

First Baptist Church  
Lexington, NC  
The Forty- Eighth Annual  
Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

December 11, 2022

Third Sunday of Advent

**Prelude**

"A Christmas Scherzo"

*arr. Don*

*Sebesky*

**Christian Greetings**

Dr. Ray N.

Howell III

**Offertory**

"Wexford Carol"

*arr. David*

*Michael Hyde*

**Processional**

"Once in Royal David's City"

*arr. Bruce W.*

*Tippette*

(Solo) Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed.  
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for His bed:  
Mary was that mother mild. Jesus Christ her little child.

(Choir only) He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,  
And His shelter was a stable, and His cradle was a stall:  
With the poor and meek and lowly lived on earth, our Savior holy.

(Congregation and Choir) Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by,  
We shall see Him; but in heaven, set at God's right hand on high;  
When like stars His children crowned all in white shall wait around.

And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own redeeming love;  
For that child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above,  
And He leads His children on to the place where He has gone.

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

Cate Pyle

**Bidding Prayer**

Dr. Ray N. Howell

III

**First Lesson**

Robert Adams

**THE LORD INVITES ABRAM TO COUNT THE STARS IN THE SKY**

A Reading from the 15<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Genesis

**Anthem**

"I Wonder As I Wander"  
Brian Walker, Soloist

*arr. Krogstad*

I wonder as I wander out under the sky  
That Jesus my Savior did come for to die

For poor on'ry people like you and like I  
I wonder as I wander out under the sky

I wonder as I wander out under the sky  
That Jesus my Savior did come for to die  
For poor on'ry people like you and like I  
I wonder as I wander out under the sky

I wonder as I wander out under the sky

**Second Lesson**

Phyllis Penry

**THE PEOPLE WHO WALKED IN DARKNESS HAVE SEEN A GREAT LIGHT**

A Reading from the 9<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Isaiah

**Anthem**

“Candlelight Carol”

*John Rutter*

How do you capture the wind on the water?  
How do you count all the stars in the sky?  
How can you measure the love of a mother?  
Or how can you write down a baby's first cry?

Candlelight, angel light, firelight and star-glow  
Shine on his cradle 'til breaking of dawn  
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Angels are singing "The Christ child is born"

Shepherds and wise men will kneel and adore him  
Seraphim 'round him, their vigil will keep  
Nations proclaim him their Lord and their saviour  
But Mary will hold him and sing him to sleep

Candlelight, angel light, firelight and star-glow  
Shine on his cradle 'til breaking of dawn  
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Angels are singing "The Christ child is born"

Find him in Bethlehem laid in a manger  
Christ our redeemer, asleep in the hay  
Godhead incarnate and hope of salvation  
A child with his mother that first Christmas Day

Candlelight, angel light, firelight and star-glow  
Shine on his cradle 'til breaking of dawn  
Gloria, gloria in excelsis Deo!  
Angels are singing "The Christ child is born"

**Third Lesson**

Mary Evann Thornhill

**THE LORD PROMISES TO DAVID A KINGDOM THAT WILL NEVER END**

A Reading from the 7<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Second Samuel

**Anthem**

“The First Nowell”

*arr. Mack Wilberg*

The First Noel, the Angels 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.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
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.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

And by the light of that same star  
Three Wise men came from country far  
To seek for a King was their intent  
And to follow the star wherever it went.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

This star drew nigh to the northwest  
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest  
And there it did both Pause and stay  
Right o'er the place where Jesus lay.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

Then entered in those Wise men three  
Full reverently upon their knee  
And offered there in His presence  
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

Then let us all with one accord  
Sing praises to our heavenly Lord  
That hath made Heaven and earth of nought  
And with his blood mankind has bought.  
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel  
Born is the King of Israel!

#### Fourth Lesson

Joe Leonard

#### A VOICE CRIES TO TELL THE GOOD NEWS ON A HIGH MOUNTAIN

A Reading from the 40<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Isaiah

#### Anthem

"Go Tell It On The Mountain"

*Traditional, arr. Huff*

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,  
Behond, throughout the heavens  
There shone a holy light.

