

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols



Truro
Cathedral

Christmas Eve
24th 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.

Please sit

Carol
sung by the choir

*Nowell sing we now all and some,
For Rex pacificus is come.*

In Bethlem in that fair city,
A child was born of a maiden free,
That shall a lord and princë be,
A solis ortus cardine.

Children were slain full great plenty,
Jesu for the love of thee;
Wherefore their soulës savëd be,
Hostis Herodis impie.

As sunnë shineth through the glass,
So Jesu in his mother was;
Thee to servë now grant us grace,
O lux beata Trinitas.

Now God is comën to worshipën us;
Now of Mary is born Jesus;
Make we merry amongës us;
Exultet caelum laudibus.

Words: Anon. 15th cent.

Music: Gabriel Jackson (b. 1962)

First Lesson
Genesis 3: 8-15

read by Talulla Lee, a Head 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: Boris Ord (1897 – 1961)

Second Lesson

Isaiah 9: 2, 6-7

read by Lufuno Ndou, 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

What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the voice! Awake the string!
Dark and dull night fly hence away!
And give the honour to this day
That sees December turn to May.

Why does the chilling winter's morn
Smile like a field beset with corn?
Or smell like a meadow newly shorn
Thus on the sudden? Come and see
The cause why things thus fragrant be;
'Tis he is born whose quick'ning birth
Gives life and lustre, public mirth,
To heaven and the under-earth.

We see him come and know him ours
Who with his sunshine and his showers
Turns the patient ground to flowers.
The darling of the world is come,
And fit it is we find a room
To welcome him.
The nobler part of all the house here,
is the heart,
Which we give him; and bequeath
This holly and this ivy wreath
To do him honour, who's our King
And Lord of all this revelling.

What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol, for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
The birth of this our heavenly King?

Words: Robert Herrick (1591-1674)

Music: John Rutter (b 1945)

Third Lesson
Isaiah 11: 1-9

read by Robert Perry, a member of the Cathedral Chapter

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

Jerusalem rejos for joy: Jerusalem, rejoice for joy:
Jesus the sterne of most beauty, Jesus, the star of greatest beauty

In thee is risen as richtous roy,
Fro dirknes to illumine thee.
With glorius sound of angel glee
Thy prince is in borne
in Baithlehem
Quhilk sall thee mak of
thraldom fre.
Illuminare, Jerusalem.

Is risen in thee as righteous king
From darkness to illumine thee.
With glorious sound of angel's glee
Thy prince is born
in Bethlehem
Who shall make thee
from slavery free.
Illuminare, Jerusalem.

With angellis licht in legionis
Thow art illumynit all about
Thre kingis of strenge regionis
To the ar cumin with lusty rout,
All drest with dyamantis,
but dout,
Reverst with gold in
every hem,
Sounding attonis with a schout,
Illuminare, Jerusalem.

With the light of angels' legions
Thou art illumined all about;
Three kings from far regions
Have come to thee in a lusty rout.
All adorned with diamonds,
without a doubt,
And trimmed with gold
on every hem,
Crying together with one shout,
Illuminare, Jerusalem.

The regeand tarrant that
in the rang,
Herod, is exilit and his ofspring
The land of Juda that
josit wrang;
And rissin is now thy
richtouss king.
So he so mychtie is and ding,
Quhen men his glorius
name dois nem,
Hevin, erd and hell
makis inclining;
Illuminare, Jerusalem.

The raging tyrant who
reigned over thee
Herod, is exiled with his offspring;
He possessed the land of Judah
unjustly;
And risen is now thy
righteous king.
Because he is so mighty and worthy,
When his glorious
name is spoken
Heaven, earth and
hell bow;
Illuminare, Jerusalem.

Words: Bannatyne MS, 16th Century Scottish

Music: Judith Weir (b. 1954)

Fourth Lesson
Luke 1: 26-35, 38

read by Dr Pat McGovern, Chairman of the Cathedral Council

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 (first performance)

The Child-Christ watched sweet Mary's face
The while she slept;
And for the woe that must claim his place
The Child-Christ wept:

And on her breast laid kisses four,
As a cross is made,
To heal those wounds which for evermore
Should be on her laid.
And his little feet in her bosom pressed
Where her soft hair trailed,
To comfort her with remembrance blessed
When his feet were nailed:

And laid his face on her face in sleep
To prevent the tears,
When the crown of thorns with his Blood should weep
In the coming years.

Words: Alice Archer Sewall

Music: Helena Paish (b. 2002)

Fifth Lesson
Luke 1: 39-45

read by Rachel Vaughan, Truro School Chorister Mentor

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.

Carol
sung by the choir

I sing of a maiden
That is makeless;
King of all kinges
To her son she ches.

He came all so stille
Where his mother was,
As dew in in April
That falleth on the grass.

He came all so stille
To his mother's bower,
As dew in April
That falleth on the flower.

He came all so stille
Where his mother lay,
As dew in April
That falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden
Was never none but she:
Well may such a lady
Goddes mother be.

Words: Anon 15th cent.

Music: Neil Cox (b. 1955)

Sixth Lesson

Luke 2: 1-7

read by the Canon Chancellor

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.

Hymn
sung by the choir

While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,

And glory shone around.

'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind);
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind'.

'To you in David's town this day
Is born of David's line
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
And this shall be the sign:'

'The heavenly Babe you there shall find
To human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
And in a manger laid.'

Thus spake the Seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shiny throng
Of angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

'All glory be to God on high,
And on the earth be peace;
Good-will henceforth from heaven to men
Begin and never cease.'

Words: Nahum Tate

Music: Thomas Este's Psalter 1592, Descant: Christopher Gray

Seventh Lesson
Luke 2: 8-16
read by the Canon Precentor

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

We stood on the hills, Lady,
Our day's work done,
Watching the frosted meadows
That winter had won.

The evening was calm, Lady,
The air so still,
Silence more lovely than music
Folded the hill.

There was a star, Lady,
Shone in the night,
Larger than Venus it was
And bright, so bright.
Oh, a voice from the sky, Lady,
It seemed to us then
Telling of God being born
In the world of men.

And so we have come, Lady,

Our day's work done,
Our love, our hopes, ourselves,
We give to your son.

Words: Clive Sansom

Music: Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)

Eighth Lesson
Matthew 2: 1-11
read by the Dean

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: arr David Willcocks (1919 – 2015)

Please stand

Ninth Lesson
John 1:1-14
read by the Bishop

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

On Christmas night all Christians sing
To hear the news the angels bring,
News of great joy, news of great mirth,
News of our merciful King's birth.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our Redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty?

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
'Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore. Amen'.

Words: English Traditional

Music: Traditional, arr Philip Ledger (1937-2012)

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

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:

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

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesu to thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing:

Words: F Oakeley and W T Brooke Music: Anonymous, arranged by David Willcocks

Organ Voluntary
Final, Symphonie No 1 by Louis Vierne (1870 – 1937)

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.

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Please take this order of service away.

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Truro
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