

Historic
Independent Presbyterian Church
of Savannah



Service of Lessons and Carols
December 21, AD 2025

207 Bull Street • Savannah, Georgia 31401 • 912/236-3346 • www.ipcsav.org

THE SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS

FIVE THIRTY O'CLOCK

The Prelude – “Carols of the Manger”
“Angels We Have Heard on High”

arr. Ruth Elaine Schram
arr. Derek K. Hakes

Handbell Choir

The Welcome

The Opening Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Rev. Dr. Terry Johnson

* **The Opening Carol** – “Once in Royal David's City” (*Hymn #225*) Irby

Verse 1 – Children's Choir

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.

The congregation rises with organ interlude

Verse 2 – All

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.

Verse 3 – All

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.

Verse 4 – All

And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own redeeming love;
For that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above,
And He leads His children on to the place where He is gone.

Verse 5 – All, in unison

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.

The congregation is seated.

The First Lesson – Genesis 3:1–15

Rev. Tim Shaw

*God announces in the Garden of Eden that the seed of the woman
shall bruise the serpent's head.*

The Truth Sent From Above

Traditional English carol
arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

The Adult Choir and Youth Choir

Text:

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love;
Therefore don't turn me from your door,
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing which I do relate,
Is that God did man create.
The next thing which to you I'll tell,
Woman was made with man to dwell.

Then after this, 'twas God's own choice
To place them both in Paradise,
There to remain from evil free,
Except they ate of such a tree.

And they did eat, which was a sin,
And thus their ruin did begin;
Ruined themselves, both you and me,
And all of their posterity.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes,
Till God the Lord did interpose,
And so a promise soon did run
That He would redeem us by His Son.

—from *Eight Traditional English Carols* (1919)

The Second Lesson – Isaiah 7:10–14; 9:2–7

Rev. Alex Sutherland

*Isaiah prophesies the coming of Emmanuel, God with us:
the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.*

O Come, Divine Messiah

16th-century French noel, arr. James Biery

*The Children's Choir
Mrs. Erin Smith, oboe
Grace and Titus Howard, handbells*

Text:

O come, divine Messiah, the world in silence waits the day
When hope shall sing its triumph, and sadness flee away.

Refrain:

Dear Savior, haste! Come, come to earth.
Dispel the night and show your face, and bid us hail the dawn of grace.
O come, divine Messiah, the world in silence waits the day
When hope shall sing its triumph and sadness flee away.

O come, Desired of Nations, whom priest and prophet long foretold,
Will break the captive fetters, redeem the long-lost fold.

Refrain

O come in peace and meekness, for lowly will your cradle be:
Though clothed in human weakness, we shall your Godhead see.

Refrain

— Simon-Joseph Pellegrin (1663–1745)

The Third Lesson – Isaiah 40:1–11

Mr. Andrew Becham

*The prophet Isaiah announces,
"Behold, your Lord comes!"*

* **Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming** (*Hymn* #221) Tune: Es Ist Ein' Ros' Entsprungen
The congregation rises with organ introduction

The Congregation

The Fourth Lesson – Micah 5:2–4

Rev. Dr. Matthew Burt

Micah declares a Ruler to arise from Bethlehem.

Thou Who Wast Rich

Traditional French carol
arr. Molly Ijames

The Youth Choir

Text:

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake becamest poor;
Thrones for a manger didst surrender, sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor, all for love's sake becamest poor.

Thou who art God beyond all praising all for love's sake becamest man.
Stooping so low, but sinners raising heavenwards by thine eternal plan,
Thou who art God beyond all praising all for love's sake becamest man.

Thou who art love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship thee.
Emmanuel, within us dwelling, make us what thou wouldst have us be.
Thou who art love beyond all telling, Savior and King, we worship thee.

— Frank Houghton (1894–1972)

The Fifth Lesson – Luke 1:26–38

Mr. Kenneth Crowe

*The angel Gabriel greets the virgin Mary.**** The Psalm – Psalm 72:1–12 (see inside back cover)**

Puer Nobis

*The congregation rises with organ introduction**The Congregation*

- 1 O God, Thy judgments give the King,
His reigning Son Thy righteousness;
- 2 He to Thy people right shall bring,
With justice shall Thy poor redress.
- 3 The heights shall bring prosperity,
The hills bring peace by righteousness;
- 4 He'll judge the poor, the wronged set free,
And crush the men who them oppress.
- 5 Till sun and moon no more are known
They shall Thee fear in ages all;
- 6 He'll come as rain on meadows mown
And show'rs upon the earth that fall.
- 7 The just shall flourish in His day,
While lasts the moon shall peace extend;
- 8 From sea to sea shall be His sway,
And from the River to earth's end.
- 9 The nomads bow to him as king,
And to the dust His foes descend;
- 10 The isles and Tarshish tribute bring,
And Sheba, Seba gifts shall send.
- 11 All kings shall down before Him fall,
All nations His commands obey.
- 12 He'll save the needy when they call,
The poor, and those that have no stay.

*The congregation is seated***The Sixth Lesson – Luke 2:1–7**

Mr. Stephen Jackson

*Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.***Away in a Manger**

W. J. Kirkpatrick (1895)

arr. Sir David Willcocks (1980)

*The Sunday School Choir**Mrs. Paula Heritage, Mrs. Emma Christine Jones, and Miss Emma Marsh, violins**Mrs. Haley Huncke, conductor**Text:*

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love thee, Lord Jesus! Look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

— Anonymous (late 19th century)

The Seventh Lesson – Luke 2:8–20

Dr. David Gobel

*The angels announce and the shepherds witness the baby in the manger.***Upon a Calm and Quiet Night**

James E. Clemens

*The Children's Choir and Sunday School Choir
Mrs. Haley Huncke, conductor**Text:*

Upon a calm and quiet night, while shepherds watched their sheep,
The angel of the Lord revealed the Savior they should seek:

Refrain:

“Raise your voices strong and clear, for the Son of God is here!”
Gloria! Gloria! in excelsis Deo!

