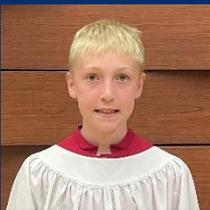




Grand Rapids Choir of Men and Boys

Christmas Nine Lessons & Carols | 36th Anniversary Season | 2025-2026



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**Season 36
continues...**

**Mark your
calendars now for
the second half of
GRCMB's season
& always invite
friends to join
with you!**



**All concerts by the choir this season will take
place at the Basilica of St. Adalbert
(654 Davis Ave. NW – Grand Rapids)**



Lenten Meditations

Saturday, March 28, 2026 – 7 PM

Sunday, March 29, 2026 – 3 PM



Spring Concluding Concert

Saturday, May 16, 2025 – 7 PM

Sunday, May 17, 2018 - 3 PM

No Tickets Required – All Free-Will Offering

THE GRAND RAPIDS

Choir

OF MEN & BOYS

MOVING THE SONG FORWARD

Music that changes lives.

Welcome to year 36 in the life of the Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys, a bright year that, with your encouragement and financial support, promises to be once again musically strong and spiritually uplifting.

As part of the rich fabric of the arts in West Michigan, we believe that anywhere in the world where there is access to music and the arts people and communities thrive. Amongst all the arts, sacred music holds a particularly special place.

Taking time out from our busy lives to gather in inspired sacred spaces to experience God's presence together through music, scripture and poetry is restorative. By doing so we individually and collectively inspire ourselves to enter more deeply into lives of faith and hope which are strengthened through expressing and sharing it with others.

The boys of GRCMB learn that there is no such thing as a choir of one. There must be a real active intent of cooperation amongst the members of a choir. The arts can disciple our senses and train us to pay attention and work together in all areas of life.

The very nature of the sacred music we perform also teaches our boys that how we act outside of the choir is just as important as how we act when singing, treating every person with dignity, respect, and gratitude for every person is a valued member of the team.

So let us continue to look for God's invitation through creativity and beauty—to pause and notice, even if just long enough to know we are being beckoned, and then



to follow the beckoning wherever it leads. For you and me, well, you never know—but we can be sure that wherever God leads will be worth the journey.

The Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys welcomes you to enter with us into Season 36 in the life of our choir. We invite you to join with us in praying for what lies ahead, praying for a successful search for our choir's next Director of Music, and for all the ways, both known and unknown, that God may use our time together.

Our prayer for the coming year: **“Lord, awaken us to beauty when it crosses our path. Help us not to neglect your invitations but to heed and steward them. Give us the resolve to make time for music, poetry and art, for we know that to enjoy and create beauty isn’t an optional luxury; it is an essential sign of your spirit living in us. Amen”**

Note: Acknowledgement for shared thoughts here inspired by ideas from Brian Morykon of *Renovare*, Carolyn Arends of the *Henri Nouwen Society*, Melissa Fitzgerald & Mary McCormack – *What’s Next*, and Michael Smith, *RSCM President*.



We wish to express our deep appreciation to the Basilica of St. Adalbert family for allowing us to bring our sacred programming into one of our city's most glorious sacred space.

Our choir is also most grateful for our continued long relationship with Grand Rapids Community College Smith Music Center and Shannon Shaker, Music Department Chair.



The Passing of the Baton

Coming in the fall of 2026

***The next exciting era dawns
in our 2026/27 Season!***

In **May of 2026**, after 25 years of loving and nurturing the Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys, Scott & Jane Bosscher will be retiring at the end of the 36th anniversary season.



Scott writes: “I heard my father say many times, ‘You can’t believe how fast life happens!’ Well dad, you were right. The fall of 2001 when I stood in front of the Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys for the very first time seems like just yesterday.

Above my desk at home I have lined up the program booklets from all 25 years of our choir’s concert series. I am further blessed that tucked inside each of the programs is a dvd video of that particular concert. Every Evensong, Lessons & Carols, Lenten/Easter Meditation, & Spring Sacred Concert is preserved. Let’s do the math, four programs each year times 25 years (minus the Covid era) – that’s nearly 100 times through so many seasons that we have gathered together to share God’s love in song and in readings. What an awesome privilege and joy it has been being with all of you.

But as Scripture declares, ‘There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.’ The time has come for the next generation of leadership to nurture and lead our GRCMB family.

Jane and I will miss the countless hours we have spent through the years planning, rehearsing & performing with the choir. We will also deeply miss working with our world-class guest conductors: Martin Neary, Andrew Nethsingha, Matthew Owens, & Richard Webster. God loves a team effort and so do we. We will miss the challenges of diving deeply into and mastering incredible choral masterpieces, and in recent years, joining our talents with visiting guest artists in our Andy Larson Biennial Concert Series: thus far Metropolitan Opera baritone Will Liverman and the Choir of St. John's College, Cambridge.

