**ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ANGLICAN CHURCH – DUNCAN**

**Service of Christmas Lessons and Carols**

**December 2020 – Recorded for public viewing**

***FIRST LESSON: Genesis 2:4-9, 15-25***

[The generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created]

4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

Another Account of the Creation

In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, 5when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up—for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; 6but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground— 7then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. 8And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9Out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16And the Lord God commanded the man, ‘You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.’

18 Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.’ 19So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. 20The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. 21So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23Then the man said,

‘This at last is bone of my bones

 and flesh of my flesh;

this one shall be called Woman,

 for out of Man this one was taken.’

24Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. 25And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

***SECOND LESSON: Isaiah 9:2,6-7***

[The People who walked in darkness have seen a great light.]

2 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.

3 You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest,

 as people exult when dividing plunder.

4 For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

6 For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onwards and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

***THIRD LESSON: Isaiah 40:1-11***

[God’s People Are Comforted]

40Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

2 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.

3 A voice cries out. ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

4 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.

5 Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.’

6 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.

7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass.

8 The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever.

9 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!’

10 See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him.

11 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.

***FOURTH LESSON: Luke 1:26-35,38***

[The Birth of Jesus Foretold]

26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. 28And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, favoured one! The Lord is with you.’ 29But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. 30The angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. 31And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32He 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. 33He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.’ 34Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’ 35The 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. 38Then 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.

***FIFTH LESSON: LUKE 2:1,3-7***

(The Birth of Jesus)

2In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. 3All went to their own towns to be registered. 4Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. 5He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. 6While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. 7And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

***SIXTH LESSON: LUKE 2:8-16***

[The Shepherds and the Angels]

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. 12This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ 13And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

14 ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven,

 and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ 16So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

***SEVENTH LESSON: MATTHEW 2:1-12***

(The Visit of the Wise Men)

2In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2asking, ‘Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.’ 3When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; 4and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

6 “And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,

 are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;

for from you shall come a ruler

 who is to shepherd my people Israel.” ’

7 Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 8Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, ‘Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.’ 9When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. 11On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

***EIGHTH LESSON: JOHN 1:1-14***

(The Word Became Flesh)

The Gospel according to John:

1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being 4in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. 11He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. 12But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, 13who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.