

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON
THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF EAST CAROLINA



A FESTIVAL OF NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS

DECEMBER 22, 2024

5:30PM

*OPEN DOORS. OPEN HEARTS. OPEN HANDS.
WE WILL WELCOME ALL TO LIVE GOD'S MISSION, TEACH CHRIST'S LOVE AND
TRANSFORM OUR COMMUNITY BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.*

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON

Welcome to St. Paul's Episcopal Church, celebrating 166 years of service and worship in Wilmington.

Voluntary

Divinum Mysterium
Vom Himmel hoch
Es ist ein Ros entsprungen

Wilbur Held
Johann Pachelbel
Johannes Brahms

Please stand.

Hymn in Procession 102

Once in Royal David's City

Descant: Wilcocks

Verse one: *Solo*

Verse two: *Sung by the Choir*

Remaining Verses: *Choir and Congregation*

Bidding Prayer

Rector: Beloved in Christ, be it this Christmas season our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear against the message of the angels; 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. 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 church 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 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 in body and in mind 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 this 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:

All: 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 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, forever and ever. Amen.

Rector: 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.

Please be seated.

Choir Carol

On Christmas Night

Ralph Vaughan Williams

On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring;

On Christmas night all Christians sing, to hear the news the angels bring:

News of great joy, news of great mirth,

News of our merciful King's birth.

When sin departs before Thy grace,

Then life and health come in its place;

When sin departs before Thy grace,

Then life and health come in its place;

Angels and men with joy may sing, All for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light Which made the angels sing this night;

All out of darkness we have light Which made the angels sing this night:

“Glory to God and peace to men, Now and forevermore. Amen.”

The First Lesson: Genesis 3: 8–15; 17–19

A Choral Scholar reads the lesson.

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

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. And unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Choir Carol

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

Elizabeth Poston

The tree of life my soul hath seen, laden with fruit and always green:
The tree of nature fruitless be compared with Christ the apple tree.
His beauty doth all things excel: by faith I know, but ne'er can tell,
The glory which I now can see in Jesus Christ the apple tree.
For happiness I long have sought, and pleasure dearly have I bought:
I missed of all: but now I see 'tis found in Christ the apple tree.
I'm weary with my former toil. Here I will sit and rest awhile:
under the shadow I will be of Jesus Christ the apple tree.
This fruit doth make my soul to thrive, it keeps my dying faith alive;
Which makes my soul in haste to be with Jesus Christ the apple tree.

The Second Lesson: Genesis 22: 15–18

A member of the Altar Guild reads the lesson.

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

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Choir Carol

A tender shoot

Otto Goldschmidt

A tender shoot has 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 our 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 this child to save us,
Thus turning darkness into light.

The Third Lesson Isaiah 9: 2; 6–7

A member of the church staff reads the lesson.

The prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour.

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 judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Please stand.

Congregational Carol 105

God rest you merry, gentlemen

God Rest You Merry

Please be seated.

The Fourth Lesson: Isaiah 11: 1–3a; 4a; 6–9

A church warden reads the lesson.

The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

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 fatling 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Please stand.

Congregational Carol 115

What child is this?

Greensleeves

Please be seated.

The Fifth Lesson: Luke 1: 26–35; 38

A child reads the lesson.

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Bogoróditse Dyévo, ráduisya,
 Blagodátnaya Mariye, Gospód s Tobóyu.
 Blagoslovyéna Ty v zhenákh,
 i blagoslovyén plod chryéva tvoyevó,
 yáko Spása rodilá yesí dush náshikh.

(English Translation)

Rejoice, virgin mother of God,
 Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.
 Blessed are you among women,
 and blessed is the fruit of your womb,
 for you have borne the Saviour of our souls.

The Sixth Lesson: Luke 2: 1; 3–7

The Mayor of Wilmington reads the lesson.

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

It came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, everyone into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Please stand.

Congregational Carol 78

O little town of Bethlehem

Forest Green

Please be seated.

The Seventh Lesson: Luke 2: 8–16

The Organist and Director of Music reads the lesson.

The shepherds go to the manger.

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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Clear in the darkness a light shines in Bethlehem: Angels are singing, their sound fills the air.

Wise men have journeyed to greet their Messiah; but only a mother and baby lie there.

'Ave Maria, ave Maria': Hear the soft lullaby the angel hosts sing.

'Ave Maria, ave Maria, Maiden, and mother of Jesus our King'.

Where are his courtiers, and who are his people? Why does he bear neither sceptre nor crown?
Shepherds his courtiers, the poor for his people, with peace as his sceptre and love for his crown.

