



Illuminating Love

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

“The wolf shall live with the lamb . . . and a little child shall lead them.”

Isaiah 11:6

14 December 2025 ~ 3:00 PM

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Little Flower
Fr. Gregory Ross, Rector

The Rev. Jon Watt, Festival Officiant
Dr. Owen Duggan, Music Director
Ms. Cheryl Crews, Assistant Director of Choirs
Dr. William Benefield, Organist

Singers from the choirs of
Musica Sacra San Antonio
Northwood Presbyterian Church
San Antonio Academy

Lessons and Carols from King's College, Cambridge, celebrates its one-hundred-and-seventh birthday this year. Its liturgical author, Eric Milner-White, was appointed chaplain at the college in 1912. When the War broke out in 1914, he volunteered on the front as a military chaplain. Decorated for courage under fire in combat, he was released in early 1918 and returned to the college where he was appointed Dean. The first Lessons and Carols was held later that year.

After the end of the war, Milner-White set out to create a special seasonal service "as a gift to the city of Cambridge" that would serve two purposes: First, he wanted to grieve the loss of young men from the city, and especially from his own college. Twenty-three percent of the members of King's College had died during the war, including Milner-White's roommate. Second, he wanted to create a service where the simple beauty of worship would shine through and attract those who had lost their faith amidst the horrors of the war. In his own words, "the main theme is the development of the loving purposes of God" as viewed "through the windows and the words of the Bible."

Courtesy of Anglicancompass.com

ORDER

Prelude

Variations on Rorate Coeli Pietro A. Yon (1886-1943)

From Heaven Above to Earth I Come VOM HIMMEL HOCH
Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming ES IST EIN ROS
 Arr. Hildebrand

Beth Johnson, violin; Alex Popovici, violin; Scott Jessup, viola; Caitlyn Snyder, cello

Processional *Once in Royal David's City* All stand as able IRBY

Aiden Leal, Zack McCormick, Elizabeth Prichard; solo voices

Bidding Prayer and the Lord's Prayer Officiant

The First Lesson All seated Isaiah 64: 1, 4-8

O that you would tear open the heavens and come down, so that the mountains would quake at your presence. From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him. You meet those who gladly do right, those who remember you in your ways. But you were angry, and we sinned; because you hid yourself, we transgressed. We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. There is no one who calls on your name, or attempts to take hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us, and have delivered us into the hand of our

iniquity. Yet, O LORD, you are our Maker; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.

Carol Adam Lay Ybounden

Philip Ledger

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 gratias! (Thanks be to God)

Anon. 15th C.

The Second Lesson

Isaiah 11: 1-9

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. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. 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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church!
 People Thanks be to God.

Hymn Low, How a Rose E'er Blooming Seated, all sing

ES IST EIN ROS

The Third Lesson

Isaiah 40: 2-11

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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church!
 People **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem *Rejoice, O Jerusalem! Behold Thy King Cometh*

Healy Willan
 Romans 13:12

The Fourth Lesson

Luke I: 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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church!
 People **Thanks be to God!**

Hymn *Savior of the Nations, Come!* All sing, standing NUN KOMM DER HEIDEN HEILAND

The Fifth Lesson All seated

Luke 2: 1; 3–7

In those days, a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 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.

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 People **Thanks be to God.**

Carol *The Holly and Ivy*

English carol, arr. Davies

The Sixth Lesson

Luke 2: 8-16

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.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church!
People **Thanks be to God!**

Carol *Riu, riu, chiu*

16th C. Spanish carol

*Riu, riu, chiu! (the cry of the kingfisher, a symbol of Christ)
The river bank is protected; God has kept the wolf from our ewe lamb (Mary).
The rabid wolf wanted to bite her, but Almighty God knew how to defend her.
The one who is born is the Great Monarch, Christ the Head, clothed in flesh.*

The Seventh Lesson

Matthew II: 1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler is to shepherd my people Israel.'

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and they knelt down and paid

him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

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 People **Thanks be to God!**

Anthem *Early On a Winter's Morn*

L. Jerome Williams

Aiden Leal, Zack McCormick, Elizabeth Prichard; solo voices

The Eighth Lesson

Isaiah 65: 17-24

"For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord-- and their descendants as well. Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear."

Anthem *Alleluia*

Eric Whitacre (b.1970)

The Ninth Lesson Officiant

John I: 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 overtake 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.

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Hymn *Of the Father's Love Begotten*

DIVINUM MYSTERIUM, arr. Willcocks

Benediction *Officiant*

Postlude *Fanfare on Adeste Fidelis*

Paul Fey (b.1998)

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Readers, in order of appearance:

*Martha Sherrod, Gayle Lord, Ben Swaney, Carolyn Pike, Donny Duggan,
Tommy Moreno, Gil Richardson, Drew Walsh,*