

**Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols
Thursday, December 24, 2020
2:00 pm**

**Rev. Stephen Kendrick, Senior Minister
Daniel Lawlor, Ministerial Intern
Dr. Robert August, Director of Music
With the First Church Choir and Voices Boston
Daniel P. Ryan, Conductor
Robert Winkley, Pianist
William Thorpe, Soloist
and Triton Brass**

Order of Service

Gathering Music In dulci jubilo Dietrich Buxtehude
 Robert August, organ
 Tendre amour Jean-Philippe Rameau
 Triton Brass

Words from Isaiah Rev. Stephen Kendrick

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light:
those who lived in a land of deep darkness--
on them light has shined.
For a child has been born for us,
Authority rests upon his shoulders:
And he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Parent, Prince of Peace.

Carol Once in Royal David's City

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed;
so may we when life turns hard find in love our stay and guard.

Shepherds came to see this wonder, and to kneel in holy awe
at that lowly stable manger where the infant lay on straw;
so may we this happy morn honor every child that's born.

From afar three magi journeyed to that stable rude and bare,
to pay homage to the infant, offering gifts both rich and rare;
so may we our gifts bestow, whether we be high or low

Lighting the Yule Log The Weaver family

Call to Worship Daniel Lawlor

Carol O Come All Ye Faithful

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.

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:
"Glory to God in the highest!" [Refrain]

Christmas Greeting

Rev. Kendrick

Reading "Christmas Returns," by Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman

Daniel Lawlor

Lesson One The Angel Appears to Mary

Joan Collins

A Time for all Sages

Rev. Kendrick

Carol 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.

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,
Let praises ring: from God they bring
Goodwill to all on earth.

Lesson Two The Birth

Janine Mudge-Mullen

Carol The First Nowell

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 Israel.

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. [Refrain]

And by the light of that same star
three Magi came from country far;
to seek a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went. [Refrain]

Lesson Three	The Shepherds Hear the Angel	Barbara Martin
Music	Die Hirten an der Krippe (The Shepherds at the Manger) From <i>Weihnachtsbaum</i> <i>Robert Winkley, pianist</i>	Franz Liszt
Reading	"Each Night a Child is Born," by Sophia Lyon Fahs	Daniel Lawlor
Music	Canzona per sonare No. 2 <i>Triton Brass</i>	Giovanni Gabrieli
Lesson Four	The Manger	Fern Beck
Prayer		Daniel Lawlor
Music	O Holy Night <i>William Thorpe, soloist</i>	Adolphe Adam
Reflection	"Come On In"	Rev. Kendrick
Time of Offertory		Rev. Kendrick

And now the ushers will wait upon us for our special Christmas Offering. Our special collection tonight will be for Lend a Hand, a long-time local charity that offers short term financial help to Boston citizens in need. This collection will work to ease the suffering of people in our community.

On this one special night, we can support these wonderful people that are out doing the work most of us don't have the time to do. So tap into your Christmas spirit. Think about what you hope someone spent on your Christmas present, and please, be as generous as you can. If you wish, you can contribute using your smart phone. Just text the dollar amount (5, 10, 20, etc.) to **(617) 917-5610**. You will receive an emailed receipt.

Again, the number is (617) 917- 5610.

If you are sending in a check, please make it payable to First Church in Boston, and add on the memo line "Christmas Eve" or "Lend a Hand." Let us be a blessing to others.

Thank you for your exuberant generosity.

Offertory *Away and In Danger*
First Church Choir and Voices Boston
Daniel P. Ryan, conductor

Shawn Kirchner

Carol *It Came Upon a 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, to all good will,
from heaven the news we bring."
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 lowly plains,
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

But with the woes of war and strife
The world has suffered long;
Beneath the angelstrain have rolled
Two thousand years of wrong;
And we who fight the wars hear not
the love song which they bring.
O hush the noise of battle strife,
And hear the angels sing.

Lesson Five *The Wise Men Come*

Margaret Moody

The Imperishable Flame

Rev. Kendrick

We invite you to light a candle here, for reflection and to invite in the spirit of the carol,
Silent Night!

Carol *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 heaven afar;
Heav'nly hosts sing "alleluia!"
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night!
Child of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Meditation on the Light

Daniel Lawlor

Carol Joy to the World

Joy to the world! the Word is come;
Let earth with praises ring.
Let ev'ry heart prepare a 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! Now gladness reigns;
Let hearts 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;
Let righteousness its glories show
As far as love is found
As far as love is found
As far, as far as love is found.

Benediction

Rev. Kendrick

May you have the Gladness of Christmas which is hope.
May you have the spirit of Christmas which is peace,
And may you have the heart of Christmas which is love.
Merry Christmas! Let us go in Peace.

Postlude Es ist ein Ros entsprungen *Triton Brass*

Johannes Brahms

