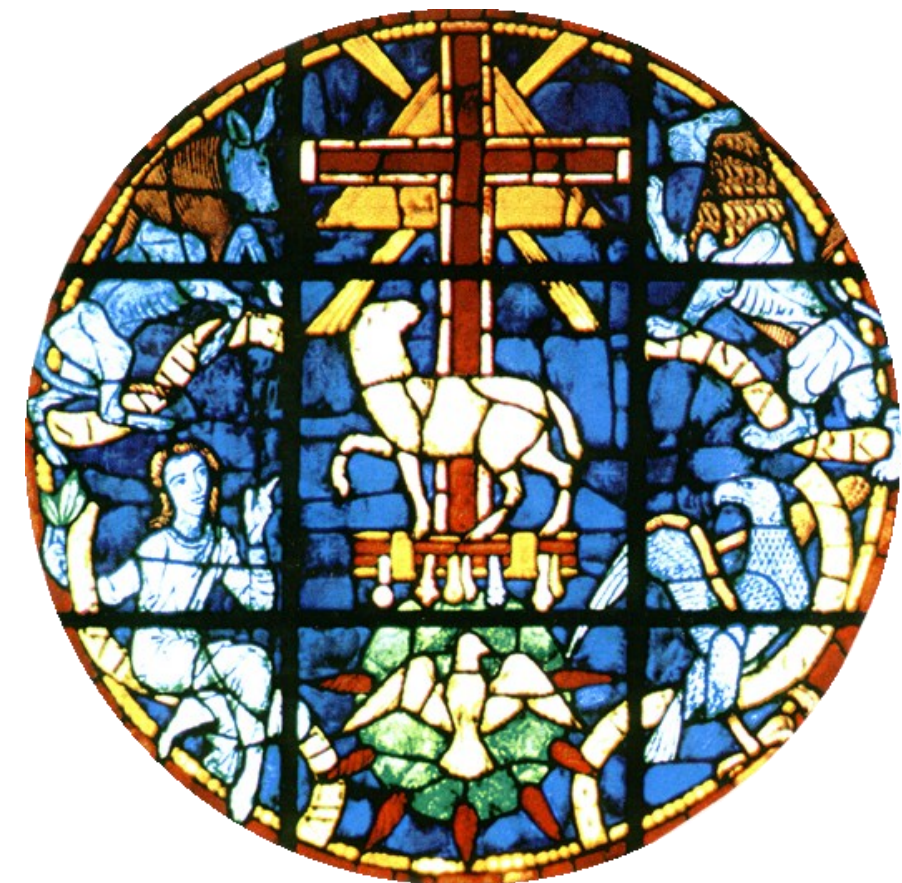


A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2018

TEN FORTY-FIVE O'CLOCK

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT



FRONT STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

136 SOUTH FISHER STREET

BURLINGTON, NC 27215

ORDER OF SERVICE

Welcome: It's time to celebrate; we are in the presence of God. We invite you to joyfully prepare your hearts to receive God's love and to feel connected to the Body of Christ this day. Please take a moment to sign the pew pads. We'd like to keep you informed of what we are doing, so please give us your email, too.

**Those who are able, please stand.*

GATHERING AND COMMUNITY CONCERNS

PRELUDE

FROM Liturgical Meditations: Fourteen Pieces Jacques Berthier
 Evening Noel (1923-1994)
 Noel a l'Enfant
 Noel of the Birds

A Christmas Prelude for Flute and Organ Charles Callahan
 Becca Meier, flute (b. 1951)

***CALL TO WORSHIP** Pastor Ross Carter

Leader: There will be signs in the heavens and distress among the nations.
All: When Christ returns in power and glory, people will faint with fear.
 Leader: But when you see these things, lift up your heads.
All: Our redemption is drawing near!
 Leader: Heaven and earth may pass away,
All: But the Word of God will stand unshaken.

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN** **Once in Royal David's City** IRBY
 Graham Huneycutt, treble soloist

Solo *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.*

Chancel Choir *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.*

Congregation *And through all his wondrous childhood he would honor and obey,
 Love and watch the lowly maiden in whose gentle arms he lay;
 Christian children all must be mild, obedient, good as he.*

Congregation *For he is our childhood's pattern: day by day like us he grew;
 He was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us he knew;
 And he feeleth for our sadness, and he shareth in our gladness.*

FRONT STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MUSIC MINISTRY, FALL 2018

Chancel Choir

SOPRANO
 *Jessica Hannah
 Gail Harwood
 Karen Hovey
 Sloane Hovey
 Janet Van Sant
 *Jennifer Wells

