



The Reverend Bob Farrow, Priest in Charge
Kevin Anderson, Organist

First Sunday After Christmas Day
December 28, 2025

A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

PRELUDE | *Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts*
From "Christmas Oratorio"

Camille Saint-Saens

PROCESSIONAL | *Once in Royal David's City*
All stand and sing.

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.

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, the scorned, the lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own redeeming love;
for that Child who seemed so helpless, is our Lord in heaven above,
and He leads His children on to the place where He is gone.

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.

BIDDING PRAYER

Beloved in Christ, this day 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 has come to pass, and the Babe, lying in the manger. Therefore let us hear again

from Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days 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 those who mourn, the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all who know not our 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 who 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. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**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 BLESSING

May the almighty God bless us with divine grace, may Christ give us the joy of everlasting life, and unto the fellowship of the citizens above, may the Spirit of Love bring us all. **Amen.**

THE FIRST LESSON

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

Read by Margaret Zachry

Lector: God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

The man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and they 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."

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

ANTHEM | *Apple Tree*

Performed by Kevin Anderson

Please remain seated for the performance. The words are provided for your enjoyment.

1 The tree of life my soul hath seen, Laden with fruit, and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be Compared with Christ the apple tree.

2 His beauty doth all things excel: By faith I know, but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

3 For happiness I long have sought, And pleasure dearly I have bought:
I missed of all: but now I see 'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

4 I'm weary with my former toil, Here I will sit and rest awhile:
Under the shadow I will be Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

5 This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, It keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

THE SECOND LESSON | Genesis 22:15-18

Read by Linda Pace

Lector: God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

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."

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN | *I Saw Three Ships*

Remain seated to sing.

I saw three ships come sailing in On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;
I saw three ships come sailing in On Christmas Day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day?
And what was in those ships all three, On Christmas Day in the morning?

And all the bells on Earth shall ring, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;
And all the bells on Earth shall ring, On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the angels in Heaven shall sing, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;
And all the angels in Heaven shall sing, On Christmas Day in the morning.

And all the souls on Earth shall sing, On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day;
And all the souls on Earth shall sing, On Christmas Day in the morning.

THE THIRD LESSON | Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Read by Connie Blackmon

Lector: The prophet foretells the coming of the Savior.

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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN | *Comfort, comfort ye my people*

Remain seated to sing.

Comfort, comfort ye my people, Speak ye peace, thus saith our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness, Mourning neath their sorrows' load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem Of the peace that waits for them,
Tell her that her sins I cover, And her warfare now is over.

Hark, the voice of one that crieth In the desert far and near,
Calling us to new repentance, Since the kingdom now is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey! Now prepare for God a way;
Let the valleys rise to meet him, And the hills bow down to greet him.

Make ye straight what long was crooked, Make the rougher places plain;
Let your hearts be true and humble, As befits His holy reign;
For the glory of the Lord Now o'er earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token That his Word is never broken.

THE FOURTH LESSON | Isaiah 11:1-4,6-9

Read by Kevin Anderson

Lector: The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

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. 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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN | *Lo, How a rose e'er blooming* *Remain seated to sing.*

Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem hath sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming As men of old have sung.
It came, a flower bright, Amid the cold of winter
When half-spent was the night.

This Flower, whose fragrance tender With sweetness fills the air,
Dispel with glorious splendor The darkness everywhere.
True man, yet very God, From sin and death He saves us
And share our every load.

Lector: The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN | *The snow lay on the ground*

Performed by Kevin Anderson

Please remain seated for the performance. The words are provided for your enjoyment.

The snow lay on the ground, the stars shone bright,
When Christ the Lord was born on Christmas night.
Venite, adoremus Dominum, Venite, adoremus Dominum.

*Venite, adoremus Dominum,
Venite, adoremus Dominum.*

'Twas Mary, Virgin pure of holy Anne,
That brought into this world the God made man.
She laid him in a stall at Bethlehem;
The ass and oxen shared the roof with them.

*Venite, adoremus Dominum,
Venite, adoremus Dominum.*

Saint Joseph, too was near to tend the child,
To guard him, and protect his mother mild:
The angels hover'd round, and sang this song:
Venite, adoremus Dominum.

*Venite, adoremus Dominum,
Venite, adoremus Dominum.*

And thus that manger poor became a throne;
For he whom Mary bore was God the Son.
O come, then, let us join the heav'nly host,
To praise the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

*Venite, adoremus Dominum,
Venite, adoremus Dominum.*

THE SIXTH LESSON | Luke 2:1-7

Read by Katherine Johnson

Lector: St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM | *I wonder as I wander*

Performed by Kevin Anderson

Please remain seated for the performance. The words are provided for your enjoyment.

I wonder as I wander, out under the sky, how Jesus the Savior did come for to die
for poor or'nary people like you and like I; I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing, a star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
or all of God's angels in heaven to sing, he surely could have had it, 'cause he was the
King.

When Mary birthed Jesus, 'twas in a cow's stall with wise men and farmers and shepherd
and all. But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall, and the promise of ages it did
then recall.

