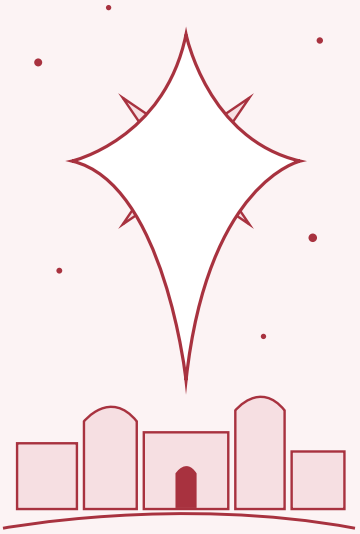
ORDER OF SERVICE

Christmas Eve lessons and carols

Nine Bible lessons with a carol after each, a call to worship, a closing prayer and a blessing, for 60 to 75 minutes.



IN THIS ORDER

Call to worship and opening carol 2

First lesson: the fall and the promise 2

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Scripture from the Berean Standard Bible, dedicated to the public domain. Responses and prayers by Church Posting. Any church may copy them.

churchposting.com/resources/worship/christmas-eve-order-of-service/

Call to worship and opening carol

A pastor reads Psalm 96 as the call to worship. The congregation stands for the opening carol.

READ PSALM 96:1-3

> [1]Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. [2]Sing to the LORD, bless His name; proclaim His salvation day after day. [3]Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples.

SING Once in Royal David's City

First lesson: the fall and the promise

A child reads the first lesson.

READ GENESIS 3:8-15, 17-19

> [8]Then the man and his wife heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the breeze of the day, and they hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. [9]But the LORD God called out to the man, “Where are you?” [10]“I heard Your voice in the garden,” he replied, “and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.” [11]“Who told you that you were naked?” asked the LORD God. “Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” [12]And the man answered, “The woman whom You gave me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” [13]Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” “The serpent deceived me,” she replied, “and I ate.” [14]So the LORD God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and every beast of the field! On your belly will you go, and dust you will eat, all the days of your life. [15]And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.” [17]And to Adam He said: “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat, cursed is the ground because of you; through toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. [18]Both thorns and thistles it will yield for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. [19]By the sweat of your brow you will eat your bread, until you return to the

> ground—because out of it were you taken. For dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

SING Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Second lesson: God's promise to Abraham

A teenager reads the second lesson.

READ GENESIS 22:15-18

> 15 And the angel of the LORD called to Abraham from heaven a second time,
> 16 saying, "By Myself I have sworn, declares the LORD, that because you have done this and have not withheld your only son, 17 I will surely bless you, and I will multiply your descendants like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will possess the gates of their enemies. 18 And through your offspring all nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

SING O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Third lesson: the child who will reign

A member of the congregation reads the third lesson.

READ ISAIAH 9:2, 6-7

> 2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned. 6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from that time and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will accomplish this.

SING Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes

Fourth lesson: the peace of his kingdom

A deacon reads the fourth lesson.

READ ISAIAH 11:1-4a, 6-9

> [1]Then a shoot will spring up from the stump of Jesse, and a Branch from his roots will bear fruit. [2]The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him—the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD. [3]And He will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what His eyes see, and He will not decide by what His ears hear, [4]but with righteousness He will judge the poor, and with equity He will decide for the lowly of the earth. [6]The wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat; the calf and young lion and fatling will be together, and a little child will lead them. [7]The cow will graze with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. [8]The infant will play by the cobra's den, and the toddler will reach into the viper's nest. [9]They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the sea is full of water.

SING It Came upon the Midnight Clear

Fifth lesson: the angel comes to Mary

A member of the congregation reads the fifth lesson.

READ LUKE 1:26-35, 38

> [26]In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, [27]to a virgin pledged in marriage to a man named Joseph, who was of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. [28]The angel appeared 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]So the angel told her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. [31]Behold, you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name 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 the house of Jacob forever. His kingdom will never
> end!" 34 "How can this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" 35 The
> angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon 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. 38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it happen to me
> according to your word." Then the angel left her.

SING O Little Town of Bethlehem

Sixth lesson: the birth of Jesus

A parent reads the sixth lesson.

READ LUKE 2:1-7

> 1 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that a census
> should be taken of the whole empire. 2 This was the first census to take place
> while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 And everyone went to his own town to
> register. 4 So Joseph also went up from Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city
> of David called Bethlehem, since he was from the house and line of David. 5 He
> went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to him in marriage and was
> expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for her Child to be
> born. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn, a Son. She wrapped Him in
> swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them
> in the inn.

SING Away in a Manger

Seventh lesson: the shepherds

A member of the congregation reads the seventh lesson.

READ LUKE 2:8-16

> 8 And there were shepherds residing in the fields nearby, keeping watch over
> their flocks by night. 9 Just then an angel of the Lord stood before 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! For behold, I bring you good news of great joy
> that will be for all the people: 11 Today in the city of David a Savior has been born
> to you. He is Christ the Lord! 12 And this will be a sign to you: You will find a
> baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” 13 And suddenly there
> appeared with the angel a great multitude of the heavenly host, praising God
> and saying: 14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom
> His favor rests!” 15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the
> shepherds said to one another, “Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that
> has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16 So they hurried off and
> found Mary and Joseph and the Baby, who was lying in the manger.

SING The First Noel

Eighth lesson: the wise men

An elder reads the eighth lesson.

READ MATTHEW 2:1-12

> 1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod,
> Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, 2 asking, “Where is the One who has
> been born King of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to
> worship Him.” 3 When King Herod heard this, he was disturbed, and all
> Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had assembled all the chief priests and
> scribes of the people, he asked them where the Christ 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 be the shepherd of My

> people Israel.’” [7]Then Herod called the Magi secretly and learned from them the exact time the star had appeared. [8]And sending them to Bethlehem, he said: “Go and search carefully for the Child, and when 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 in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the Child was. [10]When they saw the star, they rejoiced with great delight. [11]On coming to the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary, and they fell down and worshiped Him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. [12]And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they withdrew to their country by another route.

SING Angels from the Realms of Glory

Ninth lesson: the Word made flesh

A pastor reads the ninth lesson.

READ JOHN 1:1-14

> [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, and without Him nothing was made that has been made. [4]In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. [5]The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. [6]There came a man who was sent from God. His name was John. [7]He came as a witness to testify about the Light, so that through him everyone might believe. [8]He himself was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light. [9]The true Light, who 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 His own, and His own did not receive Him. [12]But 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 blood, nor of the desire or will of man, 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 from the Father, full of grace and truth.

SING O Come, All Ye Faithful

Closing prayer and blessing

PRAYER Father, you kept your promise and sent your Son. Thank you for the good news of his birth. Give us faith to receive him and joy to tell what we have heard. Lead us in your light this Christmas, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The pastor faces the people and gives the blessing.

NUMBERS 6:24-26

> [24]May the LORD bless you and keep you; [25]may the LORD cause His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; [26]may the LORD lift up His countenance toward you and give you peace.