TENOR
 Bob Bearden
 John Harwood
 William Inabnit
 *Davis Kelton
 *Ernest Lewis, Jr.
 Andrew Sam

ALTO
 Donna Bearden
 Marty Crank
 *Nicole Hannah
 Delaney Hovey
 Bert Mims
 Jan Peach
 Judy Pratt
 Kathy Rendall
 Marti Strickland
 Julie Wolverton

BASS
 Larry Allen
 Jim Euliss
 David Hoxie
 André Johnson
 *Jack Wolverton

Laura Sam, Choirmaster
 Dr. Matt Brittain, Organist/Director of Music

*Denotes section leader and soloist.

Epworth Ringers

Stephanie Gable
 Mark Hauser
 Kellee Hawley
 Carol Hoxie
 David Hoxie
 William Inabnit
 LuAnn Maner
 Laura Michel

Catherine Mills
 Patrick Mills
 Paula Reardon
 Erin Rodriguez
 Lisa Thomas
 Janet Van Sant
 Susie Wall

Dr. Matt Brittain, conductor

CHURCH CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 16, 2018

Sunday, December 16

| | | |
|-------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 9:00 | Contemporary Worship Service | Aldersgate Hall |
| 9:45 | Sunday School | Class Rooms |
| 10:45 | Worship Service | Sanctuary |
| 12:15 | Chancel Choir Christmas Gathering | Ministry Center |
| 4:00 | Children's Choir | Sanctuary |
| 4:00 | Youth Choir | Choir Room |
| 5:00 | Wesley Ringers | Room 307 |
| 5:00 | Youth Bells | Bell Room |
| 5:00 | Disciple Bible Study | Room 401 |
| 6:00 | UMYF Christmas Party/Covered Dish | Aldersgate Hall |

Tuesday, December 18

| | | |
|------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 9:30 | Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study | Room 305 |
|------|-------------------------------------|----------|

Wednesday, December 19

| | | |
|------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 7:30 | UMYF Breakfast Club | Dr. Cecil's Office 1711 Sykes St. |
| 7:00 | Chancel Choir | Choir Room |

Thursday, December 20

| | | |
|------|-----------------------|-------------|
| 9:30 | Prayer and Meditation | Prayer Room |
|------|-----------------------|-------------|

Saturday, December 22

| | | |
|------|---------------------------------|------------|
| 2:00 | Azalea MHP Community Fellowship | Azalea MHP |
|------|---------------------------------|------------|

Sunday, December 23

| | | |
|-------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 8:45 | Worship Service | Sanctuary |
| 9:00 | Contemporary Worship Service | Aldersgate Hall |
| 9:45 | Sunday School | Class Rooms |
| 11:00 | Worship Service | Sanctuary |

Congregation

*And our eyes at last shall see him through his own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle, is our Lord in heaven above;
And he leads his children on to the place where he is gone.*

Congregation

*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,
When, like stars, his children, crowned, all in white shall wait around.*

Words, Cecil Frances Alexander
Music, Henry John Gauntlett
Harmonized, Arthur Henry Mann
Arranged, Sir David Willcocks
Oxford University Press

THE BIDDING PRAYER

Pastor Ross Carter

Beloved in Christ, this Christmas season it is our duty and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels, and to go in heart and mind to Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Therefore let us hear again from Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our sin until the glorious redemption brought us by this holy Child; and let us make this house of prayer glad with our carols of praise.

But first, because this of all things would rejoice Jesus' heart, let us pray to him for the needs of the whole world, and all his people; for peace upon the earth he came to save; for love and unity within the one Church he did build; for goodwill among all peoples.

And particularly at this time let us remember the poor, the cold, the hungry, the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all who know not the Lord Jesus, or who love him not, or who by sin have grieved his heart of love.

Lastly, let us remember all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the throne of heaven, in the words that Christ himself has taught us:

THE LORD'S PRAYER (IN UNISON)

LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLES

The Brandon and Susan Wilkinson Family

We light this candle as a symbol of God's love for us and our love for one another. For the Lord rejoices over us with gladness and renews us in his love. He exults over us with singing and turns our shame into praise.

FIRST LESSON

Reader: Jack Wolverton, A Representative of the Chancel Choir

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.

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel." And to the man he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

All: Thanks be to God.

