



# *Saint Peter Cathedral*

*Erie, Pennsylvania  
December 18, 2024 at 6:00pm*

# *Historical Background to the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols*



The first Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols was held on Christmas Eve, 1918 at Kings' College, Cambridge. The service was planned by Eric Milner-White, age 34, the recently appointed Dean of King's after experience as an army chaplain. Milner-White believed the Church of England needed more imaginative worship, and the Festival of Lessons and Carols was the result. Regarded as a liturgical pioneer during his 22 years at Cambridge, Milner-White surely had no idea the impact this one service would have on musical and liturgical communities. The first service was directed by Arthur Henry Mann (organist at King's 1876-1929). The earliest incarnation of such a service seems to be one held by E.W. Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury, on Christmas Eve 1880 in Truro, England. This service was much simpler, but also consisted of nine lessons and carols.

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols from King's College has been broadcast annually since 1928 (with the exception of 1930). The broadcasts even continued during the Second World War, when the "ancient glass (and also all heat) had been removed from the Chapel and the name of King's could not be broadcast for security reasons." However, services of Lessons and Carols are now performed throughout the world, ranging from the Anglican high church to humble services in country churches and desert tents. For many people around the world, this service signals the true beginning of the Christmas season.

This evening's service adheres to the original format, with very few exceptions. Since a revision of the order of service in 1919, the service has always begun with the hymn "One in Royal David's City" as we will do this evening. While the carols have changed in the 84 years of the service's existence, the lessons and the prayers have remained unchanged. We thank you for your attendance and invite you to participate fully in this Service of Nine Lessons and Carols.



## *A Special Thanks*

### **PRESIDER**

Rev. Michael P Ferrick, Rector

### **READERS**

Sr. Mary Andrew Himes, RSM  
Christopher Beran, Seminarian for Diocese of Erie

### **INSTRUMENTALISTS**

Julia Jamieson, harp  
Isaac Ripple, oboe

### **SAINT PETER CATHEDRAL ADULT CHOIR**

Richard Robert Rossi, music director/organist  
Justin Gavio, assistant organist apprentice

\* = section leaders

#### **SOPRANO**

Jan Chrznowski  
\*Esther DeMary  
Allison Dorosch  
Cathy Kerner  
Samantha McIntyre  
Janice A. Niebauer  
Rachel Lowther  
+Grace Smrcka  
Mary Toy  
Sr. Michelle Wilwohl, OSB

#### **ALTO**

Carol Conrad  
Marilyn Gallagher  
Sheila Grove  
Pam Magerle  
Kylie Pellegrino  
\*Valerie Vollmer  
Peggy Wiebel

#### **TENOR**

Joe Greulich  
Chris Kerner  
Matthew Lowther  
Anthony Nunez  
\*Royce Strider

#### **BASS**

Nathan Demarest  
Dominic Flamini  
Gary Flick  
Michael Gallagher  
Justin Gavio  
Dennis Magerle  
\*Andrew Mahon  
Daniel A Niebauer

+ = St. Peter Cathedral College Singers  
Scholarship (SPCCS)

# *A Service of Nine Lessons & Carols*



*Prelude Music:* Julia Jamieson, harp & Isaac Ripple, oboe

*Organ Solo:* Vom Himmel Hoch Pachelbel (1653-1706)  
*From heaven high I come to you*

*Processional Hymn:* Once in Royal David's City *(sung by all)*  
Intonation solo  
*(Please stand when organ begins to play)*

Vs.1 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.

Vs.2 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.

Vs.3 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.

Vs. 4 *Sung by Choir*

Vs. 5 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;  
Where like stars his children crowned all in white shall wait around.

*Opening Prayer:* *(at the conclusion of the prayer please respond "Amen")*

*Intercessory Prayers*

*Please be seated*



*Congregational Hymn:* Silent Night W#379  
*(sung by all: please stand when the music begins)*

*Lesson V.I.I: Luke I.I: 8- 16*

While Shepherds Watch Richard Robert Rossi  
Echo Chorus:  
Rachel Lowther, Grace Smrcka, Pam Magerle,  
Matthew Lowther, Chris Kerner, Nathan Demarest, Dennis Magerle

"Interlude" from *A Ceremony of Carols* Britten (1913-1976)  
Julia Jamieson, harp

*Of Christ's Birth* David H. Williams  
V. Balulalow: Grace Smrcka, soprano

*Lesson V.I.I.I: Matthew I.I: 1- 12*

*Of Christ's Birth* David H. Williams  
III. Lullaby  
VI. Welcome Yule

*Lesson I.V: John I: 1- 14*

*(please stand for Lesson IX, then at the conclusion of the reading, please be seated)*

Love Came Down at Christmas Richard Robert Rossi

*Collect for Christmas and Final Blessing* *(please stand)*

*Congregational Hymn:* Hark the Herald Angels Sing W#387 *(sung by all)*

*Recessional Postlude*





*Lesson III: Isaiah 26: 2, 6, 7*

“The People That Walked in Darkness” from *Messiah*  
Andrew Mahon, baritone

Händel  
(1685-1759)

“Domine Deus” from *Gloria* Vivaldi (1678-1741)  
*O Lord God, Heavenly King, God the Father Almighty*  
Esther DeMary, soprano  
Isaac Ripple, oboe

*Lesson IV: Isaiah 63: 1-3a, 4a, 6-9*

Rorate Coeli Tve (1557—?)  
*Drop down, ye heavens, from above,  
and let the skies pour down righteousness:  
let the earth open, and let it bring forth a Saviour.*  
*V: The heavens declare the glory of God:  
and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.*  
*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son: and to the Holy Spirit;  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be: world without end. Amen.*

*Lesson V: Luke 1: 26-35, 38*

*Of Christès Birth* David H. Williams  
II. I Sing of a Maiden: Royce Strider, tenor

*Lesson VI: Luke 1: 1, 3-7*

*Of Christès Birth* David H. Williams  
IV. There is No Rose



*Lesson I: Genesis 1: 1-15*

*Of Christès Birth* David H. Williams (b. 1919)  
I. Good Day, Sir *Christèmas*

*Lesson I: Genesis 6: 1-18*

Conditor Alme Siderum Richard Robert Rossi (b. 1962)

*Creator of the stars of night  
Your people’s everlasting light,  
Jesus, Redeemer, save us all,  
And hear your servants when they call.*  
*Now grieving that the ancient curse  
Should doom to death a universe,  
You heal all those who need your grace  
And come to save our fallen race.*  
*You came when old world turned t’wards night,  
Appearing not in princely might,  
But born of Mary mother mild,  
Became the victim undefiled.*  
*At your great name majestic now,  
All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;  
All things in heav’n and earth adore,  
And own you, King forevermore.*  
*Great judge of all in that last day,  
Be present then with us we pray;  
Your scattered people Lord, unite,  
In vict’ry over Satan’s might!*  
*To God the Father, God the Son,  
And God the Spirit, Three in One,  
Praise, honor, might and glory be,  
From age to age eternally. Amen!*

*Tr. By John Mason Neale (1818-1866)*

