



A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS
IN
THE CHAPEL OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

S. THOMAS' COLLEGE
MOUNT LAVINIA

03rd December 2023

A Brief History of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols held in the Chapel of the Transfiguration.

Most people associated with S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia know that the School was founded in 1851 by James Chapman, 1st Anglican Bishop of Colombo on the model of Eton College, Windsor, where he himself had been a student and later a Fellow. However, it may not be common knowledge that links also exist between S. Thomas' and King's College, Cambridge where Bishop Chapman had been a King's Scholar. It was from King's, much later on, that Roy Henry Bowyer-Yin came to us as our Chaplain bringing with him the order for this Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols.

After his training for the priesthood at Cuddesdon, Roy Bowyer-Yin returned to King's to serve as Assistant Chaplain. From there he went on to be Chaplain of Hurstpierspoint School and then came to S. Thomas' on the invitation of Bishop Cecil D. Horsley, and took up duties on Boxing Day 1946. Father Yin was keen to develop the choral tradition in the Chapel of the Transfiguration that had been so ably maintained by Fr. T. W. Gilbert, R. B. W. Jayasekera, Fr A. J. Foster and Budd Jansze among others. By far Father Yin's most enduring legacy at STC has been the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols that he introduced and was held for the first time on 7th December 1947, based entirely on the King's College model. The Bidding Prayer used then and today is that which was composed by Dean Eric Milner-White the originator of the King's service in 1918, a prayer rich in theology and English prose. Father Yin in his Chapel Notes published in the College Magazine for that term writes, "It is good to record that there was a real atmosphere of devotion and at no time was there any feeling that the service was degenerating into a concert or recital, which is the ever-present danger of such a service."

In 1962, the year of Father Yin's departure from STC, one of his pupils Russel Bartholomeusz, who was destined to carry on his master's work, joined the tutorial staff. Mr. Bartholomeusz took over as organist in that year and later became the Choirmaster as well. For over forty years he proved to be a most worthy successor to his mentor. Between Father Yin leaving and Mr. Bartholomeusz taking over, the training of the choir was under the direction of an equally gifted choral musician Fr Lucian G. B. Fernando. Warden Neville de Alwis recognised the yeoman service of Mr Bartholomeusz by appointing him Precentor of the Chapel in 1997.

In 2004, on Mr. Bartholomeusz's retirement, one of his pupils and a past leader of the choir, Vinodh Senadeera took up the mantle of the Choirmaster cum Organist (appointed as the Precentor of the Chapel in 2019) continuing the tradition of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols for many years until his most untimely demise in January 2019.

In its 77th year this year, the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols continues to serve the Mission of God as a means of reaching out with the timeless message of hope that the Incarnation offers in the context of the best tradition of Anglican liturgical worship. May it continue to serve this function for many years to come.

ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

Choir only

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.

Words : Mrs. C.F. Alexander (1823 - 95)

Music : H.J. Gauntlett (1805 - 76) &

A.H. Mann (1850 - 1929)

Descant : Sir David Willcocks (1919 - 2015)

Choir only

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 Saviour holy.

All

And through all his wondrous childhood
He would honour 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.

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 heaven above;
And he leads his children on
To the place where he is gone.

All

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, in this season of Advent, let it be our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels; and in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and the Babe lying in a manger.

Therefore let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child; and let us make this Chapel glad with our carols of praise:

But first let us pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for unity and brotherhood within the Church he came to build, and especially in this our land. We give thanks for our Founder and our benefactors, and we pray also for all those near and dear to us.

And because this of all things would rejoice his heart, let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; 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 before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no man can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in the Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

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

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil; For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Almighty God bless us with His grace: Christ give us the joys of everlasting life: and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all. **Amen.**

UP! GOOD CHRISTIAN FOLK, AND LISTEN

DING-DONG; *ding*:
Ding-a-dong-a-ding:
Ding-dong, ding-dong:
Ding-a-dong-ding.

Up! good Christian folk, and listen
How the merry church-bells ring,
And from steeple bid good people
Come adore the newborn King:

Tell the story how from glory
God came down at Christmas-tide,
Bringing gladness, chasing sadness,
Show'ring blessings far and wide,

Born of mother, blest o'er other,
Ex Maria Virgine,
In a stable ('tis no fable),
Christus natus hodie.