Carol

Adam Lay Ybounden
Chancel Choir

*Adam lay ybounden,
Bounden in a bond:
Four thousand winter
Thought he not too long.*

*And all was for an apple,
An apple that he took,
As clerkès finden
Written in their book.*

*Ne had the apple taken been,
The apple taken been,
Ne had never our lady
Abeen heavenè queen.*

*Blessèd by the time
That apple taken was.
Therefore we moun singen,
Deo gracias.*

Words, 15th Century
Music, Robert J. Powell
Augsburg Fortress

Christ Offering



You are the Light of the world.

"GIVE US GRACE that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which thy son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility: that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty, to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal."

CHRIST OFFERING

These words capture the meaning of the Advent season, a time when we live somewhere between the fact of darkness and the hope of light. As a faithful supporter of the ministries of Front Street United Methodist Church, you play an important role in seeing that light wins over darkness. Your faithful support helps us to battle the darkness of this present age.

As the end of the year approaches, we ask that you go the "second mile" and participate in our Christ offering. This offering assures that we not only meet our obligations for the year, but that we testify to the light which is Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Offering envelopes are provided in the pew slots for your gift.
Please give generously today.**

2018 CONTRIBUTION DEADLINE

A friendly reminder from the Church Office: in order for contributions to be included as a contribution towards your 2018 statement, please have mail postmarked or dropped at the church office NO LATER THAN **December 31**. All contributions received after December 31 will be applied to your 2019 statement.

Please note: when you provide a check as payment, you authorize us either to use information from your check to make a one-time electronic fund transfer from your account or to process the payment as a check transaction.

IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of inclement weather, the church office will follow the delays and closures of the City of Burlington (not the Alamance-Burlington School System). For worship services, any cancellations will be publicized on Facebook, our website, FOX8, and WFMY News 2.

FAMILY LIFE/MINISTRY TEAM

Carol Sineath (in her retirement) plans to revive our Family/Life Ministries, and is seeking individuals to join this ministry team. The vision for this team is to offer both inter-generational and generational opportunities for our church family. The possibilities are limited only by our ability to envision! If you would like to be a part of this ministry team, please contact Carol at cwsineath@gmail.com or 336-263-2495.

ALTAR FLOWERS 2019

The **2019** flower calendar is on the bulletin board in the Welcome Center. The following dates are available to place flowers in the Sanctuary in honor or in memory of a loved one: **January 6 and February 3, 10, 17, and 24**. Please contact Linda Paul at 336-543-5081 or kpaul5@triad.rr.com for details or to sign up.

LIVE-STREAMING ON FACEBOOK

We are pleased to be able to live-stream our 11:00 a.m. worship each week for the benefit of those who are not able to be physically present. For those who would prefer to not be on camera, we endeavor to make the back half of the Sanctuary a non-video zone. The balcony is also available for non-video seating. If you have any questions about this service, please feel free to speak with Pastor Ross.

SECOND LESSON

Reader: Erin Rodriguez, A Representative of the Children's Choir

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

Genesis 22:15-18

The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said, "By myself I have sworn, says the Lord: Because you have done this, and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore. And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves, because you have obeyed my voice."

All: Thanks be to God.

Carol

FROM Three Christmas Villancicos

II. Riu, Riu Chiu

Chancel Choir

Becca Meier, flute

Ernest Lewis, Jr., tambourine

Riu, riu chiu, la guarda ribera,

Dios guarde el lobo de nuestra cordera.

*El lobo rabioso la quiso morder, mas dios poderoso la supo defender,
Quizole hazer que no pudiesse pecar, ni aun original esta uirgen no tuuiera.*

*Este qu`es nascido es el gran monarca, Christo patriarca de carne uestido.
Hanos redimido con se hazer chiquito, aunque era infinito, finito se hiziera.*

*Muchas profecias lo han profetizado, y aun en nuestros dias, lo hemos alcanzado,
A Dios humanado vemos en el suelo, y al hombre en el cielo porque el lo quisiera.*

*Pues que ya tenemos lo que desseamos, todos juntos uamos presentes lleuemos;
Todos le daremos nuestra voluntad, pues a se igualar con nosotros uiniera.*

*("River, little river, guardian of the riverside,
God keep the wolf from our sheep.*

*The ranting wolf tried to bite her, but God the all-powerful protected her,
He wished to keep her from sin, not even original sin should this virgin have.*

*He who was born the great monarch, Christ the patriarch dressed in flesh
Has redeemed us by becoming small, although He was infinite, finite he made himself.*

*Many prophecies prophesied Him, and even in our day, we have reached Him,
God in human form we have seen on earth and man in heaven because He so wished.*

*Since we now have what we desire, let's go all together bearing presents;
Our will we shall give Him, because He came to make Himself equal to us.")*

Words and Music, Anonymous 16th Century Spanish
Translation, Carol Kuefler
Arranged, Ben Allaway
Santa Barbara Music Publishing

THIRD LESSON

Reader: Kaelan Mims, A Representative of the Youth Choir

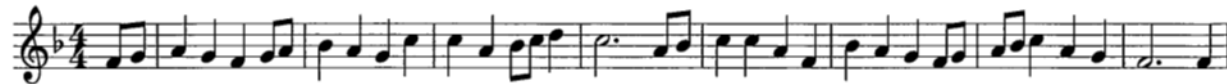
The prophet announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness.