I wonder as I wander, out under the sky, how Jesus the Savior did come for to die
for poor or'nary people like you and like I; I wonder as I wander, out under the sky.

THE SEVENTH LESSON | Luke 2:8-16

Read by Chris Butzon

Lector: The shepherds go to the manger.

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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN | *Angels We Have Heard on High*
Remain seated to sing.

Angels we have heard on high, singing sweetly through the night,
And the mountains in reply echoing their brave delight.

Refrain:

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see? What glad tidings did you hear?

Refrain

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing.
Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn King.

Refrain

See him in a manger laid whom the angels praise above.
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid while we raise our hearts in love.

Refrain

THE EIGHTH LESSON | Matthew 2:1-11

Read by William Morgan

Lector: The wise men are led by the star to 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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN | *The First Nowell*

Remain seated to sing.

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.

Refrain:

Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

Then entered in those wise men three, full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Refrain

Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought.

Refrain

THE NINTH LESSON | John 1:1-14

Read by Sheri Cody

Officiant: St. John unfolds the great 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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN | *Go tell it on the mountain*
All stand and sing.

Hymnal 99

Refrain:

*Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills, and ev'rywhere;
go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.*

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light.

Refrain

The shepherds feared and trembled when lo, above the earth
rang out the angel chorus that hailed our Savior's birth.

Refrain

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

Refrain

PRAYER AND BLESSING

Minister: The Lord be with you

People: **And also with you**

Minister: Let us pray.

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only son,
Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure
confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with
thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. **Amen.**

May he who by his Incarnation, gathered into one, things earthly and heavenly, grant you
the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit, be amongst you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN | *Joy to the World*
All stand and sing.

Joy to the world; the Lord is come; Let Earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry Heart prepare him room, And Heav'n and nature sing,
and Heav'n and nature sing. and Heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the Earth, the Savior reigns, Let men their Songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains, Repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make his blessings flow Far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found.

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 of his love, and wonders of his love.

DISMISSAL

May the One, 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, the love of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit remain with you always. Amen.

Leader: Go forth in peace and joy.

People: **Thanks be to God! Alleluia!**

POSTLUDE | *Christmas Melody*

Thank you for worshipping with us today.

Please join us for coffee and fellowship in the Gathering Room,
to the left as you exit the nave.

St. Nicholas' mission is to actively share Christ's love for all people.

Our vision is to strive to be a welcoming community who worships a caring and merciful God, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Your prayers are asked for Kash Stanfield, Peggy Gjertsen, Sheri Cody and the grieving family of Bruce Clouser, Kenny Hall and his family, and Ryder Hughes. Continued prayers and loving thoughts for our beloved homebound congregants: Mike Sawyer and Liz Dixon.

VESTRY

Rose Brent, *Senior Warden*
Martha Dimon, *Junior Warden*
Carolyn Cox, Sheri Cody,
Kathy McMurtry
Alex Garrett, *Clerk of the Vestry*
Jim Gilliam, *Treasurer*

MINISTERS THIS WEEK

Usher: Sheri Cody
Virtual Ministers: William Morgan
& Steve Morse
Crucifer: Riley-Anne Johnson
Flowers: Beth Brown & Margaret Zachry

UPCOMING IN THE PARISH

DEC 31: New Year's Eve – no Evening Prayer

JAN 1: New Year's Day – office closed

JAN 7: Book Club after Evening Prayer at 5:00 p.m.

JAN 11: Annual Parish Meeting with “2nd Sunday Brunch” after the service

The end of the fiscal year approaches! Any contributions to the church (in fulfillment of a pledge or not) that you wish to claim in your 2025 tax-year giving should be received by December 31.

Regarding 2025 pledges: December can be a tough month. If you need to put off fulfilling the rest of your 2025 pledge until 2026, that's okay! We'll take it any time it fits into your household budget. (*Treasurer's Note:* Pledge payments received after January 1, 2026 will be applied to outstanding 2025 pledge balances first.)

St. Nicholas Book Club has selected *Resistance Women* by Jennifer Chiaverini as their January read. The novel is inspired by the life of Mildred Harnack, a real historical figure whose story was previously untold because the U.S. government deliberately buried it after the war. Harnack was one of dozens of members of the network of American and German resistance fighters the Gestapo called *die Rote Kapelle* (the Red Orchestra). The bulk of the action takes place between the wars, beginning in 1929; I was initially surprised that a novel about Nazi Germany before and during WWII began so early, but Chiaverini's chosen timeline serves her story well: As a reader, you see events escalate over time through these women's eyes. The setup feels leisurely, but the payoff is worth it. (from *Modern Mrs. Darcy*) The Book Club next meets on January 7, 2026.

The Annual Meeting of the church is set for **January 11, 2026** after the service.

Participating in this meeting is an important part of stewardship: New Vestry members will be voted upon, the budget will be presented, and there will be reports on church programs and activities. **First Sunday Brunch** will be moved to this day so we can meet on a full stomach – plan to attend!