

*Christmas Eve  
Lessons and Carols*



*Emmanuel Episcopal Church*

## **A Bidding Prayer**

Dear People of God: In this Christmas Season, let it be our duty and delight to hear once more the message of the Angels, to go to Bethlehem and see the Son of God lying in a manger.

Let us hear and heed in Holy Scripture the story of God's loving purpose from the time of our rebellion against him until the glorious redemption brought to us by his holy Child Jesus, and let us make these places glad with our carols of praise.

But first, let us pray for the needs of his whole world, for peace and justice on earth, for the unity and mission of the Church for which he died, and especially for his Church in our country and in this city.

And because he particularly loves them, let us remember in his name the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed, the sick and those who mourn, the lonely and unloved, the aged and little children, as well as all those who do not know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let us remember before God his pure and lowly Mother, and that whole multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in Jesus, we are one for evermore.

And now, to sum up all these petitions, let us pray in the words which Christ himself has taught us, saying:

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 Almighty God bless us with his grace; Christ give us the joys of everlasting life; and to the fellowship of the citizens above, may the King of Angels bring us all. *Amen.*

## **First Lesson from Genesis 3: 8–19**

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

**8** Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. **9** But the LORD God called to the man, “Where are you?”

**10** He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”

**11** And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

**12** The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.”

**13** Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

**14** So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,

“Cursed are you above all livestock  
and all wild animals!

You will crawl on your belly  
and you will eat dust  
all the days of your life.

**15** And I will put enmity  
between you and the woman,  
and between your offspring and hers;  
he will crush your head,  
and you will strike his heel.”

16 To the woman he said,

“I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;  
with painful labor you will give birth to children.  
Your desire will be for your husband,  
and he will rule over you.”

17 To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

“Cursed is the ground because of you;  
through painful toil you will eat food from it  
all the days of your life.

18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you,  
and you will eat the plants of the field.

19 By the sweat of your brow  
you will eat your food  
until you return to the ground,  
since from it you were taken;  
for dust you are  
and to dust you will return.”

**Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

*Refrain:*

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, thou Dayspring come and cheer,  
our spirits by thy advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadow put to flight.

*Refrain*

O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind;  
Bid thou our sad divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace.

*Refrain*

### **Prayer**

Father, we pray for your holy catholic Church;  
That we all may be one.

*Silence*

### **Second Lesson from Genesis 22: 15–18**

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

**15** The angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time **16** and said, “I swear by myself, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, **17** I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, **18** and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”

### **Hymn: Go Tell It On the Mountain**

*Refrain:* Go, Tell It On The Mountain,  
Over the hills and everywhere;  
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 shown 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**

Grant that every member of the Church may truly  
and humbly serve you;  
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

*Silence*

### **Third Lesson from Isaiah 9: 2–7**

*The prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour.*

- 2** The people walking in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of deep darkness  
a light has dawned.
- 3** You have enlarged the nation  
and increased their joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as people rejoice at the harvest,  
as warriors rejoice  
when dividing the plunder.
- 4** For as in the day of Midian's defeat,  
you have shattered  
the yoke that burdens them,  
the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor.
- 5** Every warrior's boot used in battle  
and every garment rolled in blood  
will be destined for burning,  
will be fuel for the fire.
- 6** For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
- 7** Of the greatness of his government and peace  
there will be no end.



He will reign on David's throne  
and over his kingdom,  
establishing and upholding it  
with justice and righteousness  
from that time on and forever.  
The zeal of the LORD Almighty  
will accomplish this.

### **Hymn: Joy To The World**

Joy to the world  
Joy to the world  
Joy to the world! The lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King.  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing, and  
heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world  
Joy to the world  
Joy to the world! 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.

Joy to the world, now we sing Let the earth receive her king  
Joy to the world, now we sing Let the angel voices ring  
Joy to the world, now we sing Let men their songs employ  
Joy to the world, now we sing Repeat the sounding joy  
Oh oh

He rules the world with truth and grace,  
And makes the nations prove  
The light of his righteousness  
And wonders of his love, and wonders of his love, and wonders,  
wonders of his love.

And wonders, wonders, of His love  
Joy to the world, now we sing Let the earth receive her king  
Joy to the world, now we sing Let the angel voices ring

### **Prayer**

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;  
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

*Silence*

## **Fourth Lesson from Isaiah 11: 1–9**

*The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.*

### **The Branch From Jesse**

**1** A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;  
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

**2** The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—  
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,  
the Spirit of counsel and of might,  
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—

**3** and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,  
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

**4** but with righteousness he will judge the needy,  
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;  
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

**5** Righteousness will be his belt  
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

**6** The wolf will live with the lamb,  
the leopard will lie down with the goat,  
the calf and the lion and the yearling[[a](#)] together;  
and a little child will lead them.