Words : from Piae Cantiones, (1582)

Harmonised : Rev'd George R. Woodward (1848 - 1934)

FIRST LESSON

Reader: A MEMBER OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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

Genesis III 8–15

AND they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, “The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Thanks be to God

THIS IS THE TRUTH SENT FROM ABOVE

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

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

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.

And at this season of the year
Our blest Redeemer did appear,
He here did live, and here did preach,
And many thousands he did teach.

Thus he in love to us behaved,
To show us how we must be saved;
And if you want to know the way,
Be pleased to hear what he did say.

Words : English Traditional
Music : R. Vaughan Williams (1872 - 1958)

LO! HE COMES WITH CLOUDS DESCENDING

All **LO!** He comes with clouds descending,
Once for favoured sinners slain;
Thousand, thousand saints attending
Swell the triumph of his train:
Alleluia!
God appears, on earth to reign.

All Ev'ry eye shall now behold him
Robed in dreadful majesty;
Those who set at naught and sold him,
Pierced and nailed him to the tree,
Deeply wailing,
Shall the true Messiah see.

Choir only Those dear tokens of his passion
Still his dazzling body bears,
Cause of endless exultation
To his ransomed worshippers.
With what rapture
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

All Yea, amen, let all adore thee,
High on thine eternal throne;
Saviour, take the pow'r and glory,
Claim the kingdom as thine own.
O come quickly!
Alleluia! Come, Lord, Come.

Words : C. Wesley (1707 - 88) and J. Cennick (1718 - 55)

Melody : 18th century English melody

Last verse arranged : Sir David Willcocks (1919 - 2015)

SECOND LESSON

Reader: A MEMBER OF THE LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL

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

Genesis XXII 15–18

AND the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Thanks be to God

CAROL - *Sung by the choir alone; the congregation will be seated*

THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

THE holly and the ivy when they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood the holly bears the crown,

*O the rising of the sun, the running of the deer,
The playing of the organ sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears a prickle as sharp as any thorn
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ on Christmas Day in the morn,

The holly bears a bark as bitter as any gall
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ for to redeem us all,

The holly and the ivy when they are both full grown
Of all the trees that are in the wood the holly bears the crown.

Words : English Traditional
Music : French traditional carol
Arrangement : June Nixon (b. 1942)

THIRD LESSON

Reader: A MEMBER OF THE UPPER SECONDARY SCHOOL

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah

Isaiah IX 2, 6, 7

THE people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgement and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Thanks be to God.

CAROL - *Sung by the choir alone; the congregation will be seated*

இல்லாரில் இறைவன்

இல்லாரில் இறைவன் இருக்கின்றார்
நல்லாரின் இதயம் இதையறியும்
சொல்லாமல் இறைவன் வருகின்றார்
தள்ளாமல் அவரை அணைத்திடுங்கள்

மாளிகையில் அவர் இல்லை
குடிசையில் அவரை கண்டிடுங்கள்
ஏழையிலே பிறந்திருக்கும்
இல்லாரின் தெய்வத்தை தொடர்ந்திடுங்கள்

இருப்போரும், இல்லாரும்
வாழ்வில் பேதம் தானெதற்கு
மண்மீதில் விண்ணரசை
அமைத்திட வேண்டும் உழைத்திடுங்கள்

GOD LIVES IN THE POOR

*God lives in the poor
Good hearts recognize Him;
He comes unannounced,
Embrace Him without rejecting Him.*

*He is not in the palace;
Find Him in the lowly but.
Follow him the God of the poor;
Who is born in the midst of them.*

*Why the chasm of the haves and
The have nots in this world;
Come, work to build the
Heavenly kingdom on this earth*

Words & Music: The Rev'd Canon Joshua Ratnam (b. 1952)

A carol to honour the Malayaba Makkal community in Sri Lanka commemorating 200 years of presence in this land.

PEOPLE, LOOK EAST



All

PEOPLE, look east.

The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today;
Love, the Guest, is on the way.

All

Furrows, be glad.

Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish
People, look east and sing today;
Love the Rose, is on the way.

All

Stars, keep the watch.

When night is dim, one more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today;
Love, the Star, is on the way.

