



Nine Lessons and Carols 2020

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was first celebrated at King's College, Cambridge on Christmas Eve, 1918. It was an adaptation of a similar service that had been written for the cathedral at Truro in 1880. The lessons were reordered in 1919, and what follows are the lessons that have been used since that time. The Bible Readings tonight are from a modern Bible translation called 'The Message'.

CAROL #1 – *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 Saviour holy.
- 3 And through all his wondrous childhood
he would honour and obey,
love and watch the lowly Maiden,
in whose gentle arms he lay:
Christian children all must be
mild, obedient, good as he.
- 4 Not in that poor lowly stable,
with the oxen standing by,
we shall see him; but in heaven,
set at God's right hand on high;
where like stars his children crowned
all in white shall wait around.

CAROL #2 – *In the Bleak Midwinter*

- 1 In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter,
Long ago.
- 2 Our God, heaven cannot hold him
Nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away
When he comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.
- 3 Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air –
But only his mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshipped the beloved
With a kiss.
- 4 What can I give him
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man
I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give him —
Give my heart.

CAROL #3 – *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

- 1 O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.
- 2 O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary;
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
- 3 How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming;
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.
- 4 O holy Child of Bethlehem
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in,
be born to us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.

CAROL #4 – *God rest you merry gentlemen*

- 1 God rest you merry, gentlemen
let nothing you dismay
remember, Christ, our Saviour
was born on Christmas day
to save us all from Satan's power
when we were gone astray
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy.*
- 2 From God our heavenly Father,
a blessed angel came;
and unto certain shepherds
brought tidings of the same:
how that in Bethlehem was born
the Son of God by name,
Refrain
- 3 And when they came to Bethlehem
where our dear Saviour lay,
they found him in a manger
where oxen feed on hay;
his mother Mary kneeling,
unto the Lord did pray:
Refrain
- 4 Now to the Lord sing praises,
all you within this place,
and with true love and charity
each other now embrace;
this holy tide of Christmas
all others doth deface:
Refrain

CAROL #5 – *Away in a Manger*

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.
2. The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
and stay by my side until morning is nigh.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus: I ask thee to stay
close by me for ever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

CAROL #6 – *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;
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia:
Christ the Saviour is born,
Christ the Saviour is born.
- 3 Silent night, holy night,
son of God, love's pure light,
radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace:
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

CAROL #7 – *While Shepherds Watched*

1. While shepherds watched their flocks by night,
all seated on the ground,
the angel of the Lord came down
and glory shone around.
2. 'Fear not,' said he - for mighty dread
had seized their troubled mind -
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring
to you and all mankind:
3. 'To you in David's town this day
is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.
And this shall be the sign:
4. 'The heavenly babe you there shall find
to human view displayed,
all meanly wrapped in swathing bands
and in a manger laid.'
5. Thus spoke the seraph, and forthwith
appeared a shining throng
of angels praising God, who thus
addressed their joyful song:
6. 'All glory be to God on high,
and to the earth be peace;
goodwill henceforth from heaven to men
begin and never cease!'

CAROL #8 – *We Three Kings*

- 1 We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star:
*O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.*
- 2 Born a king on Bethlehem plain,
gold I bring, to crown him again-
King for ever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign:
Chorus
- 3 Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a deity nigh:
prayer and praising, all men raising,
worship him, God most high:
Chorus
- 4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb:
Chorus
- 5 Glorious now, behold him arise,
King and God, and sacrifice!
heaven sings alleluia,
alleluia the earth replies:
Chorus



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CAROL #9 – *Hark! the herald angels sing*

- 1 Hark! the herald angels sing,
glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled.
Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim:
Christ is born in Bethlehem.

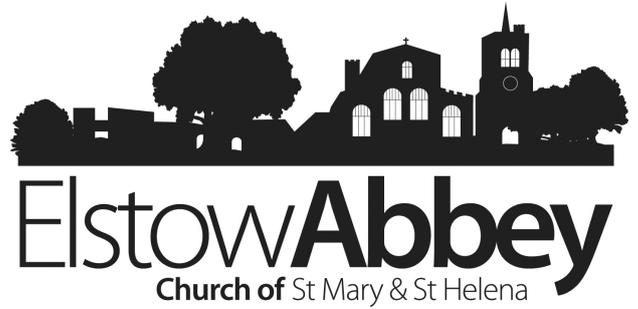
*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!*

- 2 Christ, by highest heaven adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see!
Hail the incarnate Deity!
Pleased as man with man to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel:

*Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King!*

- 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Son of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings;
mild he lays his glory by,
born that man no more may die,
born to raise the sons of earth,
born to give them second birth:

*Hark! The herald angels sing
"Glory to the new-born King!"*



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We wish you all a
Happy and Healthy
Christmas and a
Normal New Year!