The shepherds feared and trembled  
When lo, above the earth  
Rang out the angel chorus  
That hailed our Savior's birth!

Down in a lonely manger  
The humble Christ was born,  
And God sent our salvation  
That blessed Christmas morn.

**Fifth Lesson**

Kathy Hinkle

**AN ANGEL OF THE LORD TELLS JOSEPH NOT TO FEAR TO TAKE MARY AS HIS WIFE**

A Reading from the 1st Chapter of Matthew

**Anthem**

“Silent Night”

*arr. Dan Forrest*

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  
Heavenly hosts 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 dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth  
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth

**Sixth Lesson**

Sarah Thornhill

**THE MAGI VISIT THE MESSIAH**

A Reading from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter of Matthew

**Anthem**

"Sing We Now of Christmas"

*arr. John Leavitt*

Sing we now of Christmas,  
Noel, sing we here!  
Hear our grateful praises  
to the babe so dear.

Sing we Noel, the King is born, Noel!  
Sing we now of Christmas, sing we now Noel!  
Angels called to shepherds,  
"Leave your flocks at rest,  
journey forth to Bethlehem,  
find the lambkin blest."

In Bethlehem they found him;  
Joseph and Mary mild,  
seated by the manger,  
watching the holy child.

From the eastern country  
came the kings afar,  
bearing gifts to Bethlehem  
guided by a star.

Gold and myrrh they took there,  
gifts of greatest price;  
there was ne'er a place on earth  
so like paradise.  
bearing gifts to Bethlehem  
guided by a star.

**Seventh Lesson**

*Ella*

Rae Howell

**SAINT LUKE TELLS OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST**

A Reading from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter of Luke

**Anthem**

"Away In A Manger"

*arr. Mack Wilberg*

Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;  
The stars in the heavens looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

Asleep, (Asleep,) asleep, (asleep,)  
Asleep, the Savior in a stall!

Asleep, (Asleep,) asleep, (asleep,)  
Asleep, the Lord of all.

The cattle are lowing, the poor baby wakes;  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky  
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.  
Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
And fit us for heaven, to live with thee there.

**Eighth Lesson**

Dr. Ray N Howell III

**SAINT JOHN UNFOLDS THE GREAT MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION**

A Reading from the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter of John

**Congregational Hymn**

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

*arr. John*

*Rutter*

O come, all ye faithful, joyful, and triumphant,  
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem!  
Come and behold him, born the King of  
O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

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 given;  
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing;  
O come, let us adore him, O come let us adore him,  
O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

**Collects for Christmas**

Dr. Ray N. Howell III

**Ninth Lesson**

Wes Richardson

**THE SHEPHERDS GO TO BETHLEHEM**

A Reading from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter of Luke

**Congregational Hymn**

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

*Mendelssohn*

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born 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 new born King!"

Christ, by highest heaven 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 us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteous  
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth.  
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the new born King!"

**Benediction**  
*Stainer*

"God So Loved the World"

For God so loved the world  
That He gave His only Son  
And whosoever believes will not perish  
They shall have eternal life  
Yes, they shall have eternal life

**Postlude**

"A Christmas Festival"

*Leroy Anderson*

**Musicians for the Nine Lessons and Carols**

***Director***

Wes Richardson, Minister of Music

***Accompanist***

Marty Stanbery

**Sanctuary Choir**

**Soprano**

Debbie Auman  
Courtney Foster Byerly  
Barbee Kugel  
Dolly Skinner  
Debbie Tate  
Wendy Walker

**Alto**

Eryn Myers  
Erin Richardson  
Pamela Richardson  
Tamer Richardson  
Anna Raye Tate  
Abby Auman

**Tenor**

LeGrand Skinner  
Jimmy Davis  
Will Tate  
Brian Walker  
Ralph Ashley  
Dan Hopkins

**Bass**

Herb Davis  
Bruce Hill  
Phil Ryalls  
Ken Auman  
William Fulbright

**Orchestra**

Abby Simoneau  
Hylton Baker  
Joanna Porter  
Barbie Pilla  
Jon Goodman  
Joanna Wiltshire  
Tristen Craven  
Ben Weber  
Sonja Guthrie