Most of all we will miss you, our encouraging, supportive audience family. But, this isn't goodbye. We are simply changing seats to now sit beside you, where together we will continue to be uplifted and inspired by the Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys.

Let the next *Music Director* search begin! If you or someone you know feels the call to explore becoming GRCMB's next Director of Music, please visit our website (www.grcmb.org) where you will find information about applying. Throughout the coming year we look forward to interviewing potential candidates to find who God has in mind to continue the GRCMB tradition. Spread the word!

Additionally, as we prepare for the next chapter in our choir's life, we will be looking to add new members to our all-volunteer governing Board of Directors. Do let us know if you feel a calling to serve in such a manner. Our choir is only as strong as our behind the scenes support. Please ask us about how you might serve.

For the past 35 years, your presence and your prayers have nurtured and grown the Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys into its current strong family of faith filled song. May our song ever continue to sing God's praise!"

In deep appreciation,

Scott & Jane Bosscher



Does your son have what it takes to become a GRCMB Chorister?

Does your son love to sing?

- GRCMB has a choir full of boys, 3rd through 8th grade, who would love to sing with your son.

Do you value a strong music education?

- GRCMB follows the British *Royal Schools of Music Training Scheme*.
- Boys progress through seven RSCM levels of music theory earning bronze medals as they succeed.

Did you know GRCMB boys train regularly with the world's top choir trainers?

- Martin Neary – (Retired) Westminster Abbey, London - England
- Andrew Nethsingha – Westminster Abbey, London – England
- Matthew Owens – Ulster Consort, Belfast N. Ireland
- Richard Webster – (Retired) Trinity Church, Boston – USA

GRCMB makes it home at Grand Rapids Community College.

**Would you like to visit a
practice? To find out
more contact us:**

- Website: www.grcmb.org
- Phone: 616.460.0598
- Email Scott Bosscher at
scottbosscher@grcmb.org



**Welcome to
Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys'
36th Annual Season**



**A Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols
~ Preparing for Christmas ~**

For so many millions of people around the world, Christmas begins every year when a lone chorister from King's College Choir takes a breath and sings the opening line of "Once in Royal David City." For an enchanted hour and a half, the world seems to stop, and in this pause reflects once again on the story of a refugee couple fleeing for safety through foreign lands, and of a baby born into a humble, cattle feeding trough amidst lowly animals, His birth announced only to shepherds on the margins of society. In total vulnerability, God's Son comes to dwell among us so that we might know Him better.

Through words both spoken and sung, Nine Lessons & Carols takes us on this journey alongside Joseph and Mary and Jesus. And by doing so, we not only hear how much God desperately, unwaveringly loves us, but we see the ends to which He is willing to go to bring us home. Before this story is finished, we will come to understand that we have a Shepherd who knows what it is like to be a Lamb.

But, we will not grow to understand this light that shines at Christmas if we remove its dark backdrop. The world into which God chose to be born was (and still is...) fraught with danger and menace. What Herod did then is still being done across our world today by leaders and tyrants who would sooner see innocent people suffer than lose their grip on power.

While we cannot turn back time to meet and help the holy family as they flee through the deserts of Egypt, we can certainly meet them now in so many thousands of mothers, fathers and children who are fleeing the wrath of someone else's quarrel. We must take seriously Christ's teaching at the end of Matthew — He is really and substantially in the lives and bodies of those who are oppressed — and whatsoever is done to them is done to Him.

Refugee

by Malcolm Guite

We think of him as safe beneath the steeple,
Or cosy in a crib beside the font,
But he is with a million displaced people
On the long road of weariness and want.
For even as we sing our final carol
His family is up and on that road,
Fleeing the wrath of someone else's quarrel,
Glancing behind and shouldering their load.
Whilst Herod rages still from his dark tower
Christ clings to Mary, fingers tightly curled,
The lambs are slaughtered by the men of power,
And death squads spread their curse across the world.
But every Herod dies, and comes alone
To stand before the Lamb upon the throne.



But God's judgment is tempered with mercy, for it is the Lamb who sits upon the throne. No evasion, no spin, only searing truth. But at the heart of the truth will be the Lamb, who was born like us, and then died to save the Herods of the world as much as for their victims.