**7** The cow will feed with the bear,  
their young will lie down together,  
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

**8** The infant will play near the cobra's den,  
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.

**9** They will neither harm nor destroy  
on all my holy mountain,  
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD  
as the waters cover the sea.

### **Hymn: Lo How a Rose e'er Blooming**

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

Isaiah 'twas foretold it, the Rose I have in mind;  
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.  
To show God's love aright, she bore to man a Savior,  
When half spent was the night.

Oh Savior, child of Mary, who felt our human woe  
Oh Savior, King of Glory, who dost our weakness know.  
Bring us at length we pray, to the bright courts of heaven  
And to the endless day.

### **Prayer**

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the  
world;  
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

*Silence*

## **Fifth Lesson from the Gospel of Luke 1: 26–38**

*The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

### **The Birth of Jesus Foretold**

**26** In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, **27** to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. **28** The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

**29** Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. **30** But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. **31** You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. **32** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, **33** and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

**34** “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

**35** The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. **36** Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. **37** For no word from God will ever fail.”

**38** “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

### **Hymn: What Child Is This?**

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?

So bring him incense, gold and myrrh,  
come, peasant king, to own him;  
the King of kings salvation brings,  
let loving hearts enthrone him.

This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing  
haste, haste, to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary.

Oh, raise, raise a song on high,  
His mother sings her lullaby.  
Joy, oh joy for Christ is born,  
The Babe, the son of Mary.

This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing  
haste, haste, to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary.

What Child is this who, laid to rest,  
on Mary's lap, on Mary's lap He is sleeping?

This, this is Christ the King,  
whom shepherds guard and angels sing  
haste, haste, to bring him laud,  
the babe, the son of Mary.  
The babe, the son of Mary  
The son of Mary.

## **Prayer**

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;  
That our works may find favor in your sight.

*Silence*

## **Sixth Lesson from Luke 2: 1–7**

*St Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.*

### **The Birth of Jesus**

**2** In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. **2** (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) **3** And everyone went to their own town to register.

**4** So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. **5** He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. **6** While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, **7** and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

### **Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem**

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.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given.  
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.  
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 to us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels, the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.

### **Prayer**

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;  
That they may be delivered from their distress.

*Silence*



## **Seventh Lesson from Luke 2: 8–16**

*The shepherds go to the manger.*

**8** And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. **9** An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. **11** Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. **12** This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

**13** Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

**14** “Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

**15** When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

**16** So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

### **Hymn: Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!  
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled. "  
Joyful, all the nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;  
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"  
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die.  
Born to raise sons of earth, born to give him second birth.  
Veiled in flesh that Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity.  
Pleased as man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!  
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.  
Christ by highest heaven adored; Christ the everlasting lord!  
Come desire of nations come, fix in us thy humble home.  
Come desire of nations come, fix in us thy humble home.

### **Prayer**

Give to the departed eternal rest;  
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

*Silence*

## **Eighth Lesson from the Gospel of Matthew 2: 1–12**

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

### **The Magi Visit the Messiah**

**2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem **2** and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

**3** When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. **5** “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

**6** ““But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for out of you will come a ruler  
who will shepherd my people Israel.””

**7** Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. **8** He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

**9** After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. **11** On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. **12** And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

## **Hymn: We Three Kings Of Orient Are**

We three kings of orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

### *Refrain*

O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright,  
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.

Born a babe on Bethlehem's plain, Gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never, Over us all to reign.

### *Refrain*

Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and sacrifice.  
Heaven sings Alleluia, Alleluia Earth replies.

### *Refrain*

## **Prayer**

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;  
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

## *Silence*

## **Ninth Lesson from the Gospel of John 1: 1–14**

*St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.*

### **The Word Became Flesh**

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was with God in the beginning. **3** Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. **4** In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

**6** There was a man sent from God whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. **8** He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

**9** The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. **11** He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **12** Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— **13** children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. **14** The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

### **Hymn: It Came Upon The Midnight Clear**

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.

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 lonely plains, they bend on hovering wing;  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophets seen of old,  
When with the ever circling years comes round the age of gold.  
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,  
And our whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.

### **Prayer**

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

### *Silence*

O God, you have caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light: Grant that we, who have known the mystery of that Light on earth, may also enjoy him perfectly in heaven; where with you and the Holy Spirit he lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

## **Hymn: Silent Night**

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
Round yon Virgin Mother and child , Holy infant so tender and mild.  
Sleep in heavenly peace; Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight.  
Glories stream from heav'n afar, heavenly host sing Alleluia;  
Christ the Savior is born; Christ the Savior is born.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light.  
Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming  
grace;  
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.