

December 26, 2021

Accompanist

Diane Rauser

Liturgists

Lois Kern

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*The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is a format for a service of Christian worship celebrating the birth of Jesus that is traditionally followed at Christmas. The story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah, and the birth of Jesus is told in nine short Bible readings from Genesis, the prophetic books and the Gospels, interspersed with the singing of Christmas carols, hymns and choir music.*

*The format was based on an Order drawn up by Edward White Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury but at that time Bishop of Truro, in Cornwall, for use on Christmas Eve, 1880. Tradition says that he organized a 10 pm service on Christmas Eve in a temporary wooden shed serving as his cathedral and that a key purpose of the service was to keep men out of pubs on Christmas Eve.*

*The original liturgy has since been adapted and used by churches all over the world. The best-known version is broadcast annually from King's College, Cambridge, on Christmas Eve. It features carols sung by the famous Choir of King's College, Cambridge. It is estimated that each year there are millions of listeners worldwide who listen to it live on the BBC World Service.*

*This year, our service will follow the children's Christmas Pageant: "Zooming to Bethlehem," as RLC children tell us the story of the birth of Jesus... with a few artistic liberties.*

Gathering

**Prelude**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Gathering Hymn: O, Come All Ye Faithful**

**ELW 283**

**Gathering Litany**

As a new year begins, we ask ourselves, "Where are we headed? What's in store for our lives?"

**Lead us, O Lord, in the way we should go.**

Mary listened to the angel and trusted your promise of a savior for all the people.

**May we too be ready to listen and trust your word.**

The shepherds on the hillside heard the words of the angel of God and ran to Bethlehem to see the Savior.

**May we too heed the call and go with haste to where you are.**

The disciples heard what you said, O Lord, and went into all the world proclaiming the good news.

**May we too be prepared to spread the Gospel message to people everywhere.**

With the Lord directing our ways, our journey through life will be blessed.

**May we go out in joy and be led back in peace.**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of the darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your son, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with your and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **ACT 1**

**Carol:** *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

**ELW 279**

## **ACT 2**

**Carol:** *Away in a Manger*

**ELW 277**

## **ACT 3**

**Carol:** *Angels, from the Realms of Glory*

**ELW 275**

## **ACT 4**

**Carol:** *The First Noel*

**ELW 300**

## ACT 5

**Carol:** *Love Has Come*

ELW 292

### Offering

**Offering Carol:** *What Child is This*

ELW 296

### Offering Prayer

Let us pray, Merciful God, we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us: our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we pray as Jesus taught us:

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come**

**your will be done**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial**

**and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,**

**now and forever. Amen.**

### READING: JOHN 1:1-14

Carolyn Darnielle

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>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.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn:** *Once in Royal David's City*

**ELW 269**

## **Blessing and Dismissal**

Let us bless the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

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.**

**Sending Hymn:** *Go Tell It on the Mountain*

**ELW 290**

**Dismissal:** Go in Peace, Christ the savior is born! **Thanks be to God!**

## **Postlude**