



The Second Sunday of Advent

Church of the Holy Comforter – Vienna, Virginia
Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols

December 8, 2024 at 5:00 P.M.

THE ENTRANCE

All stand.

THE ADVENT PROSE *Rorate caeli*
Sung by the Choirs, in procession.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity for ever:
thy holy cities are a wilderness, Sion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation:
our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

We have sinned, and are as an unclean thing, and we all do fade as a leaf:
and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away; thou hast hid thy face from us:
and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen; that ye may know me and believe me:
I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior:
and there is none that can deliver out of my hand.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, my salvation shall not tarry:
I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions: Fear not, for I will save thee:
for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Redeemer.

Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness.

CAROL, HYMN 54 "Savior of the nations, come!"
Sung by all, standing.

Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland

THE BIDDING

Officiant Dear People of God: In the season of Advent, it is our responsibility and joy to prepare ourselves 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 look forward to the yearly remembrance of his birth with hymns and songs 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:

People

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.

Officiant 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.

People **Amen.**

THE LESSONS

THE FIRST LESSON [*The people are seated.*]

Genesis 3:1-15

Adam and Eve rebel against God and are cast out of the Garden of Eden.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

ANTHEM: "The truth from above"

Ralph Vaughan Williams

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

The first thing which I do relate
Is that God did man create;
The next thing which to you I'll 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 that 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 pleas'd to hear what he did say.

CAROL, HYMN 60 "Creator of the stars of night"

Conditor alme siderum

Sung by all, standing.



THE SECOND LESSON [*The people are seated.*]

Isaiah 40:1-11

God comforts his people and calls on them to prepare for redemption.

"Comfort, O comfort my people," says your God. "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins." A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and

gently lead the mother sheep

ANTHEM: "How Lovely are the Messengers"

Felix Mendelssohn

How lovely are the messengers that preach us the gospel of peace!
To all the nations is gone forth the sound of their words,
throughout all the lands their glad tidings.

CAROL, HYMN 67 "Comfort, comfort ye my people"

Psalm 42

Sung by all, standing.



THE THIRD LESSON [*The people are seated.*]

Isaiah 6:1-11

God reveals his glory to the prophet and calls him to be his messenger.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!" And he said, "Go and say to this people: 'Keep listening, but do not comprehend; keep looking, but do not understand.' Make the mind of this people dull, and stop their ears, and shut their eyes, so that they may not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and comprehend with their minds, and turn and be healed." Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" And he said: "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is utterly desolate."

ANTHEM: "Let all mortal flesh keep silence"

Gustav Holst

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Ponder nothing earthly minded,
For with blessing in his hand
Christ our Lord to earth descendeth,
Our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
In the Body and the Blood
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descendeth
From the realms of endless day,
That the powers of hell may vanish
As the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six-winged seraph;
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the Presence,
As with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluya, Alleluya,
Alleluya, Lord Most High!"

CAROL, HYMN 70 "Herald, sound the note of judgment"

Herald, Sound

Sung by all, standing.



THE FOURTH LESSON [*The people are seated.*]

Isaiah 11:1-9

The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon the Holy One.

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

ANTHEM: "O Emmanuel"

John Stainer

O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the Desire of all nations,
and their Salvation: Come and save us, O Lord, our God.

CAROL, HYMN 597 "O day of peace that dimly shines"
Sung by all, standing.

Jerusalem



THE FIFTH LESSON [*The people are seated.*]

Isaiah 65:17-25

God promises a new heaven and a new earth.

I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress. No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—and their descendants as well. Before they call I will answer, while they are yet speaking I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

ANTHEM: "We wait for thy loving kindness"

William McKie

We wait for thy loving kindness, O God: in the midst of thy temple. Alleluia.
O God, according to thy Name, so is the praise unto the world's end.
Thy right hand is full of righteousness: Alleluia.
We wait for thy loving kindness, O God: in the midst of thy temple.
O Lord send us now prosperity. Amen.

CAROL, HYMN 73 "The King shall come when morning dawns"
Sung by all, standing.

St. Stephen



THE SIXTH LESSON [*The people are seated.*]

Luke 1:26-38

The Angel Gabriel announces to the Virgin Mary that she will bear the Son of the Most High.

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him 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 ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to 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 holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

ANTHEM: "Hail! Blessed Virgin Mary"

Charles Wood

Hail! Blessed Virgin Mary!	Ave, ave Maria!	Archangels chant, Osanna,
For so when he did meet thee	To gladden priest and people,	And, Holy, Holy, Holy,
Spake mighty Gabriel,	The angelus shall ring	Before the Infant born
And thus we greet thee.	From every steeple,	Of thee, thou lowly,
Come weal, come woe,	To sound his virgin birth,	Aye—maiden child of
Our hymn shall never vary.	Alleluia!	Joachim and Anna;
Hail! Blessed Virgin Mary!	Ave, ave Maria!	Archangels chant, Osanna.
Hail! Blessed Virgin Mary!	Ave, ave Maria!	Archangels chant, Osanna.

CAROL, HYMN 265 “The angel Gabriel from heaven came”
Sung by all, standing.

Gabriel's Message

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

THE COLLECT

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Officiant Let us pray.

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

People **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

Officiant May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin.

People **Amen.**

Officiant May he whose second Coming in power and great glory we await, make you steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and constant in love.

People **Amen.**

Officiant May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life.

People **Amen.**

Officiant And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever.

People **Amen.**

CAROL, HYMN 56 “O come, O come, Emmanuel”
Sung by all.

Veni, veni, Emmanuel

CLOSING VOLUNTARY: Prelude on *Veni, veni, Emmanuel* (Hymn 56)

David Boulware-Kelley



The Festival of Lessons and Carols format is based on an order drawn up by Edward White Benson, later Archbishop of Canterbury but at that time Bishop of Truro, in Cornwall, for use on Christmas Eve 1880. Tradition says that he organized a 10:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve in a temporary wooden shed serving as his cathedral. The original liturgy has since been adapted and used by other churches all over the world. The best-known version is broadcast annually from King's College, Cambridge, on Christmas Eve. The first Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at King's was held in 1918. It was conceived by Eric Milner-White, the Dean of the College, whose experience as an army chaplain had led him to believe that more imaginative worship was needed by the Church of England. The order of service was adapted from the order created by Benson for Truro Cathedral thirty-eight years earlier. Milner-White also created an Advent Festival of Lessons and Carols, but distinguished the purpose of the Advent service as “not to celebrate Christmas, but to expect it.”

*It is our hope and prayer that this evening's Festival of Lessons and Carols will be a blessing to you in your own Advent journey.
Come, Lord Jesus!*