Flute 1  
Flute 2  
Oboe  
Clarinet 1  
Clarinet 2  
Clarinet 3/Bass  
Bassoon  
Horn 1  
Horn 2

Hailey Walker  
Brent Harvey  
Colin Choat  
Steve Barnhart  
Rachel Igo  
Katie Miller  
Andrew Ralston  
Shi Shi  
Kate Middel

Bass Trombone  
Tuba  
Percussion  
Percussion  
Violin 1  
Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Violin 2  
Viola 1

Steve Sutton	Trumpet 1	Solange Maughn	Viola 2
Gavin Tranter	Trumpet 2	Hannah Fishaston	Cello 1
Jon Myers	Trumpet 3	Davis Lingner	Cello 2
Mary Kathryn Bowman	Choat	Derek Fox	Bass
	Trombone 1	Marty Stanberry	Piano/Organ
Dave Beitzel	Trombone 2		

### **Christmas Poinsettias**

#### **Given in loving memory of**

Don Minner by Sidney Minner

Lori Gilliam by Lane Gilliam

Lori Gilliam by Brannon Gilliam & Kerry Shae Penland

Our parents Carroll Wall and Betsy Wall Medford

Birdie Dunn and Dick Dunn

by David & Julia Dunn

Bud & Betty Hannon, Don Hannon and Michael Hannon

and Betty Allred

by Pat & Dale Allred

#### **Given in honor of**

Hazel Frady by Sterling & Tina Wall

Richard & Vicky Baxley and Bob & Ann Cole

by Suzy Conner & Dave Colescott

Jim Skotthy and family, Sherri Salinas, Marty Stanberry, Pamela Richardson and Carson Huff

by Ginger & Bruce Hill

Evelyn Bingham and Carol Stutts Wall

by David & Julia Dunn

### **Composer Notes**

#### **Prelude – “A Christmas Scherzo”, arr. Jay Sebesky**

As a composer, arranger and conductor, he has worked with such orchestras as the London Symphony, the Chicago Symphony, the Boston Pops, The New York Philharmonic, the Royal Philharmonic of London, and the Toronto Symphony.

His Broadway theater credits include *Porgy and Bess* (London production by Trevor Nunn), *Sinatra At The Palladium*, *Sweet Charity*, *Kiss Me Kate* (2000 Tony Award), *Bells Are Ringing*, *Flower Drum Song*, *Parade*, *The Life*, *Cyrano*, *The Goodbye Girl*, *Will Rogers Follies*, and *Sinatra At Radio City*.

Among his film credits are *The Rosary Murders* (starring Donald Sutherland), *Hollow Image* (starring Morgan Freeman), *The Last of the Belles* (starring Susan Sarandon), *Let's Get Lost* (starring Chet Baker “Best Documentary at the Cannes Film Festival), *The People Next Door* (starring Eli Wallach and Julie



Harris), *Time Piece* (Jim Henson Productions "Academy Award nomination for Best Short Subject). For television, Sebesky's work has included *Allegra's Window* on Nickelodeon (Emmy nomination), *The Edge of Night* on ABC (Emmy nomination), and *Guiding Light* on CBS (Emmy nomination). As a recording artist, Sebesky's work includes nine recordings under his own name, all of which were GRAMMY nominated. Included are *Giant Box*, *Rape of El Morro*, *Full Cycle*, *Moving Lines*, *Symphonic Sondheim*, *I Remember Bill* (1999 GRAMMY Award), and *Joyful Noise* (winner of two GRAMMY Awards in 2000).

Sebesky has also created the music for many well-known commercials. Among the companies he has represented are: Corning (Clio Award), Hanes, Hallmark, Dodge Trucks, General Electric (Clio Award), Hershey's, Cheerios, Calvin Klein (Clio Award), Nike, Oil of Olay, Pepsi and Kodak. Sebesky is the author of the best-selling orchestration textbook, *The Contemporary Arranger*.

