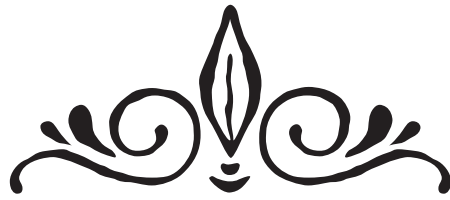




A FESTIVAL OF



**LESSONS
& CAROLS**





OPENING CAROL ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

*1. 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.*

*2. 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 Savior holy.*

OPENING PRAYER

We gather tonight to prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus Christ — our Brother, our Lord, our Redeemer. From of old, the prophets foretold his coming. Though Man chose darkness, God promised a Light who would shatter the darkness, a Messiah who would free us from sin. In his Incarnation, Jesus, the Son of God, fulfills this promise.

Lord, as we join in prayer and song this night, help us to ponder these mysteries in our hearts, and so make them ready for your coming.





FIRST LESSON

GENESIS 3: 1-8

Now the serpent was more subtle than any of the beasts of the earth which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman: Why hath God commanded you, that you should not eat of every tree of paradise? And the woman answered him, saying: Of the fruit of the trees that are in paradise we do eat: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of paradise, God hath commanded us that we should not eat; and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die. And the serpent said to the woman: No, you shall not die the death. For God doth know that in what day soever you shall eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened: and you shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil. And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold: and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband, who did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened: and when they perceived themselves to be naked, they sewed together fig leaves, and made themselves aprons. And when they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in paradise at the afternoon air, Adam and his wife hid themselves from the face of the Lord God, amidst the trees of paradise.

CAROL

CREATOR OF THE STARS OF NIGHT

<i>1. Creator of the stars of night, Thy people's everlasting light, Jesu, Redeemer, save us all, And hear Thy servants when they call.</i>	<i>2. Thou, grieving that the ancient curse Should doom to death a universe, Hast found the medicine, full of grace, To save and heal a ruined race.</i>
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PRAYER

Lord, though we are fallen, you did not reject us. Though we chose the bondage of the deceiver, you offer us truth and liberate us with your perfect mercy. We pray that we may grow in mercy and forgive others, as we have been forgiven by you.





SECOND LESSON

ISAIAH 11:1-10

And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, and of understanding, the spirit of counsel, and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the Lord, He shall not judge according to the sight of the eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of the ears. But he shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity 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 slay the wicked. And justice shall be the girdle of his loins: and faith the girdle of his reins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb: and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: the calf and the lion, and the sheep shall abide together, and a little child shall lead them. The calf and the bear shall feed: their young ones shall rest together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on other hole of the asp: and the weaned child shall thrust his hand into the den of the basilisk. They shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all my holy mountain, for the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea. In that day the root of Jesse, who standeth for an ensign of the people, him the Gentiles shall beseech, and his sepulchre shall be glorious.

CAROL


LO! HOW A ROSE E'ER BLOOMING

*1. Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming
From tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming
As men of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright,
Amid the cold of winter
When half-spent was the night.*

*2. Isaiah 'twas foretold it,
The Rose I have in mind:
With Mary we behold it,
The virgin mother kind.
To show God's love aright
She bore to men a Savior
When half-spent was the night.*

PRAYER

Lord, justice and mercy find their perfect union in your sacrifice of your most beloved Son. We pray that this union will be manifest in our hearts, our homes, and our world as we prepare for the coming of Love himself.





THIRD LESSON

ISAIAH 9:2-6

The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light: to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, light is risen. Thou hast multiplied the nation, and hast not increased the joy. They shall rejoice before thee, as they that rejoice in the harvest, as conquerors rejoice after taking a prey, when they divide the spoils. For the yoke of their burden, and the rod of their shoulder, and the sceptre of their oppressor thou hast overcome, as in the day of Median. For every violent taking of spoils, with tumult, and garment mingled with blood, shall be burnt, and be fuel for the fire. For a CHILD IS BORN to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace.