Refrain

What though your treasures are not gold or incense? Lay them before him with hearts full of love.

Praise to the Christ child, and praise to his mother who bore us a Saviour by grace from above.

Refrain

The Eighth Lesson: Matthew 2: 1–12

A member of the Daughters of the King reads the lesson.

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

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 Juda: 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 had 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. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Please stand.

Congregational Carol 128

We three kings of Orient are

Three Kings of Orient

Please remain standing for the reading of the Ninth Lesson.

The Ninth Lesson: John 1: 1–14

The Pastoral Associate reads the lesson.

St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

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: who 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.

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

Congregational Carol 83

*O come, all ye faithful (verses 1-3)
During the singing of this hymn, an offering will be collected.*

Adeste fideles

Officiant: The Lord be with you.
People: *And with thy spirit.*
Officiant: Let us pray.

O God, who makest us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only son, Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him, when he shall come to be our judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

May He who by his incarnation gathered into 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.*

Congregational Carol 87

Hark! the herald angels sing

Mendelssohn

The Dismissal

Officiant: Let us go forth in the name of the Christ child.
People: *Thanks be to God.*

Voluntary

In Dulci Julibo, BWV 729

J. S. Bach

† † †
Service Participants

Officiant
The Reverend Caleb J. Lee

Vergers
Leon Tillery

Crucifers
Cabe Lee
Louise Joyner

Gospel Book Bearer
Jeffrey Hughes

Torchbearers
Hazel Lee
Izzy Lee

Music
Brendan Conner
The Choir of St. Paul's

Lectors

Leza Vass
Sally Pope

Meaghan Thomas
Anne O'Dell

Hazel Rhett Lee
The Honorable Bill Saffo

Brendan Conner
Gail Gallaher

The Reverend A. Michael Singer

Ushers

Don Bobo
Trish Arnold
Midge Silberman

ST. PAUL'S WELCOMES YOU

We are glad you are with us today. If you are new to St. Paul's, please fill out a guest card and place it in the offering plate or give it to a greeter or an usher. Here are some quick facts that may be helpful.

Welcome: All are welcome to receive communion. If you prefer not to receive, you can remain seated, or come forward with your arms crossed to receive a blessing. If you are allergic to wheat products, gluten-free communion bread is available. Please let your request be known to the priest as you approach the altar rail.

Help: Please see any of our ushers for assistance when you enter the worship area.

Handicapped Parking: Our facility is handicapped accessible with multiple handicapped parking spaces available in the lot off Market Street and the lot off Princess Street. Handicap ramps serve both parking lots.

Live-Streamed: Our service is live-streamed on YouTube on Sundays at 10:30 am Please subscribe to St. Paul's on YouTube to view live-streamed services and concerts.

Masks: All may, none must, some should.

Worship: St. Paul's follows the services outlined in the Book of Common Prayer 1979. The services include Old and New Testament readings, a reading from the Gospel, a sermon and traditional communion.

Children: All children are welcome and encouraged to attend any of our services.

Worship Kits: Bags and boxes are located in the back of the church for different ages to use in the pew, including our children's worship bulletin, *The Sunday Paper*. Please return when church is over.

Nursery: The nursery is open most Sundays from 9:15 am to Noon upstairs in the Children's wing. The nursery is for infants to age 5.

Sunday School: Most Sundays from 9:30-10:15 am upstairs in the Children's Wing for ages 4-11.

Episcopal Youth Community

(EYC): Most Sundays from 9:30-10:15 am in the library for 6th grade and older.



16 N. 16th Street, Wilmington, NC 28401 | (910) 762-4578 | www.specchurch.com

Admin Office Hours: Mon-Thur 9 am-4 pm, Fri 9 am-1 pm

Finance Office Hours: Mon, Wed-Thurs 9 am-4 pm

Bulletin & E-news submissions: admin@specchurch.com (Deadline Mondays, 5:00 pm)

The Right Reverend Robert Skirving, Bishop
The Reverend Caleb J. Lee, Rector
The Reverend A. Michael Singer, Pastoral Associate
Brendan Conner, Organist and Director of Music
Diane Matz-Kane, Finance Assistant
Meaghan Thomas, Children's Ministry Coordinator
Isaac McDowell, Associate for Youth and Parish Life

St. Paul's 2024 Vestry

Anne O'Dell, Rector's Warden
Steve Haughey, People's Warden
Tori Cannon, Clerk
Scott Sheble, Treasurer

Steve Bucci | Ashley Eason | Barbara Ellington-Banks | Carol Field
Lisa Sanders-Park | Denise Sheehan | David Tousignant | Phillip Weiss