A sparkling, lively celebration of the season for full orchestra, as performed by the Boston Pops Orchestra under Keith Lockhart. The bright medley of carols includes *Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella*; *Adeste Fideles*; *The Holly and the Ivy*; *I Heard Three Ships on Christmas Day*; *O Tannenbaum*, and more in this 4-minute holiday showstopper.

#### **Offertory** – "Wexford Carol", arr. David Michael Hyde

The Wexford Carol is a traditional Irish hymn likely composed in the 12th century. Although its magnetic melody is less known outside of the song's homeland, its old-world folk charm captivates hearts upon first hearing. The refrain wanders through Ionian, Mixolydian and Dorian modes, beautifully combining the introspection and hopefulness of the Christmas season. This arrangement is in Theme and Variations form and navigates through an Irish air style violin solo and a series of short wind solos to establish the melody. Variations include a brass chorale, decorative tutti sections, and a build into a broad celebrative climax with large, powerful Copland-esque harmonies.

David Michael Hyde is a composer and music creative for film, live performance and fixed media. Born and raised in Austin, Texas, David explored many styles of music ranging from classical to jazz to rock. Over the last 20 years, he has recorded and produced artists in the pop and contemporary worship genres and scored several award-winning independent films. As an established film composer, he effectively communicates emotion and story in his music.

Based on his study and experience as a brass player, acoustic guitarist and electronic musician, David's composing sensibility prioritizes the lyrical long-form melody, orchestral clarity of line, and emotively tonal. These preferences engage the first-time listener. Combined with his love of jazz, drum corps, and interval theory, the amalgamation produces a unique compositional voice that ranges from pastorate to powerful.

He enjoys collaborating with filmmakers, choreographers and performing artists. He and his wife Lisa have been married 30 years and have two grown children, Rebecca and Justus. David supports the American Composers Forum (ACF) and is a member of the Texas Bandmasters Association (TBA), Texas Music Educators Association (TMEA), and Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI).

#### **Processional** - "Once In Royal David's City", arr. Bruce W. Tippet

One of the Christmas traditions celebrated by many persons in the English-speaking world is to tune in on Christmas Eve, either on radio or television, to the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols, originating from King's College, Cambridge. This tradition began in 1918, was first broadcast in 1928, and is now heard by millions around the world.

In 1919, Arthur Henry Mann, organist at King's College (1876-1929), introduced an arrangement of "Once in Royal David's City" as the processional hymn for the service. In his version, the first stanza is sung unaccompanied by a boy chorister. The choir and then the congregation join in with the organ on succeeding stanzas. This has been the tradition ever since. It is a great honor to be the boy chosen to sing the opening solo—a voice heard literally around the world.

The author of this text, Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895), was born in Dublin, Ireland, and began writing in verse from an early age. She became so adept that by the age of 22, several of her hymn texts made it into the hymnbook of the Church of Ireland. Alexander [née Humphreys] married William Alexander, both a clergyman and a poet in his own right who later became the bishop of the Church of Ireland in Derry and later archbishop. Aside from her prolific hymn writing, Mrs. Alexander gave much of her life to charitable work and social causes, something rather rare for women of her day. "Once in Royal David's City" first appeared in her collection, *Hymns for Little Children* (1848), in six stanzas. This particular text was included with others as a means to musically and poetically teach the catechism. It is based on the words of the Apostles' Creed, "Born of the Virgin Mary," and is in six stanzas of six lines each. Even though this text is included in the Christmas liturgical sections of most hymnals, the narrative painted by Alexander truly relates to the entire "youth" of Christ and not just his birth.

### **1st Lesson** – "I Wonder As I Wander", *arr. Krogstad*

"I Wonder as I Wander" is a Christian folk hymn, typically performed as a Christmas carol, written by American folklorist and singer John Jacob Niles. The hymn has its origins in a song fragment collected by Niles on July 16, 1933.