All

Angels announce

With shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today;
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Words : Eleanor Farjeon, (1881 - 1965)

Music : Traditional French Carol

Harmony : Martin Shaw (1875 - 1958)

DING! DONG! MERRILY ON HIGH

DING! dong! merrily on high
In heav'n the bells are ringing!
Ding! dong! merrily the sky
Is riv'n with angels singing.

Gloria! Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below,
Let steeple bells be swungen
And i o i o i o.
By priest and people sungen!

Pray you dutifully prime
Your Matin chime, ye ringers!
May you beautifully rime
Your eve-time song, ye singers!

Words : 16th Century French Carol
G.R. Woodward (1848 - 1934)
Arranged : Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)

FOURTH LESSON

Reader: THE SENIOR SACRISTAN

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown

Isaiah XI 1–4 & 6–9

AND there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fating together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Thanks be to God

CAROL - *Sung by the choir alone; the congregation will be seated*

A TENDER SHOOT

A TENDER shoot hath started Up from a root of grace,
As ancient seers imparted from Jesse's holy race.
It blooms without a blight,
Blooms in the cold bleak winter,
Turning darkness into light.

This shoot Isaiah taught us from Jesse's root should spring.
The Virgin Mary brought us the branch of which we sing.
Our God of endless might,
Gave her his child to save us,
Thus turning darkness into light.

Words : William Bartholomew (1793 - 1867)
Music : Otto Goldschmidt (1829 - 1907)

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

All **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.

Congregation 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.

Choir only 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.

All 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 splendours fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

Words : E.H. Sears (1810 - 76)

Melody : English traditional melody

adapted by Arthur Sullivan (1842 - 1900)

Last verse arranged : Sir David Willcocks (1919 - 2015)

FIFTH LESSON

Reader: THE DEPUTY HEAD PREFECT

The Angel Gabriel visits the Blessed Virgin Mary

St Luke I 26 – 33, 38

AND in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the Angel said unto her, fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said, behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Thanks be to God.



*Illustration : Mr. Parilajithan Ramanathan - Tutorial Staff of STC
Our God of endless might, gave her his child to save us. Thus turning darkness into light.*

TODAY THE VIRGIN

TODAY the Virgin comes to the cave
To give birth to the Word eternal.

*Rejoice O world! With the Angels and the Shepherds
Give glory to the Child! Alleluia!*

Mary, my wife, O Mary, my wife! What do I see?
I took you blameless before the Lord
From the priests of the Temple.
What do I see?

Joseph, the Bridegroom, O Joseph, the Bridegroom!
Do not fear.
God in His mercy has come down to earth,
He takes flesh in my womb for all the world to see.

Mary, my Bride, O Mary, my Bride! What do I see?
You, a virgin giving birth
Strange mystery!

Joseph, the Bridegroom, O Joseph, the Bridegroom!
Do not fear.
God in His mercy has come down to earth,
He takes flesh in my womb for all the world to see.

Warned by the Angel we believe
That Mary gives birth inexplicable
To the infant, Christ our God.

Words : Mother Thekla (1918 - 2011)
Music : John Tavener (1944 - 2013)

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL - *Sung by all, standing*

GABRIEL'S MESSAGE



All **THE** angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
“All hail”, said he to meek and lowly Mary,
“Most highly favoured maiden.” Gloria!

Lower Voices “I come from heav’n to tell the Lord’s decree:
A blessed virgin mother you shall be.
Your Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold,
Most highly favoured maiden.” Gloria!

Upper Voices Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head;
“To me be as it pleases God,” she said.
“My soul shall laud and magnify his holy name.”
Most highly favoured maiden, Gloria!

All Of her, Immanuel, the Christ, was born
In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
“Most highly favoured maiden.” Gloria!

Words & Music : Traditional Basque Carol

SIXTH LESSON

Reader: A MEMBER OF THE STAFF

St Matthew tells of Christ's Holy Birth

St Matthew I 18–23

NOW the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Thanks be to God.

CAROL - *Sung by the choir alone; the congregation will be seated*

දෙයිය දෙයිය දෙයිය!