**Now, prepare your heart & mind to go even unto
Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass...**

Nine Lessons & Carols for Christmas



The Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys

Scott Bosscher – Director

Dr. Julia Brown – Organist

Amy Netz - Rehearsal Pianist

Jordan Malone – Rehearsal Assistant

Basilica of St. Adalbert, Grand Rapids

Saturday, December 13, 2025 – 7:00 PM

Sunday, December 14, 2025 – 3:00 PM

Tuesday, December 16, 2025 – 7:00 PM

~ Introit ~

Silent Night

W. G. Rothery (1858-1930)

Franz Gruber (1787-1863)
Arr. Alan Ridout (1934-1996)

Silent night, holy night
Starry skies beaming bright,
Guard the Virgin Mother mild,
Watching o'er the Holy Child;
Sleeping in heavenly grace.

Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds lone hail the light,
Hark, the wondrous angel throng,
Hail the morn with joyful song;
Christ the Saviour is born.

Silent night, holy night,
God's dear Son, bringeth light,
Saving us from sin's dark thrall,
Giving life and light to all;
Christ, the Light of the world.





~ **Processional Carol** ~

Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth

Words: St. Ambrose (340-397)

M. Praetorius (1571-1621)

Trans: J.M. Neal (1818-1866)

(Choir only v. 1-4)

Come, thou Redeemer of the earth, and manifest thy virgin-birth:
Let every age adoring fall; such birth befits the God of all.

Begotten of no human will, but of the Spirit thou art still.
The Word of God, in flesh arrayed, the Saviour, now to us displayed.

Forth from that chamber goeth he, that royal home of purity,
A giant in two-fold substance one, rejoicing now his course to run.

From God the Father he proceeds, to God the Father back he speeds,
Runs out his course to death and hell, returns on God's high throne
to dwell.

(Congregation joining stanzas 5-7 remaining seated)

5. O e - qual to thy Fa - ther, thou! Gird
6. Thy cra - dle here shall glit - ter bright, and
7. O Je - su, vir - gin - born, to thee e -

on thy flesh - ly man - tle now, the weak - ness of our
dark - ness glow with new - born light, no more shall night ex -
ter - nal praise and glo - ry be, whom with the Fa - ther

mor - tal state with death - less might in - vi - gor - ate.
tin - guish day, where love's bright beams their power dis - play.
we a - dore and Ho - ly Spi - rit, ev - er - more.

Once in Royal David's City

C.F. Alexander (1818-1895)

H.J. Gauntlett (1805-1876)

A.H. Mann (1850-1929)

Arr. Philip Stopford (b. 1977)

Saturday - Treble First Stanza Soloist: Francis Hillary

Sunday - Treble First Stanza Soloist: Flint Townsend

Tuesday - Treble First Stanza Soloist: Joshua Lipsy

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.

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 mean and lowly lived on earth our Saviour holy.

For He is our childhood's pattern: day by day like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feeleth for our sadness, and He shareth in our gladness.

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,
Where like stars His children crowned all in white shall wait around.



~ Bidding Prayer ~

Read by Scott Bosscher – GRCMB Director of Music

The congregation, standing, shall be bidden to prayer.

Beloved in Christ, at this Christmas-tide let it be our care and delight to hear again the message of the angels, and 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.

Therefore, 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.

But first, let us pray for the needs of the whole world; for peace on earth and goodwill among all his people; for unity and brotherhood within the Church He came to build.

And because this would rejoice His heart, let us remember, in His name, the poor and helpless, the cold, the hungry, the oppressed; the sick and them that mourn, the lonely and the unloved, the aged and the little children; all those who know not the Lord Jesus, or 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 the Lord Jesus we are one for evermore.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer up to the Throne of Heaven, in the words which Christ Himself hath taught us:

(Choir & Congregation)

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.

~ Bidding Carol ~

**On Christmas Night
(Sussex Carol)**

English Traditional Carol

Arr. Philip Ledger (1937-2012)

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.

Then why should men on earth be so sad,
Since our redeemer made us glad,
When from our sin he set us free,
All for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before his grace,
Then life and health come in its place;
Angels and men with joy may sing,
All for to see the new-born King.

All out of darkness we have light,
Which made the angels sing this night:
'Glory to God and peace to men,
Now and for evermore. Amen.'



~ First Lesson ~

Read by Lincoln Hoeksema – A Chorister of the Choir

Genesis 3:8-15

*God announces in the Garden of Eden
that the seed of woman shall 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."

