

# Grace Episcopal Church

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## *Lessons and Carols*

From Stories after Jesus' birth  
with Holy Communion



Sunday, December 28, 2025 ~ 10:00 am

# Christmas Lessons & Carols ~ From Stories after Jesus' birth

## December 28, 2025 at 10:00 AM

### **OPENING HYMN 83**

"O Come, all ye faithful"

*Adeste fideles*

### BIDDING PRAYER

*Officiant:* The people who walked in darkness  
**People:** **have seen a great light.**

*Officiant:* For to us a child is born,  
**People:** **to us a Son is given.**

*Officiant:* His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
**People:** **the Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.**

*Officiant:* Glory to God in the highest,  
**People:** **and peace to God's people on earth.**

### The Christmas Bidding Prayer

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger. Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make Grace Episcopal Church glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and this community.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore. And now to sum up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying;

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

**First Reading: John 1:1-14    The Mystery of the Incarnation**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. 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.

**Hymn 89**

"It came upon the midnight clear"

*Carol*

**Second Reading: Luke 2: 15 - 21    The Holy Name**

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

**Hymn 115**

"What child is this?"

*Greensleeves*

**Third Reading: Luke 2:22-4    The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, the parents of Jesus brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed-- and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

### **Hymn 81**

"Lo how a Rose e'er blooming"

*Es ist ein Ros*

### **Fourth Reading: Matthew 2:1-12 The Wise Men Visit Jesus**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

`And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

### **Hymn 128**

"We three kings of Orient are"

*Three Kings of Orient*

### **Fifth Reading: Matthew 2:13-15 The Holy Family Flees to Egypt**

After the wise men had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

### **Hymn 105**

"God rest ye merry gentlemen"

*God Rest You Merry*

## **Sixth Reading: Matthew 2:19-23    The Holy Family Goes to Nazareth**

*When Herod died, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who were seeking the child's life are dead." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And after being warned in a dream, he went away to the district of Galilee. There he made his home in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He will be called a Nazorean."*

### **Hymn 84**

**"Love came down at Christmas"**

*Gartan*

### **THE VESPER RESPONSORY**

*Officiant:* Judah and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed:

***People:* tomorrow go ye forth and the Lord will be with you.**

*Officiant:* And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together,

***People:* for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.**

*Officiant:* The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us;

***People:* and we beheld his glory, full of grace and truth.**

### **A COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS 1**

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of the incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### **BIRTHDAY BLESSINGS**

**Watch over your children O Lord, as their days increase: bless and guide them wherever they may be. Strengthen them when they stand: comfort them when discouraged or sorrowful; raise them up if they fall; and in their hearts may they peace which passes understanding abide all the days of their lives: through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen**

### **Offertory Hymn 110**

**"The snow lay on the ground"**

*Venite Adoremus*

### **CONCLUDING COLLECT**

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

### **THE CHRISTMAS BLESSING**

*Officiant:* May Almighty God, who went his Son to take our nature upon him, bless you in this holy season, scatter the darkness of sin, brighten your heart with the light of his holiness.

**Amen.**

May God, who sent his angels to proclaim the glad news of the Savior's birth, fill you with joy, and make you heralds of the Gospel. **AMEN.**

May God, who in the Word made flesh joined heaven to earth and earth to heaven, give you his peace and favor. **AMEN.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **AMEN.**

**RECESSATIONAL HYMN 87**

"Hark! The herald angels sing"

*Mendelssohn*

**DISMISSAL**

Officiant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God!**

**Serving today:**

Officiant..... The Rev. Susan Scranton  
Acolytes..... April Moore, David Moore, McKenna Parra  
Piano..... Susan Scranton  
Flower Guild .....Christmas Crew  
Altar Guild..... Dawn Mellon, Debbie Pullen, Cathy St. Onge  
Vestry Person of the Week..... Kathi Ferris

**Prayer List**

**For healing and comfort:** Edie Noland, Sam Luna, Rick, Lucy, Lindsay, Manette Thomas, Ken Mayle, Liz Hernandez, Rosalie Lack, Lisa Taylor, Marshall Meyer, Sharon W., Anita Baker, Amanda Van Derbur, Chad Camou, Paulina Wells, Scott Martin, Frank Boyd, Dick Honaker, David, Derek Anderson, Marie Gillies, Erin Carter, Chris Geiss

**For strength & guidance:** Jennifer & Justin, Brock, The Hernandez Family

**For those who died:** Lawrence Everett

**For those in morning:** The Hafer Family

**For those serving in the military:** Chad Donohoe ~ U.S. Navy, Nelson Acosta ~ U.S. Air Force, Adam Corona Jr. ~ U.S. Air Force, Seth Tradel ~ U.S. Navy, Mitchell Mann ~ U.S. Marines

**December Birthdays**

28 – Fred Colley

28 – Austin Lippert

29 - Andrew Petteruto