CAROL

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST

<i>1. People, look east. The time is near Of the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able, Trim the hearth and set the table. People, look east and sing today: Love, the guest, is on the way.</i>	<i>2. Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, One more seed is planted there: Give up your strength the seed to nourish, That in course the flower may flourish. People, look east and sing today: Love, the rose, is on the way.</i>
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PRAYER

Lord, you have dispelled the darkness in which we dwelt. We pray that we will always walk in your light and that you will guard us from any temptation to rejoin the ways of sin.





FOURTH LESSON

LUKE 1:26-38

And in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called 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 being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren: Because no word shall be impossible with God. And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

CAROL


ON JORDAN'S BANK THE BAPTIST'S CRY

*1. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
announces that the Lord is nigh.
Awake and harken, for he brings
glad tidings of the King of kings!*

*2. Then cleansed be every life from sin:
make straight the way for God within,
and let us all our hearts prepare
for Christ to come and enter there.*

PRAYER

Lord, your daughter Mary was chosen as the vessel of your passage into this world, and your son Joseph as your protector and guardian. We pray that we might imitate the sanctity and faithfulness of the holy family in our own homes.



FIFTH LESSON

LUKE 2:1-18

And it came to pass, that in those days there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled. This enrolling was first made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: because he was of the house and family of David, To be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass, that when they were there, her days were accomplished, that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds watching, and keeping the night watches over their flock. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them; and they feared with a great fear. And the angel said to them: Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people: For, this day, is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army, praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace to men of good will. And it came to pass, after the angels departed from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another: Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that is come to pass, which the Lord hath shewed to us. And they came with haste; and they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. And seeing, they understood of the word that had been spoken to them concerning this child. And all that heard, wondered; and at those things that were told them by the shepherds.

CAROL

SILENT NIGHT

*1. Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.*

*2. Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!*

PRAYER

Lord, you came in to the world as a child, giving yourself in vulnerability and trust to all mankind, from the greatest kings to the lowliest shepherds. We pray that we will have the strength to reject pride and imitate your perfect humility.



SIXTH LESSON

MATTHEW 2:1-12

When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, 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 adore him. And king Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet: And thou Bethlehem the land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, privately calling the wise men, learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them; And sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go and diligently inquire after the child, and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come to adore him. Who having heard the king, went their way; and behold the star which they had seen in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was. And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him; and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having received an answer in sleep that they should not return to Herod, they went back another way into their country.

CAROL


COVENTRY CAROL

*1. Lullay, Thou little tiny Child,
By, by, lully, lullay.
Lullay, Thou little tiny Child.
By, by, lully, lullay.*

*2. O sisters, too, how may we do,
For to preserve this day;
This poor Youngling for whom we sing,
By, by, lully, lullay.*

PRAYER

Lord, the wise seek truth, as the three wisemen followed your star sought Truth himself. We pray that our minds may likewise seek after you; let our intellects be illumined by wisdom and guarded from error.





SEVENTH LESSON

JOHN 1:1-14

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 made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to give testimony of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this 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, he gave them power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name. Who are 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 saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

CAROL

COME, THOU LONG EXPECTED JESUS

*1. Come, thou long expected Jesus,
born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us,
let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation,
hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation,
joy of every longing heart.*

*2. Born thy people to deliver,
born a child and yet a King,
born to reign in us forever,
now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit
rule in all our hearts alone;
by thine all sufficient merit,
raise us to thy glorious throne.*

PRAYER

Lord, by your Word you created the earth and set Man upon it, and as your Word you came to the earth and set Man free. We pray that you will speak your Word, your eternal Logos, into our hearts, that we thus may be made ready for your long awaited coming.

Amen.





CLOSING CAROL O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

*1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.*

*Refrain
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

*2. O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
Who ord'rest all things mightily;
To us the path of knowledge show,
And teach us in her ways to go.*

*3. O come, O come, Thou Lord of might,
Who to thy tribes on Sinai's height
In ancient times didst give the law,
In cloud and majesty and awe.*

*4. O come, Thou Rod of Jesse's stem,
From ev'ry foe deliver them
That trust thy mighty pow'r to save,
And give them vict'ry o'er the grave.*

*5. O come, Desire of nations, bind
In one the hearts of all humankind;
Bid thou our sad divisions cease.*