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: **Thanks be to God.**



Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

New Hampshire 18th Century

Elizabeth Poston (1905-1987)

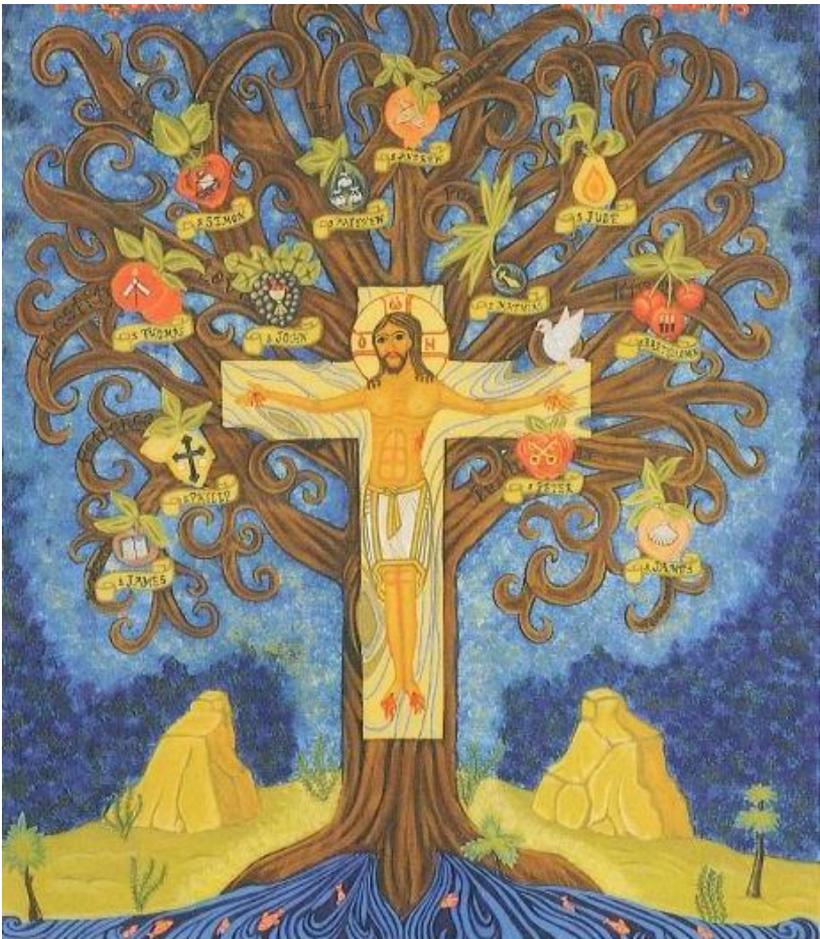
The tree of life my soul hath seen,
Laden with fruit, and always green:
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree.

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 I have 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.



~ Second Lesson ~

Read by David Diephouse – A Gentleman of the Choir

Genesis 22:15-18

*God promises to faithful Abraham
that in his seed shall 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: 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.



The Holly and the Ivy

Traditional English Carol French Tune Arr. June Nixon (b. 1942)

The holly and the ivy
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown,

(Chorus)

O The rising of the sun,
The running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.

The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas Day in the morn,

(Chorus)

The holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all,

(Chorus)

The holly and the ivy
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown,

(Chorus)

~ Third Lesson ~

Read by Bennett Foreman – A Chorister of the Choir

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Christ's birth and kingdom are foretold by Isaiah.

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, Counselor, 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.



Nativity Carol

John Rutter (b. 1945)

Born in a stable so bare, Born so long ago;
Born 'neath light of star He who loved us so.

(Chorus)

Far away silent he lay,
Born today, your homage pay,
For Christ is born for aye,
Born on Christmas Day

Cradled by mother so fair, Tender her lullaby;
Over her son so dear Angel hosts fill the sky.

(Chorus)

Wise men from distant far land, Shepherds from starry hills
Worship this babe so rare, Hearts with his warmth he fills.

(Chorus)

Love in that stable was born Into our hearts to flow;
Innocent dreaming babe, Make me thy love to know.

(Chorus)



~ Fourth Lesson ~

Read by John Scheid – A Gentleman of the Choir

Micah 5

The prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem.

But thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel. And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God, and shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.



~ O Little Town of Bethlehem ~

Phillips Brooks (1835-93)

Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Choir and Congregation stanzas 1, 2 & 4 (Please Stand)

**O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.**

**O morning stars, together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth;
For Christ is born of Mary; And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep the angels keep Their watch of wond'ring love.**

Stanza Three: Choir Only

How silently, how silently, The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him, still The dear Christ enters in.

**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 Emmanuel.**





Ave Maris Stella

Vesper Hymn c. 9th Century

Edvard Grieg (1843-1907)

Ave, maris stella,
Dei Mater alma,
Atque semper Virgo,
Felix caeli porta.

Hail, Star of the Sea,
Loving Mother of God,
And Virgin immortal,
Heaven's blissful portal.

Solve vincla reis,
Profer lumen caecis,
Mala nostra pelle,
Bona cuncta posce.