While in the town of Murphy in Appalachian North Carolina, Niles attended a fundraising meeting held by evangelicals who had been ordered out of town by the police. In his unpublished autobiography, he wrote of hearing the song:

A girl had stepped out to the edge of the little platform attached to the automobile. She began to sing. Her clothes were unbelievable dirty and ragged, and she, too, was unwashed. Her ash-blond hair hung down in long skeins. ... But, best of all, she was beautiful, and in her untutored way, she could sing. She smiled as she sang, smiled rather sadly, and sang only a single line of a song.

The girl, named Annie Morgan, repeated the fragment seven times in exchange for a quarter per performance, and Niles left with "three lines of verse, a garbled fragment of melodic material—and a magnificent idea". Based on this fragment, Niles composed the version of "I Wonder as I Wander" that is known today, extending the melody to four lines and the lyrics to three stanzas. His composition was completed on October 4, 1933. Niles first performed the song on December 19, 1933, at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, North Carolina. It was originally published in *Songs of the Hill Folk* in 1934.

### **2nd Lesson** - Candlelight Carol

A Christmas carol with music and lyrics by the English choral composer and conductor John Rutter. The carol was written in 1984, and was first recorded by Rutter's own group, the Cambridge Singers, on their 1987 album *Christmas Night*. It was commissioned by John Romeri, then Director of Music at the Church of the Assumption in Bellevue, Pennsylvania.

*Candlelight Carol* focuses on describing the Nativity of Jesus, focusing on the love of Mary (mother of Jesus) for her son Jesus.

### **3rd Lesson** - "The First Nowell", *arr. Mack Wilberg*

Mack Wilberg was appointed Music Director of The Mormon Tabernacle Choir in 2008, having served as Associate Music Director since 1999. He is a former professor of music at Brigham Young University, where he received his bachelor's degree; his master's and doctoral degrees are from the University of Southern California. Alongside Wilberg's conducting responsibilities he is active as a pianist, choral clinician, composer, arranger, and guest conductor throughout the United States and abroad. In addition to the many compositions he has written for The Tabernacle Choir, his works have been performed by artists such as Renée Fleming, Frederica von Stade, Bryn Terfel, Rolando Villazón, Deborah Voigt, and The King's Singers. Wilberg's arrangements and compositions are performed and recorded all over the world.

Mack Wilberg (b. 1955) provides this beautiful arrangement of the traditional English carol The First Nowell. Wilberg is perhaps best known throughout the choral world for his arrangements of traditional Christmas carols. In this arrangement, Wilberg combines the singing of the traditional tune with a counter harmony in the accompaniment to create a rich, luscious landscape.

### **4th Lesson** – "Go Tell It on the Mountain", *arr. Huff*

John Wesley Work, Jr., may not have originated the spiritual "Go, Tell It on the Mountain," but he can take credit for the fact that we still sing it every Christmas. As the son of a church choir director, Work grew up in Nashville loving music. Even though he earned his Master's in Latin and went on to teach ancient Latin and Greek, his first love continued to be music, and he went on to become the first African-American collector of Negro spirituals. This proved to be a daunting task for Work because they were passed down orally, from plantation to plantation; very few were ever written down. But Work proved up to the challenge, publishing his first book, *New Jubilee Songs as Sung by the Fisk Jubilee Singers*, in *Songs of the American Negro*, six years later. It was in this second volume that "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" first appeared. The original singers of the song fulfilled the same important task the angels gave the shepherds that first Christmas night outside of Bethlehem, proclaiming, "that Jesus Christ is born!" And thanks to John Wesley Work, so can we.

### **5th Lesson** – "Silent Night", *Dan Forrest*

A stunning new take on this timeless carol, as only Dan Forrest can do, beginning with the smallest and simplest of musical ideas to paint "Silent Night... all is calm", then gradually building into an overwhelming statement of the profoundest of truths: "Christ, the Savior, is born." A must-have for Christmas concerts for this year, and years to come. Scored for SATB choir, piano, and optional string quartet or full orchestra.

