



**SERVICE OF
LESSONS & CAROLS**



December 24, 2025

SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

The Eternal Word

John 1:1–5,14,16,18

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 were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ... And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ... No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.

"Of the Father's Love Begotten"

(Hymn 162, vv. 1–3)

**Of the Father's love begotten
ere the worlds began to be,
he is Alpha and Omega,
he the Source, the Ending he,**

**of the things that are, that have been,
and that future years shall see,
evermore and evermore!**

**O that birth forever blessed,
when the Virgin, full of grace,
by the Holy Ghost conceiving,
bore the Savior of our race;
and the babe, the world's Redeemer,
first revealed his sacred face,
evermore and evermore!**

**This is he whom heav'n-taught singers
sang of old with one accord,
whom the Scriptures of the prophets
promised in their faithful word;
now he shines, the long-expected;
let creation praise its Lord,
evermore and evermore!**

Words by Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348–413)

Tr. by John Mason Neale (1854) & Henry Williams Baker (1859)

Music by Charles Winfred Douglas (1916)

Hope in the Promised Son

Genesis 3:15

**"I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."**

Genesis 15:4–6

**And behold, the word of the LORD came to him:
"This man shall not be your heir; your very own son**

shall be your heir.” And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

2 Samuel 7:12–13

When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Isaiah 11:1–2

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit.
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 the fear of the LORD.

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

(Hymn 196)

**Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.
Israel’s Strength and Consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art,
Dear Desire of ev’ry nation,
Joy of every longing heart.
Joy to those who long to see Thee,**

**Dayspring from on high, appear;
Come, Thou promised Rod of Jesse,
Of Thy birth we long to hear!
O'er the hills the angels singing
News, glad tidings of a birth;
"Go to Him, your praises bringing;
Christ the Lord has come to earth."**

**Come to earth to taste our sadness,
He whose glories knew no end;
By His life He brings us gladness,
Our Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend.
Leaving riches without number,
Born within a cattle stall;
This the everlasting wonder,
Christ was born the Lord of all.**

**Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.**

Words for stanzas 1&4 by Charles Wesley (1744). Public Domain

Words for stanzas 2&3 by Mark E Hunt (1978). © Intervarsity Christian
Fellowship

Music by Rowland Hugh Pritchard (1855).

The Birth Foretold

Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the LORD himself will give you a sign.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear
a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Micah 5:2–5

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and shepherd his flock
in the strength of the LORD,

in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.
And he shall be their peace.

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

(Hymn 201)

**O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by:
yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.**

For Christ is born of Mary;

**and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wond'ring love.**

**O morning stars, together
proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
and peace to men on earth.**

**How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him still,
the dear Christ enters in.**

**O holy child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in;
be born in us today.**

**We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel.**

Words by Phillips Brooks (1868) . Music by Lewis H. Redner (1868).

Luke 1:26–38

In the sixth month [of Elizabeth's pregnancy with the prophet John] the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.

And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name 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 father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

And the angel answered 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 called holy—the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

(Hymn 194)

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here,
until the Son of God appear.
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, O come, thou Lord of might,
who to thy tribes, on Sinai's height,
in ancient times didst give the law
in cloud and majesty and awe.**

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free
thine own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell thy people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.**

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, thou Dayspring from on high,
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight.**

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

**O come, thou Key of David, come
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery.**

***Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.***

Latin antiphons (12th cent.); Latin hymn (1710);

Tr. by John Mason Neale (1851; Alt. 1951) . Music by Thomas Helmore (1856).

The Child Is Born

Isaiah 9:6–7

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Of the increase of his government and of peace
there will be no end,
on the throne of David and over his kingdom,
to establish it and to uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time forth and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

"Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come"

(Hymn 195)

**Joy to the world! The Lord is come:
let earth receive her King;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n and nature sing,
and heav'n, 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, 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, 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, wonders of his love.**

Words by Isaac Watts (1719).

Music by George Frederick Handel (1742); arr. by Lowell Mason (1836).