Break the chains of sinners,
Bring light to the blind,
Drive away our evils,
And ask for all good things.

Vitam praesta puram,
Iter para tutum,
Ut videntes Jesum,
Semper collaetemur.

Keep our life pure,
Make our journey safe,
So that, seeing Jesus,
We may rejoice together forever.

Sit laus Deo Patri,
Summo Christo decus,
Spiritui Sancto,
Tribus honor unus. Amen.

Let there be praise to God the Father,
And glory to Christ the most High,
And to the Holy Spirit,
And to the Three be one honor. Amen.



~ Fifth Lesson ~

Read by Michael Match – A Gentleman of the Choir

Luke 1: 26-35, 38

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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.



A Maiden Most Gentle

Andrew Carter (b. 1939)

French Traditional Melody

Arr. Andrew Carter

A maiden most gentle and tender we sing:
Of Mary the mother of Jesus our King.

Ave Maria.

How blessed is the birth of her heavenly child,
Who came to redeem us in Mary so mild.

Ave Maria.

The Archangel Gabriel foretold by his call
The Lord of creation, and Savior of all.

Ave Maria.

Three Kings came to worship with gifts rich and rare,
And marveled in awe at the babe in her care.

Ave Maria.

Rejoice and be glad at this Christmas we pray;
Sing praise to the Saviour, sing endless 'Ave'.

Ave Maria.

~ Sixth Lesson ~

Read by Charles Good – A Chorister of the Choir

Luke 2: 1, 3-7

St. Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that the whole 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 Judaea, 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 she was 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

The Oxen

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)

Jonathan Rathbone (b. 1957)

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.

"Now they are all on their knees,"

An elder said as we sat in a flock

By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where

They dwelt in their strawy pen,

Nor did it occur to one of us there

To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave

In these years! Yet, I feel,

If someone said on Christmas Eve,

"Come; see the oxen kneel,

"In the lonely barton by yonder *coomb**

Our childhood used to know,"

I should go with him in the gloom,

Hoping it might be so.

**Coomb* – a valley or cut out basin in a hillside



It is a GRCMB tradition to have one of our choristers
lead the choir and congregation in our next carol.

Andreas Rubin – Chorister Director

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

G. Whitefield (1714-1770)

Arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

**Choir and Congregation stanzas 1 & 3
(Please Stand)**

**Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn 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 newborn King!**

(Choir only stanza 2)

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
Late in time behold him come Offspring of a virgin's womb:
Veil'd in flesh the Godhead see, Hail, th'incarnate Deity!
Pleased, as man, with men to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing Glory to the newborn King!

**Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Son of
Righteousness!**

**Light and life to all He brings, Risen with healing in His wings;
Mild He lays his glory by, Born that man no more may die,
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth.
Hark! the herald angels sing Glory to the newborn King!**

~ Offertory ~

Toccata-Gigue on the Sussex Carol

George Baker (b. 1951)

~ The Choir Moves to the Rear Gallery ~

36 Years of Your Caring, Generous Partnering Has Kept our Mission of Music Alive...Thank You!

“I dread the extinction of boys’ choirs!” The Spectator – June 2018

So appeared a recent headline in a prominent British paper. Did you know that there are now only 11 daily-singing choirs of men and boys left — four Anglican cathedrals, one Catholic one, four Oxbridge colleges, and two Royal Peculiars. As Britain is the only country in the world that maintains the medieval miracle that is daily sung services with psalms, responses, canticles and anthem, this means that there are only 11 choirs of men and boys left in the world singing daily. (Well, 12: St Thomas’s Fifth Avenue in New York has a choir of men and boys who sing five services a week, emulating the glorious British phenomenon.)

This tradition, for those communities blessed to support it, twice blesses. Those who come to listen are given pause to re-think, re-experience, re-feel, reconnect and re-charge. And for the boys who sing, it’s not just about becoming musically literate, it is also about becoming emotionally literate and learning how to grow spiritually.

In the current climate of how the world teaches boys to behave, our sons and grandsons have very few places to turn to learn how to safely express how they feel. What the world needs now more than ever are caring, expressive boys who will grow into men with great empathy for the people and communities in which they will one day live and lead. The Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys is dedicated to our boys, sharing with them how to connect their head to heart and heart to head.



Boys will be boys must leave our mind-set. In its place let's proclaim that ***boys will be and are caring, expressive, empathetic and open-hearted spiritual human beings.***



As to the Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys and the extinction of boys' choirs, with your continued support and prayers the choir remains strong and has now returned to presenting musically and spiritually rich performances throughout the year. We continue to engage several of the world's greatest choral conductors to travel to Grand Rapids to be part of our GRCMB family and to inspire the choir to be the very best that it can be.

The Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys receives no city or state grants or corporate support, but depends totally upon you, our choir family, for the funds to keep this sacred programming alive.



GRCMB Donate QR Code

As the boys pass the red books down your row, please sign our email registry to receive future concert information.

Donate Online at: www.grcmb.org

As December 31st approaches, please also remember the Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys in your 2025 year-end charitable giving. A mail-back envelope is attached to this program for your convenience or online at: www.grcmb.org

For tax purposes, GRCMB is a Registered 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit organization. Contributions to the Choir are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

The Choir's tax-exempt ID# is 38-2919772.

~ Seventh Lesson ~

Read by Colt Kirkman – A Chorister of the Choir

Luke 2: 8-16

The shepherds go to the manger.

And 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.



Ding! Dong! Merrily on High

G. R. Woodward (1848-1934)

16th Century French Carol
Arr. Mack Wilberg (b. 1955)

Ding dong! merrily on high
In heav'n the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! verily the sky
Is riv'n with Angel singing.
Gloria,
Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below,
Let steeple bells be swungen,
And "Io, io, io!"
By priest and people sungen.
Gloria,
Hosanna in excelsis!

Pray you, dutifully prime
Your matin chime, ye ringers;
May you beautifully rime
Your evetime song, ye singers.
Gloria,
Hosanna in excelsis!



~ Eighth Lesson ~

Read by Faith Noorman – A Choir Family Member

Matthew 2: 1-11

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea 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 Judaea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

“And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah art not the least among the princes of Judah: 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.



The Magi's Dream

Words: Robert Tear (1939-2011)

James Whitbourn (1963-2024)

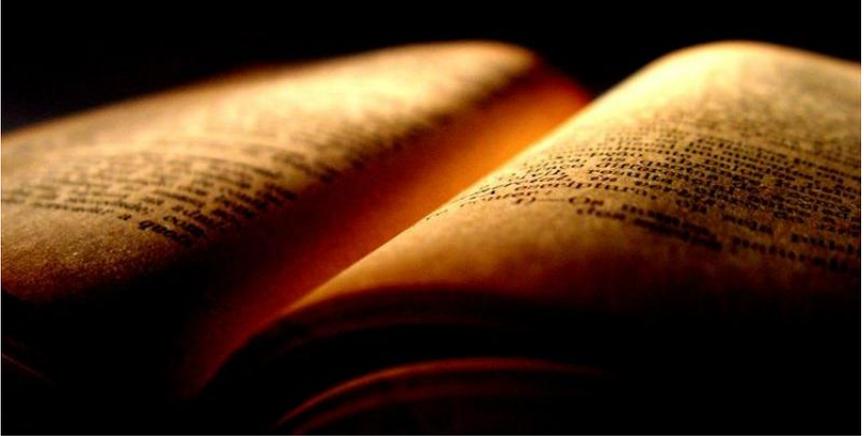
Night has come to Bethlehem,
The family is asleep,
Exhausted by the wonders seen,
The news outrageous, deep.
'That I may come and worship him.'

Ox, and ass have closed their eyes,
Their ears now hear no sound.
Shepherds have gone back to their flocks,
The mouse still noses around.
'That I may come and worship him.'

Kings have left for their distant lands,
Fractious camels moan.
At a desert spring they make their farewells.
'It's a mighty way to home!'
'That I may come and worship him.'

Later that night their heads are filled with a dream-drenched holy ray.
'Do not return to Herod the king,
Go back another way.'
'That I may come and worship him.'

And so our Christ is saved from death
His mission to complete:
To change the world by selfless love,
Satan's legions to beat.



Please stand for the ninth lesson.

Read by a GRCMB Board of Director's Member

~ Ninth Lesson ~
John 1: 1-14

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. 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; which 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.



The Quiet Heart

James Morgan (1888-1962)

June Collin (b. ?)

‘Twas in the stillness of the night that Jesus came;
No blare of trumpets heralded His birth
Nor broke the silence of the earth;
No clang of bells or blatant hue and cry
Disturbed the calm beneath the Beth’hem sky.
When Jesus came ‘twas night, and the world was still.

‘Tis to the quiet heart He loves to come:
Not often ‘midst the tumult of the day,
When we can find small time to think and pray,
Or when, confused by agitating care,
We find no secret place for Him to share.
We must be still if we His voice would hear.
“Tis to the quiet heart He loves to come.

~ Closing ~

Read by Scott Bosscher – GRCMB Director of Music

From the Epistle to Diognetus (2nd Century)

The Almighty himself, Creator of the universe,
the God whom no eye can discern,
has sent down from heaven his very own Truth, his holy Word,
to be planted in the heart of the human race.

