

Worship Guide

December 24, 2021

Christmas Eve Service of Lesson and Carols & Candlelight Service

**Taken from the United Methodist Book of Worship #284**



*In 1880 E.W. Benson, then Anglican Bishop of Truro England, composed a Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, based on ancient sources, for Christmas Eve. In 1918 it was adapted for the chapel of King's College, Cambridge, by its Dean, Eric Milner-White, who also wrote the bidding prayer. The Blessing after The LORD'S Prayer, added by Milner-White, was first included in its present form in 1930. The Nine Lessons given here have been customarily used in recent years at King's College. The service has been edited for United Methodist congregations.*

GATHERING and welcome

Pastor Jen

OPENING HYMN: O Come, All Ye Faithful (Stanzas 1-3 UMH 234)

THE BIDDING PRAYER: (Pastor Jen)

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**(ALL): 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. Amen.**

BLESSING

Pastor Jen

CAROL: Joy to the World (Stanzas 1,3,4 UMH 246)

FIRST LESSON

Ila Libby

Reader1: God announces in the garden of Eden

Adam and Eve's punishment for their rebellion  
and that the seed of woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

Lesson: Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

Reader 1: The Word of the LORD

All: **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (UMH 196)

SECOND LESSON

Larry James

Reader 2: God promises to Abraham that by his descendants  
all the nations of the earth shall obtain blessing.

Lesson: Genesis 22:15-18

Reader 2: The Word of the LORD

All: **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (Stanzas 1,2,4,7 UMH #211)

THIRD LESSON

Gene Rouse

Reader 3: the prophet announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness.

Lesson: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Reader 3: The Word of the LORD

All: **Thanks be to God.**

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

*(Relight the Advent candles)*

ALL: **God has brought light into every darkness.**

ONE: The promises of God are fulfilled! Wonderful Counselor! Mighty God! Everlasting Father!  
Prince of Peace!

CAROL: It Came Upon a Midnight Clear (Stanzas 1 & 4 UMH #218)

FOURTH LESSON

Charlene Gordon

Reader 4: The king is coming and will usher in a reign of justice for the poor and peace for all of God's creation.

Lesson: Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9

Reader 4: The Word of the LORD

All: **Thanks be to God**

CAROL: O Little Town of Bethlehem (Stanzas 1 & 4 UMH #230)

FIFTH LESSON

Kevin Tansey

Reader 5: The angel Gabriel announces to the virgin Mary  
that she will give birth to God's promised Son  
whose kingdom shall never end.

Lesson: Luke 1:26-35, 38

Reader 5: The Word of the LORD

All: **Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: What Child Is This (Stanzas 1 & 3 UMH 219)

SIXTH LESSON

Amy Rouse

Reader 6: Against a backdrop of emperors and taxes,  
Jesus is born.

Lesson: Luke 2:1-7

Reader 6: The Word of the LORD

All: **Thanks be to God!**

CAROL: The First Noel (Stanza 1, UMH 245)

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

*(Light the Christ Candle here)*

**ALL: We hear, even today, a chorus of angels bringing good news of the great joy to all the people.**

ONE: We light the Candle of Christ-witness to the Savior who is Christ the LORD.

**All: Glory to God in the highest Heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors.**

CAROL: Angels We Have Heard on High (Stanzas 1 & 4 UMH 238)

SEVENTH LESSON

Betty Frederic

Reader 7: The shepherds go to see the Savior of the World, lying in a manger.

Lesson: Luke 2:8-16

Reader 7: The Word of the LORD

**All: Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: Infant Holy, Infant Lowly (Stanzas 1 & 2 UMH 229)

EIGHTH LESSON

Ben Reed

Reader 8: The wise men follow a star to find the child Jesus, the King of the Jews

Lesson: Matthew 2:1-11

Reader 8: The Word of the LORD

**All: Thanks be to God.**

CAROL: We Three Kings (Stanzas 1 & 5 UMH254)

NINTH LESSON

Kevin Reed

Reader 9: John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

Lesson: John 1:1-14

Reader 9: The Word of the LORD

**All: Thanks be to God.**

COLLECT: Christmas (UMH 231) (ALL)

**Eternal God,**

**By the birth of Jesus Christ,**

**you gave yourself to the world.**

**Grant that, being born in our hearts,**

**He may save us from all our sins,**

**And restore within us the image and likeness of our Creator,**

**To whom be everlasting praise and glory,**

**World without end. AMEN.**

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Pastor Jen

O God, you have brought us again to the glad season  
when we celebrate the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ our LORD.  
Grant that his Spirit may be born anew in our hearts this day  
and that we may joyfully welcome him to reign over us.  
Open our ears that we may hear again the angelic chorus of old.  
Open our lips that we, too, may sing with uplifted hearts.  
Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth, peace, good will toward all;  
through Jesus Christ our LORD. AMEN.

Go forth in peace and joy.

**ALL: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

CANDLE LIGHTING SERVICE

*Congregation at this point will have a candle lighting service. Candles should be distributed prior to the service. The worship leader may light a candle from the Christ candle and then light the other candles of others, dipping only the unlighted candle. The lights are dimmed during this time. Once all candles are lit we join in carol. Once the carol is finished we will leave the sanctuary with our candles still lit. They will be collected outside.*

CAROL: Silent Night, Holy Night (UMH 239)

### FREE DRIVE THRU COMMUNITY MEALS

Our free Drive Thru Community meals are on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. Our next meal will be on December 14th. Chicken Fajitas and dessert. Call 207-474-3915, leave your name and number of meals. Pick up time is between 5pm and 6 pm that evening.

### MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LENDING PROGRAM

Do you or someone you know have need for a wheelchair, walker, crutches, canes, etc.? If so, we have many of these items available through our medical lending program. This is offered by ap-ointment. Call 207-474-3915 and leave your name, phone number, and the item that you need. Someone will contact you. This is an outreach through the partnership of Common Unity Place and Centenary United Methodist Church.

### SKOWHEGAN AREA YOUTH GROUP

Thursdays from 5:30-7 pm at Centenary UMC on the Dr. Mann Rd. Snacks and activities provided. For more information, please call Sharon Newell or Kevin Tansey at 207-708-0767 or 207-877-5987.

\*If you have unwanted or broken Christmas decorations, please bring them in and drop them off in the Sunday School Room. We will use them for craft projects to sell.

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### BIBLE STUDY COMING IN JANUARY 2022!

“Behold, I am *COMING SOON*” Rev 22:7

#### **Bible Study on the Book of Revelation**

*Or All you ever wanted to know about the end of time, as prophesized by the prophet John*

**Tuesdays from 10:00 am - 11:00am in the “Café”**

- 1/11 Who, What, Where, When, Why and How?
- 1/18 How Soon is Soon? Or How Can Soon Not Be Soon?
- 1/25 The Players: Good Guys, Bad Guys, Beastie Boys and Girls.
- 1/31 What’s Happening Here? Places and Events.
- 2/15 Are These Sevens Lucky or Unlucky?
- 2/22 What Would Jesus Do, and What Would Jesus Have Us Do  
About the End of the World?

**Contact John Malek (399-2955) with Questions or to sign up...“Soon!”**

**\*\*\*Pre-Reading the whole Book of Revelation before will help you understand more\*\*\***