

# CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT IN THE CITY OF BIRMINGHAM

6:00 P.M.
DECEMBER 18, 2025
A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

THE PEOPLE STAND.

# HYMN IN PROCESSION

Puer nobis nascitur

VERSES 1 AND 2 WILL BE SUNG BY THE CHOIR. THE CONGREGATION JOINS IN SINGING VERSES 3-6.





Words: St. Ambrose, trans. John Mason Neale

Music: Melody adapt. Michael Praetorius; harm. George Ratcliffe Woodward

THE PEOPLE REMAIN STANDING.

#### THE BIDDING PRAYER

Beloved in Christ, in this season of Advent, let it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the Angels, and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

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 look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for the mission and unity of the Church for which he died, and especially in this country, and within this city.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless; the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and those who mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and 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 this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

#### 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,
for ever and ever. Amen.

#### THE GRACE

The Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all. **Amen**.

THE PEOPLE SIT.

# INVITATORY CAROL

arr. Edgar Pettman

I saw a maiden sitten and sing: She lulled a child, a sweete Lording.

Lullay, lullay, my dear son, my sweeting. Lullay, lullay, my dear heart, my own dear darling.

This very Lord he made alle thing: Of lords the Lord, of kings the King. *Refrain* 

There was mickle melody at that childes brith: And all in heaven's bliss, they made mickle mirth. *Refrain* 

Angels sang that night and saiden to that child: Now blest be thou and she, both meek and mild. *Refrain* 

Pray we to that child and to his mother dear,

His blessing to them that maken now cheer. *Refrain*-15th Century (adapted)

Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden.

Reader: A Warden of the Parish

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, "but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die." <sup>4</sup>But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. <sup>5</sup>For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. 8And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." 11He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" 12The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." 13 Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." 14 The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. <sup>15</sup>I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

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 Abeen heavené queen.

Blessed be the time
That apple taken was.
Therefore we moun singen
Deo gratias!

-Anonymous, 15th Century

# THE SECOND LESSON

Genesis 22:15-18

God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed.

Reader: A Member of the Congregation

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven <sup>16</sup>and said, "By myself I have sworn, declares the Lord, because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, <sup>17</sup>I will surely bless you, and I will surely multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of his enemies, <sup>18</sup>and in your offspring shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice."

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

HYMN NO. 126 Dundee

THE PEOPLE SIT.

#### THE THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

Reader: A Member of the Choir

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone. <sup>6</sup>For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

CAROL O Oriens Cecilia McDowall

O Oriens,
Splendor lucis aeternae,
et sol justitiae:
Veni, et illumina sedentes in tenebris,
et umbra mortis.

O Orient,
Brightness of the Eternal Light,
and Son of Righteousness:
Come and lighten those that sit in darkness,
and in the shadow of death.

-Salisbury Antiphonary

The prophet foretells Christ's peaceable kingdom.

Reader: A Member of the Choir

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. <sup>2</sup>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 the fear of the Lord. <sup>3</sup>And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, <sup>4</sup>but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. <sup>5</sup>Righteousness shall be the belt of his waist, and faithfulness the belt of his loins. <sup>6</sup>The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the lion and the fattened calf together; and a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze; their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play over the hole of the cobra, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder's den. <sup>9</sup>They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

Reader: The Word of the Lord. **People:** Thanks be to God.

CAROL O Radix Jesse Zachary Wadsworth

O Root of Jesse,
Who standest for an ensign of the people,
at Whom Kings shall shut their mouths,
unto Whom the Gentiles shall pray:
Come and deliver us, and tarry not.

-Salisbury Antiphonary

The angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear the Son of the Most High.

Reader: The Associate Director of Music

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup>But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup>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 father David, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup>And the angel answered 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 called holy—the Son of God. <sup>36</sup>And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup>For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup>And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Reader: The Word of the Lord. **People:** Thanks be to God.

The first good joy that Mary had, It was the joy of one; To see the blessed Jesus Christ When he was first her son: When he was first her son, good man: And blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had, It was the joy of two; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, To make the lame to go: To make the lame to go, good man: And blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had, It was the joy of three; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, To make the blind to see: To make the blind to see, good man: And blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had, It was the joy of four; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, To read the bible o'er: To read the bible o'er, good man: And blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had, It was the joy of five; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, To bring the dead alive: To bring the dead alive, good man: And blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had, It was the joy of six; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, Upon the crucifix: Upon the crucifix, good man: And blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, To all eternity.

The next good joy that Mary had, It was the joy of sev'n; To see her own son, Jesus Christ, To wear the crown of heav'n: To wear the crown of heav'n, good man: And blessed may he be, Both Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, To all eternity.

-Anonymous

THE SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

Saint Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

Reader: The Director of Music and Liturgy

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>And all went to be registered, each to his own town. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, <sup>5</sup>to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. <sup>6</sup>And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

THE PEOPLE STAND.

HYMN NO. 105

God Rest You Merry

THE PEOPLE SIT.

The shepherds go to the manger. Reader: A Member of the Clergy

In the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 
<sup>9</sup>And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. <sup>10</sup>And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" <sup>15</sup>When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup>And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

Reader: The Word of the Lord. **People:** Thanks be to God.

CAROL

The Shepherd's Carol

**Bob Chilcott** 

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.

-Clive Sansom

#### THE EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

The Wise Men are led by the star to Jesus.

Reader: A Member of the Clergy

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, 2saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; 4 and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: 6'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.' Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. 8And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him."9After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now reclining,
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the Infant King.
Angels are watching, stars are shining
Over the place where he is lying:
Sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now a-sleeping,
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the Infant King.
Soon will come sorrow with the morning,
Soon will come bitter grief and weeping:
Sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby baby, now a-dozing,
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not wake the Infant King.
Soon comes the cross, the nails, the piercing,
Then in the grave at last reposing:
Sing lullaby!