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

All: Thanks be to God.

*Hymn **It Came upon the Midnight Clear** NOEL
Congregation and Chancel Choir



*It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on the earth, goodwill to men, from heaven's all-gracious King!'
The world in solemn stillness lay to hear the angels sing.*

*Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heavenly music floats o'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing;
And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.*

*Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suffered long;
Beneath the angel-strain have rolled two thousand years of wrong;
And man, at war with man, hears not the love-song which they bring:
O hush the noise, ye men of strife, and hear the angels sing!*

*For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,
When, with the ever-circling years, comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.*

Words, Edmund Hamilton Sears
Music, English Traditional Melody
Adapted, Sir Arthur Sullivan
Arranged, Sir David Willcocks
Oxford University Press

WELCOME! We're glad that you have chosen to worship with us today. Following this service, there is a gathering in the Heritage Center for fellowship and refreshments. Our hosts this week are Rev. and Mrs. Marshall Old.

THE ALTAR FLOWERS are given to the glory of God and in memory of Paul E. (Gene) Scarborough by Joanne Scarborough.

MEMBERS OF THE ALTAR GUILD SERVING IN DECEMBER are Mary Ellen Cross, Trisha Craig, Marie Crissman, Helen Ellington, Sarah Folckomer, and Beth Kelley.

OUR ACOLYTES are Amelia Pardue and Jacob Wilkinson, and our crucifer is Alex Pardue.

THE PRAYER REQUEST CARDS in the pews may be placed in the offering or in the Prayer Request Boxes in the Reading Area and the Narthex Area, or you may email the Prayer Ministry Team at prayer@frontstreetumc.org. We thank team members Mike and Margaret Mitchell, who will be in the Prayer Room on our behalf at noon to pray for requests given on the Prayer Request Cards.

TREES OF LOVE

Thank you to everyone who has adorned our Trees of Love to share Christ with our neighbors this season. Please return all items (unwrapped) to the trees by **Wednesday, December 19**. Note: if you are donating money or gift cards, please return them to the church office.

AZALEA MHP COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP

Everyone is welcome to join us this **Saturday, December 22** (2:00 – 4:00 p.m.) at Azalea MHP for an afternoon of Christmas activities and fellowship with our neighbors. Please gather at the church at 1:15 p.m. to carpool. Contact Betty Huneycutt for details.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Please join us for one of our Christmas Eve services as we celebrate the birth of our Lord.

- A Christmas Eve Service for Children: 5 p.m. in the Sanctuary.
- Communion Service: 8 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

A Christmas Eve offering will be taken at both services. This year's Christmas offering will be divided between Allied Churches of Alamance County and the church budget.

OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The Church Office will be closed **December 24, 25, and 26** for Christmas and **January 1** for New Year's Day. Merry Christmas and happy New Year!

WORSHIP SERVICES ON DECEMBER 30

Aldersgate service at 9 a.m. with breakfast.

There will be **ONE** combined traditional worship service at **11:00 a.m.** No Sunday School for children or youth.

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes are available for pick-up outside the church office. PLEASE pick yours up by **December 30**. This will help in reducing our mailing costs. Thank you.

CALL TO PRAYER

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

OFFERTORY

Pat-a-pan arr. Fred Gramann
(Guillaume prends ton tambourin) (b. 1950)
Epworth Ringers

*DOXOLOGY No. 95 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow OLD 100th

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Gracious God, in gratitude for all that you have given us, we bring our tithes, offerings, and labor to care for a world that needs healing and hope; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

*HYMN

Joy to the World! ANTIOCH
Congregation and Chancel Choir

*Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
Let earth receive her King.
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.*

*Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;
Let men their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.*

Words, Isaac Watts
Music, George Frideric Handel
Arranged, John Rutter
Oxford University Press

*PRONOUNCEMENT OF BLESSING Pastor Ross Carter

May the Christ, who by his Incarnation gathered into One things earthly and heavenly, fill you with the sweetness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

Go forth in peace and joy.
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

In dulci jubilo, BWV 729 Johann Sebastian Bach
(1685-1750)

FOURTH LESSON

Reader: Rodney Beckom, A Representative of the Congregation

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

Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

All: Thanks be to God.

