  
Behold your King! Before the Lowly bend!

*Words: J. S. Dwight*

*Music: Adolphe Adam*

First Lesson

**Genesis 3: 8-15**

*read by Miles Townsend, a chorister*

God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, 'Where art thou?' And he said, 'I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid,

because I was naked; and I hid myself.' And he said, 'Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?' And the man said, 'The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.' And the Lord God said unto the woman, 'What is this that thou hast done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.' And the Lord God said unto the serpent, 'Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.'

Thanks be to God.

Carol  
sung by the choir

Adam lay ybounden,  
Bounden in a bond,  
Four thousand winter  
Thought he not too long

And all was for an apple,  
An apple that he took,  
As clerkes finden  
Written in their book.

Ne had the apple taken been,  
The apple taken been,  
Ne had never our Lady  
A-been heavene Queen.

Blessed be the time  
That apple taken was,  
Therefore we moun singen  
*Deo Gracias!*

Words: Anonymous 15th century

Music: Peter Warlock (1894-1930)

Second Lesson  
**Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7**  
read by Ed Dunne, a choral scholar

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Thanks be to God.

Carol  
*sung by the choir*

Listen, angel trumpets blow,  
True redemption all will know;  
Bring your hearts and bring your voices,  
All the world tonight rejoices.

Jesus in the cradle lay,  
Born for us a king today;  
Lying humble in the manger,  
God made man for ev'ry stranger

Listen, bells in heaven ring,  
While seraphic voices sing;  
In him your saving king you'll find,  
His peace on earth to all mankind.

*Words by Benji Harvey and Oliver Thorpe (former Head Choristers)  
Music: Sasha Johnson Manning (b. 1963)*

Third Lesson  
**Isaiah 11: 1-9**  
*read by Daphne Skinnard, a Chapter Canon*

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Thanks be to God.

Carol  
*sung by the choir*

As I sat under a sycamore tree,  
A sycamore tree, a sycamore tree,  
I looked me out upon the sea  
On Christ's Sunday at morn.

I saw three ships a-sailing there,  
A-sailing there, a-sailing there,  
Jesu, Mary and Joseph they bear  
On Christ's Sunday at morn.

Joseph did whistle and Mary did sing,  
Mary did sing, Mary did sing,  
And all the bells on earth did ring  
For joy our Lord was born.  
O they sailed into Bethlehem  
To Bethlehem, to Bethlehem,  
Saint Michael was the steersman,

Saint John sat in the horn

And all the bells on earth did ring,  
On earth did ring, on earth did ring:  
'Welcome be Thou Heaven's King,  
On Christ's Sunday at morn!'

*Words: Traditional*

*Music: Benjamin Britten (1913-1976)*

Fourth Lesson

**Luke 1: 26-35, 38**

*read by Andy Johnson, Head of Truro School*

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, 'Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women'. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, 'Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.' Then said Mary unto the angel, 'How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?' And the angel answered and said unto her, 'The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible.' And Mary said, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.' And the angel departed from her.

Thanks be to God.

Carol  
*sung by the choir*

Now the holly bears a berry as white as the milk,  
And Mary bore Jesus who was wrapped up in silk.  
*And Mary bore Jesus Christ,  
Our Saviour for to be,  
And the first tree in the greenwood  
It was the holly, holly, holly,  
And the first tree in the greenwood  
It was the holly.*

Now the holly bears a berry as green as the grass,  
And Mary bore Jesus who died on the Cross.

Now the holly bears a berry as black as the coal,  
And Mary bore Jesus who died for us all.

Now the holly bears a berry as blood it is red,  
Then trust we our Saviour who rose from the dead.

Words: *Cornish Traditional Carol*

Music: *arr John Rutter (b 1954)*

Fifth Lesson

**Luke 1: 39-45**

*read by Joy Reynolds, a Trustee of Truro Cathedral Ltd*

**The Blessed Virgin Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth.**

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah, and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and she exclaimed with a loud cry, 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! And why is this granted me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For behold, when the voice of your greeting came to my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfilment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.'

Thanks be to God.

Hymn  
*sung by the choir*

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.

O morning stars, together  
Proclaim the holy birth,  
And praises sing to God the King,  
And peace to men on earth;  
For Christ is born of Mary;  
And, gathered all above,  
While mortals sleep, the angels keep  
Their watch of wondering love.

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.

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.

*Words: Phillips Brooks*

*Music: the folk tune Forest Green, collected and published by Ralph Vaughan Williams*

Sixth Lesson

**Luke 2: 1-7**

*read by Adam Starr, Warden of the Cathedral Lay Assistants*

St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Thanks be to God.

Carol  
*sung by the choir*

Torches, torches, run with torches  
All the way to Bethlehem!  
Christ is born and now lies sleeping;  
Come and sing your song to Him!

Torches, torches, run with torches  
All the way to Bethlehem!  
Christ is born and now lies sleeping;  
Come and sing your song to Him!