Sing lullaby!
Lullaby! is the babe awaking?
Sing lullaby!
Hush, do not stir the Infant King.
Dreaming of Easter, gladsome morning,
Conquering Death, its bondage breaking:
Sing lullaby!

-Sabine Baring-Gould

THE PEOPLE STAND.

THE NINTH LESSON

John 1:1-14

Saint John unfolds the mystery of the Incarnation.

Reader: A Member of the Clergy

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 were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. <sup>4</sup>In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has 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 bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

THE PEOPLE SIT.

THE WELCOME

CAROL arr. Philip Moore

Joseph Ardovino, trumpet

Thus angels sung, and thus sing we; "To God on high all glorie bee! Let him on earth his peace bestow And unto men his favours show."

If angels sung on Jesus' birth
Then we have greater cause for mirth,
For it was all for our poor sake
He did our human nature take.

Surely the manger where he lies Doth figure forth his sacrifice; And, by his birth, may all men see A pattern of humility.

Stupendous Babe, my God and King!
Thy praises will I ever sing,
In joyful accents raise my voice,
And in the praise of God rejoice.

-George Wither

#### THE COLLECT

Officiant: The Lord be with you. **People:** And with thy spirit.

Officiant: Let us pray.

THE PEOPLE KNEEL.

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon him, and as at this time to be born of a virgin; Grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit; through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit ever, one God, world without end. **Amen.** 

#### THE DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

IF YOU DESIRE, KNEEL FOR A MOMENT OF SILENT PRAYER.

VOLUNTARY

Toccata on Veni Emmanuel

Andrew Carter

#### SERVICE NOTES

A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is the Christmas Eve service held in the Chapel of King's College, Cambridge every year since 1918. Conceived as an imaginative approach to worship, the service gained enormous popularity and is broadcast all over the world today.

Today's Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is heavily modeled on the original King's service, celebrating the Scripture that tells the story of the Fall, the promise of the Messiah, and Christ's birth in Bethlehem. Each lesson is followed by music that illumines and heightens the spoken word just heard. Our service begins and ends with two of the great Advent hymns, reminding us that while we take a moment to reflect on the Christmas story this afternoon, we are still in the midst of the Advent season preparing for Christ's birth.

On behalf of the Cathedral Church of the Advent, we wish you a most blessed Advent and Christmastide as we wait in joyful expectation for the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.

### MUSIC DEDICATION

The anthem Thus Angels Sung arranged by Philip Moore was commissioned by the St. Cecilia Fund for the Choir of the Cathedral Church of the Advent and in thanksgiving for Myer Brookins Hitchcock (neé Craven).

#### CLERGY

For email addresses and phone numbers, please see our staff listing at AdventBirmingham.org.

The Very Rev. R. Craig Smalley Dean and Rector

The Rev. Canon Thomas P. Murray Vice Dean

The Rev. Canon James "Jay" W. Gardner, III Canon Pastor

The Rev. Canon Dr. Dean L. Pinter Canon Theologian

The Rev. Canon Adam A. Young Canon Missioner

The Rev. William J. Fagan Curate

The Very Rev. Dr. Paul F.M. Zahl

Dean Emeritus

#### MEMBERS OF THE VESTRY

Craig Brady Ricky Bromberg Hewes Hull James Bradford

Senior Warden Junior Warden Treasurer Clerk

Term Ending Parish Meeting 2026 Term Ending Parish Meeting 2027 Term Ending Parish Meeting 2028

Craig Brady Mary Bradley Anderson Ross Blankenship

Richard Cook Ricky Bromberg Sister Clapp
Charles Gaston Wil Bromberg Lindsey Druhan
Charlotte Getz Fred Elliott Doug Elliott

Charlotte Getz Fred Elliott Doug Elliott
Kelly Hulsey Parker Evans Jen Green

Claiborne Morris Sam Everette Glynn Lassiter
Emily Pruet Julia King Mike Lucas
Charlie Sharp Bailey Knight Kate Ray
Jason Wallace Thomas Nelson Will Thuston

Forsyth White Drew Wright Chris Weingartner

Margot Cooney Associate for Youth and Families
Tara Davis Director of Children's Ministry

John Mark Haase Boys Youth Associate

Leslie Housman Director of Women's Ministry
Charles Kennedy Associate Director of Music

Gil Kracke Director of Programs and Parish Life

Kathy Logue Advent House Coordinator

Mary Ann McCarty Director of Youth Ministry

Gunter Owens Associate Director of Children's Ministry

Fontaine Pope Director of Small Groups and Newcomers' Coordinator

Frederick Teardo Director of Music and Liturgy

Lowana Wallace Refectory Music Leader

Ann Campbell Bookstore Manager

Arturo Davis Assistant Building Manager

Rachel DeSanto Deans' Assistant and Finance Associate

Janet Dozier Receptionist

Anita Gray Programs and Outreach Administrative Assistant

Michael Halverson Technology Coordinator

Brad Horne Building Manager

Spencer LeffelCommunications AssociateMary Jane McAllisterDigital Media ManagerBeth Anne MaierAccounts Receivable

Chris Maxwell Communications Associate

Betsy Pate Music and Worship Administrative Assistant

Robin Turner Pastoral Care Coordinator

Dorothy White Director of Finance and Administration

Eldon Brummett, Drew Foster, Sexton Staff

Juan Mazuca, Kevin Moore, Gary Talley

# Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11.28

The Church of the Advent was founded with the City of Birmingham in 1872.

CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT (EPISCOPAL)
2017 SIXTH AVENUE NORTH | BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35203
205 251-2324 | ADVENTBIRMINGHAM.ORG