

CHRISTMAS EVE

A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

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: UMH 234 (stanzas 1-3) O Come, All Ye Faithful

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

FIRST LESSON

Toni Jo Blaisdell

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

CAROL: UMH 196 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

SECOND LESSON:

Larry James

Lesson: Genesis 22:15-18

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

THIRD LESSON:

Corinne Dunton

Lesson: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Shawna Elliot & Toni Jo Blaisdell

ALL: God has brought light into every darkness.

ONE: The promises of God are fulfilled!

Wonderful Counselor! Mighty God! Everlasting Father!

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

FOURTH LESSON:

Charleen Gordon

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

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

FIFTH LESSON:

Skip Young

Lesson: Luke 1:26-35, 38

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

SIXTH LESSON:

Sydney Dunbar

Lesson: Luke 2:1-7

CAROL:UMH 245 (stanza 1) The First Noel

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

Charleen Gordon

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

SEVENTH LESSON:

Bonnie Young

Lesson: Luke 2:8-16

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

EIGHTH LESSON:

Ben Reed

Lesson: Matthew 2:1-11

CAROL: UMH 254 (stanzas 1 & 5) We Three Kings

NINTH LESSON:

Kevin Reed

Lesson: John 1:1-14

CAROL: UMH 231 Christmas

**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

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. When all candles are lit we join in song.

CAROL: UMH 293 Silent Night, Holy Night.

After the carol , we will leave the sanctuary with our candles still lit.

The candles will be collected outside.

Go in Peace. Merry Christmas!

CENTENARY COMMUNITY PRAYER LIST:

Lord, our faith community prays for the following people and situations:

Mike, Victoria & David McGuire; Ralph & Marge Black; Phyllis Chamberlin; Scott Bosworth; David James; Te Kelly; Debbie Tuttle; Cameron Barnes; Patsy Miller, Jeff Ellis; Cookie Gravel; Darcy Lyons; Lori Trevains; Cliff Brown's family; Kim-Marie Violette's partner, Bruce & his mother Sheila; Sydney Dunbar; Wendell Prosser; Kim Poirier; Larry James & his mother Diane; Barbara Harvey; Tim Young; Judy Steen; Toni Jo & John Blaisdell; Linda & Wendy Eaton; Samantha Brown; Billie Sherman; Al & Wanda Quimby; Jim & Diane Arsenault; Diane's brother Lenny Doucette; Diane's son Edie Hiltonen; Paul Breglia; Ken Fitzherbert; Babbett; John Benton; Cindy Travers; Pam Everett; Rodney & his mother Clarissa; Carol Taylor; Blaine & Shawna Elliott; Dave Libby. Foster children; Health Care workers; victims and survivors of domestic violence; people struggling with housing and food insecurity; Skowhegan Police, Fire, and EMT departments. Teachers and educator and their support staff. The people of Ukraine. Our D.S. Reverend Arlene Tully. The Bishop, and Reverend Peggy Johnson.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE:

We will be celebrate Christmas Eve with a service of Lessons and Carols beginning at 6PM, December 24th. There will be a sign up sheet at the back of the sanctuary for those wishing to participate in this service.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY/ADVENT STUDY

Wednesday, December 20th will be the last meeting of the Advent Study with Pastor Jen. It is a study based on the preaching texts for the sermon series, "Prepare the Way of the Lord: Advent and the Message of John the Baptist

OUR CHAPEL IS OPEN FOR ADVENT (JUST OFF OF THE SANCTUARY)

has been set up for contemplative prayer and meditation. There are guided meditations, prayers for the season, etc. available to take home and to use in the chapel. Please also find on the back table in the sanctuary, a guide for daily Scripture readings throughout Advent. Blessings on your Advent.

CHRISTMAS VACATION FOR OUR VOLUNTEER STAFF:

The Café , Clothes Closet, and Hearts & Hands Thrift Shop will be closed Wednesday, December 27th So that our volunteers can have a short vacation. The clothing donation bin will also be closed that week. Please be thoughtful of our volunteers and not leave bags of clothing during this time. Have a wonderful celebration of Christmas and New Year with your families.

FREE TUESDAY MEAL

There will be **NO** community meal on the 4th Tuesday, December 26, 2023. Meals will resume at regular times in January.

HEART & HANDS THRIFT SHOP

The Thrift Shop is open Wednesdays 9 AM to NOON.

Call Jim Barto @ (207) 858-0257 to arrange drop off of donations or for more information.

CLOTHES CLOSET

The Clothes Closet is open Wednesdays 9 AM to NOON and 5 PM to 7 PM.

CUP CAFÉ

Cup Café is open Wednesdays 8 AM to NOON. Free Wi-fi is available.

Each week we offer a free light lunch, hot chocolate, coffee and snacks.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Our medical lending program makes available wheelchairs, walkers, cans, crutches, etc.

Call (207) 474-03915, leave your name and phone number. Someone will return your call and set and appointment for pick up.

Join after the service in Fellowship Hall for a snack and fellowship.