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SLEEP MY DEAR ONE

*Sleep my dear one.
You, are the son of liberation
Sleep my dear one.
You are the prince of peace.*

*The milk that you drink, will one day
Turn to the blood that saves the world from sin.
You are the Son of God who redeems the world.
You are the King of Kings*

*You sleep in a manger made of hay
Lulling in your mothers bosom.*

*Words : The Rev'd Amal Fernando (b.1953)
Music : Suraj Peiris (b.1973)*

JOSEPH'S CAROL

LONG and weary was the journey,
Hard and dark the road we trod;
Deep enfolded in the stillness of the night
It seemed I heard the voice of God:
'Fear not, Joseph, weep not, Mary,
Travel onward through the darkness of night;
Bethlehem will see his glory:
Christ, Emmanuel, the Lord of light.'

*Ecce miraculum, ecce miraculum,
Here in a stable lies your heav'nly King,
Ecce miraculum, ecce miraculum,
Alleluia, alleluia hear the angels sing.*

Journey's end was just a stable bare,
Cold and lonely for a birth;
Ox and ass were our companions there
When God revealed himself on earth.
Shepherds came in awe and wonder,
Kneeling low beside his manger stall;
Angels singing, Wise men bringing
Gifts to lay before the Lord of all.

Words & Music : John Rutter (b.1945)

SEVENTH LESSON

Reader: AN OLD BOY

The Shepherds go to the manger

St Luke II 8–16

AND there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

Thanks be to God.

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL - *Sung by all, standing*

WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS



All **WHILE** shepherds watched their flocks by night,
All seated on the ground,
The angel of the Lord came down,
And glory shone around.

All ‘Fear not’, said he (for mighty dread
Had seized their troubled mind);
‘Glad tidings of great joy I bring
To you and all mankind.

Lower Voices ‘To you in David’s town this day
Is born of David’s line
A saviour, who is Christ the Lord;
And this shall be the sign:

Congregation ‘The heav’nly Babe you there shall find
In human view displayed,
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,
And in a manger laid.’

Choir only Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith
Appeared a shining throng
Of angels praising God, who thus
Addressed their joyful song:

All ‘All glory be to God on high,
And to the earth be peace;
Goodwill henceforth from heav’n to men
Begin and never cease.’

Words : Nahum Tate (1652 - 1715)
Tune : Este’s Psalter (1592)

EIGHTH LESSON

Reader: THE WARDEN

The Wise Men are led by the star to Jesus

St. Matthew II 1 – 11

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Judea: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

Thanks be to God.

I AM THE DAY

SOON to be born, soon to be born.

I am the day soon to be born

*I am alpha and Omega
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel!
O come, O come Emmanuel!*

I am the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

I am the sprig from the root of David,

I am the alpha and the omega,

I am the first and last, the first and last.

And the bright star of the morning.

Words : Revelation 22: 16, 13

Music : Jonarthan Dove (b. 1959)

CONGREGATIONAL CAROL *Sung by all, standing*

** During the singing of this Carol and the next, a collection will be taken.*

THE FIRST NOWELL

All **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 Israell!*

All 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:

Choir only 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:

Congregation This star drew nigh to the north-west,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay;

Choir only Then entered in those Wise Men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there in his presence
Both, gold and myrrh and frankincense:

All 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 mankind has bought:

Words and Music : Traditional 17th Cent

NINTH LESSON

Reader: THE LORD BISHOP OF COLOMBO

**The Congregation shall stand for this Lesson*

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation

St John I 1 – 14

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Thanks be to God

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

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 newborn 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.

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.

Words : C. Wesley (1707 - 88) and others

Music : F. Mendelssohn (1809 - 47)

Last verse : Sir David Willcocks (1919 - 2015)

COLLECT FOR ADVENT

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that on 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; through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen**

COLLECT FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him and to be born of a pure virgin: Grant that we being regenerate and made thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by the Holy Spirit; through the same Jesus Christ thy Son who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

CHRIST, who by his incarnation gathered in to one things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill, and make you partakers of the divine nature; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

ADESTE FIDELES

All **O COME** all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him,
Born the King of Angels:

Refrain *O come, let us adore him,*
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

All God of God,
Light of Light,
Lo! he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
Very God,
Begotten not created:

Choir only Child for us sinners
Poor and in a manger,
Fain we embrace thee, with awe and love;
Who would not love thee,
Loving us so dearly?

All Sing, choirs of Angels,
Sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above,
Glory to God
In the highest:

Words : 18th cent.

Translation : F. Oakley, W. T. Brooke, and others

Music : Anon. 18th Cent.

Last Verse : Sir David Willcocks (1919 - 2015)