To do this, one might have imagined he would send some servant,
some angel, some prince.
But no. He has sent the very Artificer and Constructor of the universe,
through whom the heavens were made,
and the seas set within their bounds,
whose word is obeyed by the very elements of creation,
who assigns the sun the limits of its course by day,
and commands the moon to unveil its beams by night,
and orders the obedient stars to circle the heavens.
He is the Ordainer, Disposer, and Ruler of all things,
of all that is in heaven and earth,
of the very seas and all that they contain
of fire, and air, and the deep,
of all that is above and below and in between.
Such a messenger God has sent to the human race.

One might have imagined that his coming
would be in power, terror and awesomeness.
But no. His coming was in gentleness and humility.
God sent him as a king might send his own son,
and he came among us as a fellow human being.
For God would save us by persuasion, not by compulsion
(there is no compulsion to be found in God).
And he sent him not to judge us, but out of love.

~~~~~

From Isaiah 41:13. “For I am the Lord your God, who takes hold of  
your hand and says to you, ‘Do not fear. I will help you.’”

May the love brought to each and every one of you this night by the  
Child in a manger, fill your hearts and minds with hope and purpose  
this Christmastide and throughout the new year which lies ahead.

Amen.

## **O Come All Ye Faithful**

Oakeley, Brooke

John Francis Wade (1711-1786)

Arr. David Willcocks (1919-2015)

### **Choir and Congregation (Please Stand)**

**O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant!**

**O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;**

**Come and behold him Born the King of Angels:**

**O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,**

**O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

**God of God, Light of Light,**

**Lo! He abhors not the Virgin's womb;**

**Very God, Begotten, not created:**

**O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,**

**O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!**

**Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation,**

**Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;**

**Glory to God in the highest:**

**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 that happy morning;**

**Jesu, to thee be glory giv'n,**

**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!**

### **~ Organ Postlude~**

It is our GRCMB tradition to remain seated for the service postlude.

## **Unto Us is Born a Son**

Christopher Tambling (1964-2015)

## ~ Prayer for Our Nation ~

(For silent, personal reflection during the postlude.)

Lord Jesus,

You were born and walked and lived in days much graver than ours. You know something about confronting the kingdoms of men. You know something about answering the calls of a people desperately crying out for shalom — for peace, for justice, for equity, for the radical wellness of all relationships in creation.

We are a wounded nation. We have sustained the crackling lash of racist rhetoric. We have weathered the assault of hashtags and legislative stalemates, and policies that threatened the wellbeing of marginalized people “image bearers of God” inside and beyond our borders. Worst, we have witnessed before our very eyes the corruption of our Christian faith — the exploitation of Your scriptures which crushes the image of God on earth.

Lord Christ, please stand with us as you stood with a displaced Joseph. God comfort and gird us for the long journey ahead. Use this time to deepen Your church’s discipleship — to teach us not to rely on the power of empire to bring Your kingdom to earth. Make us creative in our resistance to injustice. Fill us with love, and laughter, and joy, and life, and help us not to grow weary in doing good.

God give us glimpses of your shalom in the days to come. Show us Your power by shining Your light into our darkness. Show us the power of Your voice — You speak and chaos is halted in its tracks. You confront the kingdoms of men and call forth the image of God in us, Your people. You call forth all humanity to exercise stewardship of the world. Empower each of us to see and connect with each other.

Heal us, Lord. Connect us, Lord. Give us courage to resist. Help us to understand that while confronting something proved is easy, embracing truth through faith takes enormous work. Then, empower us to walk forward in belief that transformation is possible and in the belief that through You and with You, Your kingdom will be re-established in us.

Amen.

# Grand Rapids Choir of Men & Boys

## 2025-2026 Roster

### Senior Choristers

|                  |                   |                 |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Andrew Barrows + | Francis Hillary + | Joshua Lipsy    |
| Leo Ensing +     | Colt Kirkman      | Andreas Rubin + |
| Charles Good     | Thomas Leidel     |                 |

### Junior Choristers

|                  |                   |                    |