Dr. Dan Forrest (b. 1978) has been described as having "an undoubted gift for writing beautiful music....that is truly magical" (NY Concert Review), with works hailed as "magnificent, very cleverly constructed sound sculpture" (Classical Voice), and "superb writing...full of spine-tingling moments" (Salt Lake Tribune). Dan's music spans a wide spectrum of genres and difficulty, ranging from extended major works for chorus and orchestra and significant concert choral repertoire to more accessible works for church and community choirs, as well as instrumental works ranging from wind ensemble pieces to solo instrumental sonatas.

Dan holds a doctorate in composition from the University of Kansas and a master's degree in piano performance, and is a Fellow of Melodious Accord. His academic background includes several years as a professor and department head (music theory and composition) in higher education. Dan professes lifelong gratitude to the teachers that shaped his musicality: James Barnes (doctoral advisor), Alice

Parker (multiple fellowships with Melodious Accord), Joan Pinkston and the late Dwight Gustafson (college composition teachers), Frances McLaren and the late Joanne Snyder (childhood piano and music teachers).

### **6th Lesson** – “Sing We Now of Christmas”, *arr. Leavitt*

John Leavitt's career has included more than three decades as a practicing composer, conductor, and teacher. He holds the Doctorate of Musical Arts (conducting) from the University of Missouri – Kansas City Conservatory of Music. He is a lifetime member of the American Choral Directors Association and a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers, from which he has received annual recognition for his achievements in composition.

He has served as music professor at several universities in North America, winning awards for teaching excellence. He has served as a regular guest conductor in major venues including New York's Carnegie Hall and Washington DC's Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. He has also conducted in Dublin's Christ Church Cathedral.

As a composer and arranger, Dr. Leavitt has published across all media and genres. Many of his compositions and arrangements have become standard repertoire being performed in countries across the globe. As a performer, he has recorded more than two dozen albums of choral, orchestral, and piano music.

### **7th Lesson** - “Away In A Manger”, *Wilberg*

The origin of this popular Christmas hymn is shrouded in apocryphal associations with Martin Luther (1483-1546). First, the facts. Methodist hymnologist Fred Gealy (1894-1976) noted that “evidence suggests that [“Away in a Manger”] is wholly an American product. The original two-stanza form probably originated among German Lutherans in Pennsylvania about 1885.”

Indeed, most sources note that the hymn first appeared with two stanzas in *Little Children's Book for Schools and Families*, a Sunday school collection published in 1885 by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America.

Stanza three first appeared unattributed in *Gabriel's Vineyard Songs* (1892), compiled by gospel composer Charles H. Gabriel (1856-1932). Gealy conjectured “the song may have been contributed by an editor or publisher who thought the two narrative stanzas needed to be supplemented by a prayer.”

The Rev. Carlton Young, editor of the *UM Hymnal*, notes that the only German version of the carol is clearly a translation from the English because the metrics are not natural to the German language. Furthermore, this version was first included in Herbert W. Werneke's *Christmas Songs and Weihnachts-Lieder* (1934), a privately published collection.

The stanza concludes: “I love thee Lord Jesus, look down from the sky and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.” This proposes a comforting concept that Jesus is watching over children, especially at night when children are more vulnerable and subject to manufactured fears of imagination. In the 18th and 19th centuries, even adults were thought to be closer to death while asleep. Though that notion is less accepted today, the idea of Jesus as a comforting presence is certainly an appropriate understanding for a child.

The final stanza, added later, follows the pattern of many hymns by using the form of prayer, petitioning Jesus' presence in the first part of the stanza and blessing of “all the dear children in thy tender care.”

The final petition requests that Jesus would “fit us for heaven to live with thee there.” This stanza would seem to indicate that all of us are Christ’s children by baptism and our eschatological hope lies in heaven.

In spite of controversies of attribution and perhaps a bit of slippery theology, this little gem of the season is still sung each year with fervor and joy.

#### **8th Lesson** - "O Come All Ye Faithful", *arr. Rutter*

John Rutter was born in London in 1945 and studied music at Clare College, Cambridge. His compositions embrace choral, orchestral, and instrumental music, and he has edited or co-edited various choral anthologies, including four *Carols for Choirs* volumes with Sir David Willcocks and the *Oxford Choral Classics* series. From 1975 to 1979 he was Director of Music at Clare College, and in 1981 he formed his own choir, the Cambridge Singers. He now divides his time between composition and conducting and is sought after as a guest conductor for the world's leading choirs and orchestras. John Rutter's music has been widely recorded and is available on many record labels including Universal, Naxos, and Hyperion. The Cambridge Singers have recorded many of John Rutter's works on the Collegium Records label.

