

Festival
of LESSONS
and CAROLS

Abiding Word Evangelical Lutheran Church
Maineville, Ohio
December 24, 2025

INVOCATION

M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

M: Dear people of God, in this Christmas season, it is our duty and delight to hear again the message of the angels and, in heart and mind, to go to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us—the Christ Child lying in a manger.

Let us read and learn in Holy Scripture the story of the loving purposes of God from the first days after our fall into sin to the glorious redemption brought to us by this holy child.

But first, let us pray for people all over the world who would delight with us to know the good news of Jesus Christ and who would join with us in singing his praises. Let us pray for the people of our community and for all those in our own congregation.

Silent prayer

And, because this would please our Lord, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who are sad, the lonely and the unloved, and the elderly and the little children. We especially remember all those who do not know the Lord Jesus, those who do not love him, and those who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Silent prayer

Finally, let us remember with thanksgiving before God all those who rejoice with us in heaven, who live in greater light than we, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, who died in faith, and who live before the throne of God and praise him each day in his temple. We confess that we are united with them as we are united with one another.

Silent prayer

To sum up all these petitions, let us pray as Christ himself taught us.

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 forever and ever. Amen.

FIRST LESSON

GENESIS 3:8-15

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?"

He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?"

The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

So the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, "Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."

363 Now Sing We, Now Rejoice



1 Now sing we, now re - joice, now raise to heav'n our voice;
2 Come from on high to me; I can - not rise to thee.
3 Now through his Son doth shine the Fa - ther's grace di - vine.
4 Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'n - ly ground,



he from whom joy stream - eth poor in a man - ger lies;
Cheer my wea - ried spir - it, O pure and ho - ly Child;
Death was reign - ing o'er us through sin and van - i - ty
where the an - gels sing - ing with all his saints u - nite,



not so bright - ly beam - eth the sun in yon - der skies.
thro' thy grace and mer - it, blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,
till he o - pened for us a bright e - ter - ni - ty.
sweet - est prais - es bring - ing in heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art! Thou my Sav - ior art!
draw me un - to thee! Draw me un - to thee!
May we praise him there! May we praise him there!
Oh, that we were there! Oh, that we were there!

SECOND LESSON

GENESIS 22:15-18

The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time and said, "I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me."

333 O Little Town of Bethlehem



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
2 For Christ is born of Mar - y, and, gath - ered all a - bove
3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly the won - drous gift is giv'n!
4 O ho - ly Child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep the si - lent stars go by;
while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - d'ring love.
So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heav'n.
cast out our sin and en - ter in, be born in us to - day.



yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light.
O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;



The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
and prais - es sing to God the King and peace to all the earth.
where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
O come to us, a - bide with us, our Lord Im - man - u - el!

Text: Phillips Brooks, 1835-1893, abr., alt.
Tune: Lewis H. Redner, 1831-1908
Text and tune: Public domain

THIRD LESSON

ISAIAH 9:2, 6-7

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

350 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



1 Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King;
2 Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
3 Hail, the heav'n - ly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Right - eous - ness!



peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
late in time be - hold him come, off - spring of a vir - gin's womb.
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with heal - ing in his wings.



Joy - ful, all ye na - tions rise, join the tri - umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God - head see, hail th' in - car - nate De - i - ty!
Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that man no more may die,



with th' an - gel - ic host pro - claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Je - sus, our Im - man - u - el!
born to raise the sons of earth, born to give them sec - ond birth.

Refrain



Hark! The her - ald an - gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new - born King!"

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.
Tune: Felix Mendelssohn, 1809–1847
Text and tune: Public domain

FOURTH LESSON

ISAIAH 11:1-9

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord—and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

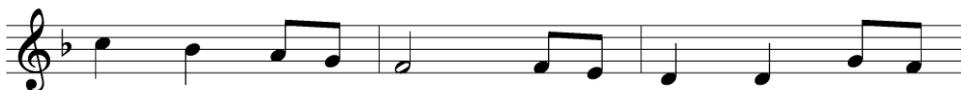
339 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing



stall; ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the
new saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, ti - dings



child is Lord of all. Swift - ly wing - ing an - gels
of a gos - pel true. Thus re - joic - ing, free from



sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, ti - dings bring - ing: Christ the
sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row: Christ the



child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

FIFTH LESSON

LUKE 1:26-35,38

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

343 Once in Royal David's City



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
 3 And our eyes at last shall see him through his own re -
 4 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble with the ox - en



cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 deem - ing love, for that child, so dear and gen - tle, is our
 stand - ing by shall we see him, but in heav - en, set at



man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and mean and
 Lord in heav'n a - bove, and he leads his chil - dren
 God's right hand on high. Then like stars his chil - dren



mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
 low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 on to the place where he is gone.
 crowned, all in white, his praise will sound.

SIXTH LESSON

MATTHEW 1:18-25

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “God with us.”

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

335 To Shepherds as They Watched by Night



1 To shep - herds as they watched by night ap - peared a
2 “At Beth - le - hem, in Da - vid’s town, as Mi - cah
3 O then re - jice that through his Son God is with
4 What harm can sin and death then do? The true God



host of an - gels bright; “Be - hold the ten - der
did of old make known. It is the Christ, your
sin - ners now at one; made like your - selves of
now a - bides with you. Let hell and Sa - tan



babe,” they said, “in yon - der low - ly man - ger laid,
Lord and King, who will to all sal - va - tion bring.”
flesh and blood, your broth - er is th’e - ter - nal God.
storm and rave, Christ is your broth - er— you are safe.

5 Not one he will or can forsake;
his promise he will never break.
Let ev’ry scheme the tempter try,
you may his utmost pow’rs defy.

6 You shall and must at last prevail;
God’s own you are, you cannot fail.
To God forever sing your praise
with joy and patience all your days.

SEVENTH LESSON

LUKE 2:8-20

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

346 Angels We Have Heard on High



- 1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
- 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some ti - dings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.



EIGHTH LESSON

MATTHEW 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

“ ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.’”

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

356 God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 God rest you merry, gentlemen,
let nothing you dismay;
remember Christ, our Savior,
was born on Christmas Day
to save us all from Satan’s pow’r
when we were gone astray. (Refrain)</p> | <p>2 From God our heav’nly Father
a blessèd angel came
and unto certain shepherds
brought tidings of the same,
how that in Bethlehem was born
the Son of God by name. (Refrain)</p> |
| <p>3 “Fear not,” then said the angel,
“let nothing you affright;
this day is born a Savior,
the true and radiant light,
to free all those who trust in him
from Satan’s pow’r and might.” (Refrain)</p> | <p>4 Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place,
and in true love and fellowship
each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas
is filled with heav’nly grace. (Refrain)</p> |

Refrain

O tidings of comfort and joy, comfort and joy, O tidings of comfort and joy.

NINTH LESSON

JOHN 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning.

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

353 Joy to the World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their
3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her King; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

CLOSING PRAYER

M: O God, who makes us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of your only Son, Jesus Christ, grant that as we joyfully receive him as our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he comes to be our judge, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: *(spoken)* **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

M: Jesus is the light of the world.

C: **The light no darkness can overcome.**

M: The light that gives life has come.

C: **May he shine in our hearts and lives.**

M: The blessing of God Almighty—the Father, the Son, + and the Holy Spirit—be upon you and remain with you always.

C: *(spoken)* **Amen.**

337 Silent Night, Holy Night



1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,



all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
at the sight. Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
love's pure light ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face



Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
heav'n - ly hosts—sing, Al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy



peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.