Carol

Isaiah the Prophet
Chancel Choir

*Isaiah the prophet has written of old
How God's new creation shall come.
Instead of the thorn tree, the fir tree shall grow;
The wolf shall lie down with the lamb.*

*The mountains and hills shall burst forth into song,
The peoples be led forth in peace,
For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God
As the waters cover the sea.*

*Yet nations still prey on the meek of the world,
And conflict turns parent from child.
Your people despoil all the sweetness of earth;
The briar and the thorn tree grow wild.*

*God, bring to fruition your will for the earth,
That no one shall hurt or destroy,
That wisdom and justice shall reign in the land
And your people shall go forth in joy.*

Words, Joy F. Patterson
Music, Daniel C. Nelson
MorningStar Music Publishers

FIFTH LESSON

Reader: Betsy Huneycutt, A Representative of the Building and Grounds Committee

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

Luke 1:26-35, 38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

All: Thanks be to God.

Carol

Gabriel's Message

Chancel Choir

*The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
"All hail," said he, "thou lowly maiden Mary,
Most highly favored lady, Gloria!"*

*"For known a blessed mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honor thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold."
Most highly favored lady, Gloria!*

*Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,
"My soul shall laud and magnify his Holy Name."
Most highly favored lady, Gloria!*

*Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
"Most highly favored lady, Gloria!"*

Words, Sabine Baring-Gould
Music, Old Basque Noel
Arranged, Philip Ledger
Roger Dean Publishing Company

*NINTH LESSON

Reader: Rev. Ross Carter, The Senior Pastor

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

John 1:1-14

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.

All: Thanks be to God.

***Hymn**

Hark! the Herald-Angels Sing
Congregation and Chancel Choir

MENDELSSOHN

*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.*

*Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come offspring of a 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.*

*Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun 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.*

Words, Charles Wesley
Music, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy
Arranged, Sir David Willcocks
Oxford University Press

*** * ***

EIGHTH LESSON

Reader: Rev. Patrick Murphy, The Pastor of Discipleship

*The wise men follow a star to find the child Jesus, the King of the Jews.
Matthew 2:1-12*

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 have 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.

All: Thanks be to God.

*Hymn

The First Nowell

THE FIRST NOWELL

Congregation *The first Nowell the angel did say was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
In fields where they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel!*

Chancel Choir *They looked up and saw a star, shining in the east, beyond them far;
And to the earth it gave great light, and so it continued both day and night:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel!*

Congregation *And by the light of that same star, three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent, and to follow the star wherever it went:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel!*

Chancel Choir *This star drew nigh to the northwest; o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay right over the place where Jesus lay:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel!*

Congregation *Then entered in those wise men three, full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in his presence their gold and myrrh and frankincense:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel!*

Congregation *Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
That hath made heaven and earth of naught, and with his blood mankind hath bought:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel!*

Words and Music, Traditional English Carol
Arranged, Sir David Willcocks
Oxford University Press

SIXTH LESSON

Reader: Patrick Mills, A Representative of the Mission Committee

*Against a backdrop of emperors and taxes, Jesus is born.
Luke 2:1-7*

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

All: Thanks be to God.

Carol

In the Bleak Mid-Winter

Chancel Choir

*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.*

*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.*

*Enough for him, whom Cherubim worship night and day,
A breastful of milk and a mangerful of hay;
Enough for him, whom angels fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel which adore.*

*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 can I give him, give my heart.*

Words, Christina Rossetti
Music, Harold Darke
Stainer and Bell

SEVENTH LESSON

Reader: Marianna Harris, A Representative of the Worship and Arts Committee

The shepherds go to see the Savior of the world, lying in a manger.
Luke 2:8-16

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!" 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.

All: Thanks be to God.

*Hymn

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

GOD REST YOU MERRY



Congregation

*God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Savior
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

Chancel Choir

*From God our heavenly Father
A blessèd angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name:
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

Congregation

*The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoicèd much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding
In tempest, storm, and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway
This blessèd babe to find:
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

Chancel Choir

*But when to Bethlehem they came,
Whereat this infant lay,
They found him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling,
Unto the Lord did pray:
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

Congregation

*Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All others doth deface:
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

Words and Music, English Traditional Carol
Arranged, Sir David Willcocks
Oxford University Press