Matthew 1:18–25

Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

**“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel”**

(which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

“All My Heart This Night Rejoices”

(Hymn 217, vv. 1–3, 6–7)

**All my heart this night rejoices
as I hear far and near
sweetest angel voices.**

**“Christ is born,” their choirs are singing
till the air ev’rywhere
now with joy is ringing.**

**Forth today the Conqu’ror goeth,
who the foe, sin and woe,
death and hell, o’erthroweth.
God is man, man to deliver;
his dear Son now is one
with our blood forever.**

**Shall we still dread God’s displeasure,
who, to save, freely gave
his most cherished Treasure?**

**To redeem us, he hath given
his own Son from the throne
of his might in heaven.**

**Come, then, banish all your sadness,
one and all, great and small;
come with songs of gladness.
Love him who with love is glowing;
hail the star, near and far
light and joy bestowing.**

**Dearest Lord, thee will I cherish.
Though my breath fail in death,
yet I shall not perish,
but with thee abide forever
there on high, in that joy
which can vanish never.**

Words by Paul Gerhardt (1653); translated by Catherine Winkworth (1858, alt.).

Music by Johann G. Ebeling (1666).

Luke 2:1–7

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

“What Child Is This”

(Hymn 213)

**What child is this, who, laid to rest,
on Mary’s lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
haste, haste to bring him laud,
the babe, the son of Mary.**

**Why lies he in such mean estate,
where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through;
the cross be borne for me, for you:
hail, hail the Word made flesh,
the babe, the son of Mary.**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh;
come, peasant, king, to own him;
the King of kings salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high,
the virgin sings her lullaby:
joy, joy for Christ is born,
the babe, the son of Mary.**

Traditional English carol; adapted by William C. Dix (ca. 1865).

English melody (16th century).

Heaven and Earth Rejoice

Luke 2:8–14

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths 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,
and on earth peace among those with whom
he is pleased!"

"Angels We Have Heard on High"

(Hymn 214)

**Angels we have heard on high,
sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply
echo back their joyous strains.**

Gl—o—ria in excelsis Deo.

Gl—o—ria in excelsis Deo.

**Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
Say what may the tidings be,**

which inspire your heav'nly song?

Gl—o—ria in excelsis Deo.

Gl—o—ria in excelsis Deo.

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

Gl—o—ria in excelsis Deo.

Gl—o—ria in excelsis Deo.

Traditional French carol;

Traditional French melody; adapted by Edward S. Barnes (1937).

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

(Hymn 203)

**Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled!”**

**Joyful, all ye nations, rise,
join the triumph of the skies;
with th’angelic host proclaim,
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”**

***Hark! the herald angels sing,
“Glory to the newborn King.”***

**Christ, by highest heav'n adored,
Christ, the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold him come,
offspring of the Virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;
hail th'incarnate Deity,
pleased as man with men to dwell,
Jesus, our Emmanuel.**

***Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King."***

**Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
ris'n 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 newborn King."***

Words by Charles Wesley (1739, 1753; Alt.).

Music by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy (1840); arr. by William H.

Cummings (1856)

Matthew 2:1–12

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;

and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

“And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

(Hymn 208)

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

**God of God, Light of Light;
lo, he abhors not the Virgin's womb;
very God, begotten, not created;
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.***

**Sing, choirs of angels,
sing in exultation,
sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;
glory to God in the highest;
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.***

**Yea, Lord, we greet thee,
born this happy morning:
Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n;
Word of the Father,
late in flesh appearing;
*O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord.***

Latin hymn attr. to John Francis Wade (1751);
tr. by Frederick Oakeley (1841; alt.).

"Thou Who Wast Rich Beyond All Splendor"

(Hymn 230)

**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 becomes poor.**

**Thou who art God beyond all praising,
all for love's sake becamest man;
stooping so low, but sinners raising,
heavenward 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.**

Words by Frank Houghton (1894–1972).

French carol melody arranged by Charles Herbert Kitson (1930).

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Pastoral Reflection

Children of the Father

John 1:1–5,9–13

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 were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

“Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

(Hymn 162, vv. 4–5)

**O ye heights of heav’n, adore him;
angel hosts, his praises sing;
all dominions, bow before him,
and extol our God and King;
let no tongue on earth be silent,
ev’ry voice in concert ring,
evermore and evermore!**

**Christ, to thee, with God the Father,
and, O Holy Ghost, to thee,
hymn, and chant, and high thanksgiving,
and unwearied praises be,
honor, glory, and dominion,
and eternal victory,
evermore and evermore!**

Words by Aurelius Clemens Prudentius (348–413)

Tr. by John Mason Neale (1854) & Henry Williams Baker (1859)

Music by Charles Winfred Douglas (1916)

Benediction




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