The wise men sought the newborn King; from far-off lands they came.
They gave Him gifts and worshiped Him to glorify His name:

Refrain

Now come, all Christians young and old, give praise to Christ our King!
Join hands and hearts in joy to spread this wondrous news we bring:

*Refrain**The four-and five-year-old choir members rejoin their families***The Eighth Lesson – Matthew 2:1–12**

Mr. Rick Mullininx

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.***O'er the Hill and O'er the Vale** In Vernali Tempore, from *Piae Cantiones* (1582)*The Youth Choir and Children's Choir**Text:*

O'er the hill and o'er the vale, come three kings together,
Caring nought for snow and hail, cold and wind and weather;
Now on Persia's sandy plains, now where Tigris swells with rains,
 they their camels tether:
Now through Syrian lands they go, now through Moab, faint and slow,
 now o'er Edom's heather.

O'er the hill and o'er the vale, each king bears a present:
Wise men go a Child to hail, monarchs seek a Peasant:
And a star in front proceeds, over rocks and rivers leads,
 shines with beams incessant:
Therefore onward, onward still! Ford the stream and climb the hill:
 love makes all things pleasant.

He is God ye go to meet: therefore incense proffer.
He is King ye go to greet: gold is in your coffer.
Also Man, He comes to share every woe that man can bear—
 tempter, railer, scoffer:
Therefore now, against the day, in the grave when Him they lay,
 myrrh ye also offer.
—John Mason Neale, from *Carols for Christmas-Tide* (1853)

The Ninth Lesson – John 1:1–14

Rev. Dr. Terry Johnson

*The Apostle John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.***And the Child Grew**

Randall Thompson

from *The Nativity According to Saint Luke* (1961)*The Adult Choir**Text:*

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace
of God was upon Him. Alleluia!
— Luke 2:40 (KJV)

The Meditation

Rev. Dr. Terry Johnson

* **The Hymnal** – #207 “Good Christian Men, Rejoice”

In Dulci Jubilo

The Blessing and Benediction

The Postlude - Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern / How Lovely Shines the Morning Star

Georg Friedrich Kauffmann

Mrs. Erin Smith, oboe

Text:

See *Trinity Hymnal*, #515

MUSICIANS & DIRECTORS

Handbell Choir Director	Dr. Jacob Fuhrman
Organist & Choirmaster.....	Dr. Jacob Fuhrman
Additional conducting	Mrs. Haley Huncke
Violins	Mrs. Paula Heritage
	Mrs. Emma Christine Jones
	Miss Emma Marsh
Oboe	Mrs. Erin Smith

ABOUT THE SERVICE

The Service of Lessons and Carols was first developed up by Archbishop Edward Benson, when he was Bishop of Truro, for use in the Truro Cathedral. It was later simplified in 1918 for use in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, by its then Dean, the Very Reverend Eric Milner-White.

The service joins Scripture texts that speak of the birth of Christ with anthems and carols which highlight the themes found in those texts.

Universally beloved, this service is used with some variation all over the world.

THE SCRIPTURE

The Scripture readings are from the authorized “King James Version,” which from 1611 served as the standard text of English-speaking Christianity.

NURSERY

Nurseries are available for children three-years-old and under. They are located down the hallways behind the pulpit.

PICTURE ON COVER

The cover art, “Shepherd and the Lamb,” is an original painting by Daniel Rodgers.

Psalm 72:1-12

1. 'O God, Thy judg - ments give the king,
 2. 'The heights shall bring pros - pe - ri - ty,
 3. 'Till sun and moon no more are known
 4. 'The just shall flour - ish in his day;
 5. 'The no - mads bow to him as king,
 6. 'All kings shall down be - fore him fall,

His reign - ing son Thy right - eous - ness;
 The hills bring peace by right - eous - ness;
 They shall Thee fear in a - ges all;
 While lasts the moon shall peace ex - tend;
 And to the dust his foes des - cend;
 All na - tions his com - mands o - bey.

2He to Thy peo - ple right shall bring,
 4He'll judge the poor, the wronged set free,
 6He'll come as rain on mea - dows mown
 8From sea to sea shall be his sway,
 10The isles and Tar - shish trib - ute bring,
 12He'll save the need - y when they call,

With jus - tice shall Thy poor re - dress.
 And crush the men who them op - press.
 And show'rs up - on the earth that fall.
 And from the Ri - ver to earth's end.
 And She - ba, Se - ba gifts shall send.
 The poor, and those that have no stay.

CHRISTMAS BUFFET

You are cordially invited to our Christmas Buffet in the Olmstead Fellowship Hall, Telfair Hall & the Courtyard immediately following the Service of Lessons & Carols.

DIRECTIONS TO THE BUFFET

If you are planning to join us for the Christmas Buffet, please exit down the front steps and proceed down Oglethorpe Avenue. Enter through the two doors just past the courtyard gate.

If you are uncomfortable walking down Oglethorpe Avenue, you may proceed down the hallway through the pulpit door.

There is a designated seating area for our Seniors to eat in the Choir Room.

There is a designated location in the Olmstead Fellowship Hall for children to enjoy their own buffet and this is located in the middle alcove.

Food is available in the Telfair Hall and Olmstead Fellowship Hall locations with identical carving stations.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

WITH CANDLELIGHT CAROLING

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2025

5:30 P.M.

A message by Mr. Johnson,
and candlelight carol singing on the lawn.