Ah, Roro, Roro, my baby  
Ah, Roro, my love, Roro;  
Sleep you well, my heart's own darling  
While we sing you our Rorro

Sing, my friends, and make you merry  
Joy and mirth and joy again;  
Lo, He lives, the King of heaven  
Now and evermore. Amen

Lo, He lives, the King of heaven  
Now and ever, evermore. Amen

*Words: Based on a Galician Carol*

*Music: John Joubert (1927-2019)*

Seventh Lesson

**Luke 2: 8-16**

*read by Beverly Hulme, cathedral Mothers' Union*

The shepherds go to the manger.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, 'Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, and on earth peace, good will toward men.' And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, 'Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.' And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

Thanks be to God.

Carol  
*sung by the choir*

Quem vidistis pastores dicite:  
Annuntiate nobis  
in terris quis apparuit:  
Natum vidimus,  
et choros angelorum  
collaudantes Dominum.  
Dicite quidnam vidistis,  
et annuntiate Christi nativitatem.

Tell us, shepherds, whom have you  
seen? Relate to us,  
who has appeared on earth?  
We have seen a new born babe,  
and choirs of Angels  
praising God together.  
Proclaim what you have seen,  
and announce the birth of Christ.

*Words: The Office of Matins on Christmas Day*

*Music: Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)*

Eighth Lesson  
**Matthew 2: 1-11**

*read by Lois Bush, a cathedral Steward*

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.' When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, 'In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.' Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, 'Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.' When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Thanks be to God.

Carol  
*sung by the choir*

Infant holy, Infant lowly,  
For His bed a cattle stall;

Oxen lowing, Little knowing  
Christ the Babe is Lord of all.  
Swift are winging angels singing,  
Noels ringing, tidings bringing,  
Christ the Babe is Lord of all.

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping  
Vigil till the morning new;  
Saw the glory, heard the story,  
Tidings of a Gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
Praises voicing, greet the morrow,  
Christ the Babe was born for you!

*Words: Traditional Polish Carol*

*Music: Becky McGlade (b. 1974)*

*Please stand*

Ninth Lesson

**John 1:1-14**

*read by the Bishop of St Germans*

### **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. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God.

*Please sit*

Carol  
*sung by the choir*

I wonder as I wander out under the sky,  
How Jesus the Saviour did come for to die.  
For poor on'ry people like you and like I.  
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.

When Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall,  
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.  
But high from the heavens a star's light did fall,  
And the promise of ages it then did recall.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,  
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,  
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,  
He surely could have it, 'cause he was the King.

*Words: Traditional Appalachian carol*

*Music: Carl Rütli*

The Collect for Christmas Eve  
*The Dean*

Almighty God, you have given us your only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him and as at this time to be born of a pure virgin: grant that we, who have been born again and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

*All* Amen.

The Blessing  
*The Bishop of St Germans*

Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with peace and goodwill and make you partakers of

the divine nature; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.  
All Amen.

Hymn  
*sung by the choir*

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:

Child, for us sinners  
Poor and in the manger,  
Fain we embrace thee with love and awe;  
Who would not love thee,  
Loving us so dearly?  
O come, let us adore him...

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

Organ Voluntary  
Toccata on 'Vom Himmel hoch' by Garth Edmundson (1892 – 1971)

*Thank you for joining us for this special service today. We would love you to stay in touch. Truro Cathedral is first and foremost a church, a living community working and worshipping in surroundings of great importance,*

*privilege and beauty. It is a holy place accessible to all. The primary purpose continues to be, as it always has been and will be, the Opus Dei: the daily round of prayer and worship of Almighty God from which all other activities draw their inspiration. Each day of the year services are held, whether large diocesan or civic events in the nave or smaller intimate occasions in one of the chapels. The cathedral is also pleased to host a number of events, exhibitions and concerts which take place throughout the year.*

*There are many ways you can support the life and work of Truro Cathedral. From worshipping and volunteering, to attending events, visiting or making a donation. You can discover more about all of these elements on our website, or you can like and follow us on our cathedral Facebook or Twitter to stay up to date with all that is taking place here at Truro Cathedral.*

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[www.trurocathedral.org.uk](http://www.trurocathedral.org.uk)

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## **COULD YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER BE A CHORISTER?**

The cathedral's Director of Music is always pleased to hear from parents of prospective boy or girl choristers.

Our boy choristers are aged 8 to 13 (school years 4 to 8) and the girl choristers are aged 13 to 18 (school years 9 to 13). Boys normally audition in Year 3 for entry into the choir as they begin Year 4. Girls normally audition when in Year 8, for entry into the choir as they begin Year 9.

Enquiries are welcome as soon as possible ahead of auditions in the New Year. Full information can be found on the cathedral's website, [www.trurocathedral.org.uk](http://www.trurocathedral.org.uk)

Contact details for the Director of Music are:  
01872 276782  
[christophergray@trurocathedral.org.uk](mailto:christophergray@trurocathedral.org.uk)

***Please take this order of service away.***

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**Truro  
Cathedral**

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