This joyful setting of the much-loved Christmas hymn is extracted from the Christmas collection *Joy to the World*. Leaving the first five verses in their familiar form, Rutter adds a spectacular descant to the sixth verse, before an original and grandiose setting of the final verse.

#### **9th Lesson**- "Hark the Herald Angels Sing", *Felix Mendhelson, arr. Rutter*

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) was one of the most amazing figures of the 19th century – virtuoso pianist, composer, conductor, musicologist, educator (he founded the Leipzig Conservatory, the first such school for training musicians), labor negotiator (he brokered the first contract for professional musicians between the city of Leipzig and the Gewandhaus Orchestra), talented amateur mathematician and competent water colorist. Mendelssohn did not set out to write a Christmas carol in Hark! The Herald Angels Sing. It was actually the English hymnist William Cummings who, in 1855, matched a text written by Charles Wesley with music from a Mendelssohn cantata written to celebrate Johannes Gutenberg to provide the familiar setting in use today.

#### **Benediction** - "God So Loved the World", *Stainer*

English Victorian composer John Stainer's (1840-1901) setting of John 3:16, "For God So Loved the World," comes from his 1887 oratorio *The Crucifixion: A Meditation on the Sacred Passion of the Holy Redeemer*, a piece the composer himself is said to have described as "rubbish." Nonetheless, *The Crucifixion* remains popular and is widely performed today, especially around this time of year. Stainer's homophonic setting treatment of "For God So Loved the World" is heartfelt and earnest, underscoring the tension of love and sacrifice found in the text.

#### **Postlude** - "A Christmas Festival", *Leroy Anderson*

**A Christmas Festival** is a medley of traditional carols written for the Boston Pops Orchestra in 1950, including "Joy to the World," "Deck the Halls," "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel," "Good King Wenceslaus," "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Silent Night," "Jingle Bells," and "Adeste Fidelis."

Leroy Anderson (1908-1975) was a preeminent American composer of light concert music. He was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts to first-generation Swedish immigrants. Originally a trombonist, he was director of the Harvard Band. During WW II he served as an Army captain in intelligence. A versatile linguist, he wrote a book on Icelandic grammar. Anderson achieved fame as arranger for the Boston Pops Orchestra, and for his conducting.

### **Homebound Ministry**

The gift bags and blankets for our homebound church family are available for you to pick up today. We are reaching out to 47 people who have been an important part of our church. Thank you to everyone who is making deliveries. Please get a blanket as well as the gift bag.

### **Children's Christmas Program**

The Martha Best Children's Center will present their annual Christmas program this Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Please join us as we welcome the families of our 120 children to celebrate Christmas joy! Following the program, a festive reception will be held in the Fellowship Hall. We need more cookies and fruit trays for the reception. Please let Eryn Myers know if you can help.

### **Cancer Services Christmas Party, December 22**

We are hosting the annual Christmas party for patients of Cancer Services. You will be invited to provide food and refreshment and assist in the party. This is always a very joyful time for people in great need of hope.

### **Birthday Party for Jesus, December 18**

Our annual Birthday Party for Jesus will take place in fellowship hall next Sunday beginning at 3 p.m. This great tradition in our church helps our children to focus on the true meaning of Christmas, the birthday of Jesus! There will be games, crafts, and of course a birthday cake for Jesus. Martha Best Children's Center families will be invited to join us.

### **Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service**

**Saturday, December 24**

**5:30 p.m.**

### **Extended Sessions**

Today	Ashley Harrison and Hannah Hess
December 18	Donna & Jazmine Sink

**Email: [fbclexington@fbclex.org](mailto:fbclexington@fbclex.org)**

**[www.fbclex.org](http://www.fbclex.org)**



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 Immanuel!