|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Bennett Foreman  | Tyler Netz        | Axel Townsend      |
| Lincoln Hoeksema | Victory Tamungang | Flint Townsend     |
| Alex Kazmierczak | Peter Triemstra   | Jacob Vande Werken |
| Timothy Lipsy    | Liam TenHoopen    | Landon Vermeersch  |

### Preparatory Choristers

|              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| Calvin Hamby | Jack Stover |
|--------------|-------------|

### Counter Tenors

|               |             |               |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|
| Michael Match | Adrian Pool | Ross Townsend |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|

### Tenors

|              |                   |               |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Jacob Davies | Dan Lipsy         | Jordan Malone |
| Chad Dykema  | Michael Steinfort | Art Wallace   |
| Phil Konczyk | Justin Triemstra  | Aaron Wheeler |

### Baritones

|                 |               |                  |
|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| David Bading    | Brad Hoeksema | Timothy Pennings |
| Curt Day        | Jim Noorman   | Randy Rusthoven  |
| David Diephouse |               |                  |

### Basses

|                  |                   |               |
|------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| David Boersma    | Brandon K. Harris | Dan Natelborg |
| Emmanuel de Leon | John Hibma        | John Scheid   |
| Doug De Vries    |                   |               |

**+ = Head Choristers**

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Nicky Kearney, Treasurer

Scott Bosscher

Doug DeVries

Elizabeth Fausone

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 Wierenga, Gladys

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 Beversluis, Marcus and Claudia  
 Boelens, Elizabeth  
 Bolt, Arthur and Marilyn  
 Bom, Philip  
 Boonstra, Carol  
 Bos, Ken and Fay  
 Buffham, Charles and Sandra  
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   Diane Mahon  
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 DeWindt, Joan  
 Forcia, Lyle and Mary  
 Friesen, Timothy and Tammy  
 Frisch, Jr. Kurt and Dorothy  
 Gogle, Scot  
 Heerspink, Jan  
 Hendrikse, Tom and Gwen  
 Herrera, Jake and Edward  
 Hillary, Keith and Wendy  
 Hoekman, Greg and Thea  
 Hoeksema, Ed and Lois  
 Hohman, Barbara  
 Hoisington, Michael and Linda  
 Hooker, Robert  
 Huisman, David and Lois  
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 Knox, John and Norma  
 Kooyer, William  
 Kuiper, John and Margaret  
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 Muller, Bruce and Cobie  
 Nelson, Lars  
 Noorman, James and Faith  
 Petersen, Jonathan and Beth  
 Primus, June  
 Reitsma, Ed and Noreen  
 Rozema, Ronald and Joanne  
 Rubin, Tom and Jennifer  
 Ryan, Margaret  
 Rynbrandt, Rachel  
 Scott, Jean

Sneller, Mark and Ann  
 Stob, Warren and Jean  
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 Vanderweide, Marilyn  
 Veenstra, Joe and Marcia  
 Vis, Bill and Barb  
 Wagenmaker, Rev Tyler  
 Wesseling, Ruth  
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 Winn, Jack and Paula  
 Wisse, Charles and Julie  
 Witteveen-Lane, Martin and Caralee  
 Wustman, John  
 Sneller, Mark and Ann

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 Breuker, James and Sharon  
 Christenson, Randy and Anne  
 Dragt, Alexander and Lavonne  
 Engeltjes, Dr. Ira and  
 Valerie Engeltjes  
 Flick, Steven  
 Galien, Linda  
 Gazan, Harold and Nancy  
 Huizenga, Gertrude  
 Knierim, Mick and  
 Ethel Sundman-Knierim

Kreykes, Michele  
 LaGrand, Virginia  
 Obetts, Arlene  
 Ragagni, Mary  
 Setsma, Lynn and Dave  
 Swets, Dave and Lynne  
 Van Buren, James and Marie  
 Vandekieft, Catherine  
 VanderHart, Gerald  
 VanderWilp, Sharon  
 VanKempen, Ty and Deb  
 Warner, Catherina  
 Westenbroek, Bob and Jean  
 Wilke, Linda

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 Cammenga, Cheryl  
 DeVries, Eileen  
 Early, Duane and Jeanne  
 Faass, Don  
 Fennell, Jonathan and Katie  
 Fortune, Gene  
 Graf, David and Paula  
 Herrick, James and Glenna

Jekel, Ivan and Barbara  
 Lunde, Doug and Debbie  
 Meyer, Matthew and Mary  
 Mulder, Raymond and Dawn  
 Nelson, Eric  
 Otterbacher, Jeff and Ruth  
 Praay, Keith and Jenell  
 Schaner, Charles and Marcia  
 Schmitt, Derek  
 Scoville, Joseph and Margaret

**Chichester Club \$1 - \$49**

Snow, Stephen and Betty  
Stover, Mark and Julie

Wagenmaker, Peter and Barbara  
Watkins, Janet

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Petersen, Jonathan and Beth

**Donation in memory of Shirley Hoogeboom**  
DeWindt, Joan

**In honor of Barb and Jim Hoogeboom**  
Van Andel, Richard and Virginia

**In honor of Scott Bosscher**  
Mayflower Congregational Church Choir

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10pm Candlelight Service

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