



# A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols



FINE MUSIC RADIO  
101.3

Broadcast at 6 pm (South African Standard Time)  
on Saturday 24 December 2022

## The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

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**T**he Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols tells the story of the fall of humanity, the promise of the Messiah and the birth of Jesus. It is evoked in nine short Bible readings, interspersed with the singing of Christmas hymns and carols. The format is based on an order of service drawn up at Truro Cathedral in Cornwall in 1880 that has since been adapted by churches all over the world. The most famous version is broadcast annually on Christmas Eve by the BBC from King's College, Cambridge.

Since 2016, Fine Music Radio (FMR) has also broadcast a local adaption of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols by VOX Cape Town on Christmas Eve, bringing this musical celebration to a much wider audience.

## About this year's selection of music

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**E**very December, VOX Cape Town presents its own local interpretation of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Cape Town, continuing the tradition led for many years by Barry Smith and the St George's Singers.

Two of the choral items presented tonight are by composers with whom Barry's career has been associated. The first is Peter Warlock (1894–1930) and the opening lines of his joyous carol *Benedicamus Domino* set the tone of festive expectation. Later, South African-born composer John Joubert's (1927–2019) sublime, unaccompanied setting of *There is no rose* is sung after the angel Gabriel appears to Mary in the Fifth Lesson.

To acknowledge our setting at the southern tip of Africa, several choral items from closer to home are presented including the first recording of a meditative setting of a 16th-century text composed by Stephen Carletti. This is contrasted with a specially-commissioned isiXhosa translation of the rocking *Cradle Hymn* by Malcolm Archer. You may also recognise the Afrikaans song originally written by Koos du Plessis to celebrate "a bright summer's Christmas", *Somerkersfees*, here arranged by Hans Huyssen.

In addition to the choral items are the much-loved hymns traditionally associated with this service, such as *O Come All Ye Faithful* and *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*. We encourage you to join us as we sing these exuberant songs of praise.

This year, we have celebrated a return to normality for choral singing. Regular rehearsals and performances by choirs and other ensembles are once again taking place around the Mother City. You may remember that, last year, we teamed up with musical colleagues Here be Dragons for a folk-inspired, globetrotting musical narrative to celebrate the festive season. The live recordings from that concert (that were incorporated into this broadcast last year) added such a festive flair that we have included two of them again this year. Do stay tuned until the very end of the broadcast for a couple of hot-off-the-press musical surprises!

Thank you for joining us on FMR tonight. On behalf of VOX Cape Town and the musicians, we wish you a safe, happy and music-filled Christmas.

## Instrumental Prelude

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### Coetzer-McConnachie Carol

*Composed by Jan-Hendrik Harley (South Africa)*

## Opening Hymn

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**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**     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.

All

And through all his wondrous childhood  
He would honour and obey,  
Love and watch the lowly maiden,  
In whose gentle arms he lay:  
Christian children all must be  
Mild, obedient, good as he.

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.

And our eyes at last shall see him,  
Through his own redeeming love,  
For that child so dear and gentle  
Is our Lord in heaven above;  
And he leads his children on  
To the place where he is gone.

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.

*First verse sung by Jenni van Doesburgh*

*Words by C. F. Alexander*

*Music by H. J. Gauntlett*

*Harmonised by A. H. Mann*

*Descant by Sir David Willcocks*

*Organ: Erik Dippenaar*

# The Bidding Prayer

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*Read by Reverend Natalie Barnard*

**B**eloved in Christ, be it this Christmas Eve our care and delight to prepare ourselves to hear again the message of the angels; in heart and mind to go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, and with the shepherds and the Wise Men adore the Child lying in his Mother's arms.

Let us read and mark in Holy Scripture the tale of the loving purposes of God from the first days of our disobedience unto the glorious Redemption brought us by this Holy Child; and in company with the whole Church let us make this Church glad with our carols of praise:

But let us first pray for the needs of his whole world; for peace and goodwill over all the earth; for unity and fellowship within the Church he came to build.

And let us at this time remember in his name the poor and the helpless, the cold, the hungry and the oppressed; the sick in body and mind and them that mourn; the lonely and the unloved; the aged and the little children; and all who know not the loving kindness of the Lord.

Let us also remember before God all those who rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light, that multitude which no one can number, whose hope was in the Word made flesh, and with whom, in this Lord Jesus, we for evermore are one.

These prayers and praises let us humbly offer to the throne of heaven, in the words which Christ himself hath taught us:

*Our Father, which 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 them that trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. Amen.*

The Almighty God bless us with his grace: Christ give us the joys of everlasting life: and unto the fellowship of the citizens above may the King of Angels bring us all. Amen.

# Carol

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## Benedicamus Domino

Procedenti puero  
Eya, nobis annus est!  
Virginis ex utero  
*Gloria! Laudes!*  
*Deus homo factus est et immortalis.*

Sine viri semine  
Eya, nobis annus est!  
Natus est de virgine  
*Gloria! ...*

Sine viri copia  
Eya, nobis annus est!  
Natus est ex Maria  
*Gloria! ...*

In hoc festo determino  
Eya, nobis annus est!  
Benedicamus Domino!  
*Gloria! ...*

### Translation:

A boy comes forth,  
Eya, this is our time!  
From the womb of a virgin.  
*Glory! Praise!*  
*God is made man and immortal.*

Without the seed of a man  
Eya, this is our time!  
He is born of a virgin.  
*Glory! ...*

Without the means of a man,  
Eya, this is our time!  
He is born of Mary.  
*Glory! ...*

On this appointed feast,  
Eya, this is our time!  
Let us bless the Lord.  
*Glory! ...*

*Words from the 15th century (Sloane MS 2593)*  
*Music by Peter Warlock (1894-1930, England)*

## First Lesson

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

Genesis 3:8-15 (Read by Aaron Juritz)

## Carol

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### **Maria durch ein' Dornwald ging**

Maria durch ein' Dornwald ging.  
*Kyrieleison!*

Maria durch ein' Dornwald ging,  
Der hat in sieben Jahr'n kein Laub getragen!  
*Jesus und Maria.*

Was trug Maria unter ihrem Herzen?  
*Kyrieleison!*

Ein kleines Kindlein ohne Schmerzen,  
Das trug Maria unter ihrem Herzen!  
*Jesus und Maria.*

Da haben die Dornen Rosen getragen.

*Kyrieleison!*

Als das Kindlein durch den Wald getragen,

Da haben die Dornen Rosen getragen!

*Jesus und Maria.*

**Translation by Henry Drinkler:**

Maria walks amid the thorn,

*Kyrieleison!*

Which for seven years no leaf hath born,

She walks amid the wood of thorn.

*Jesus and Mary.*

What 'neath her heart does Mary bear?

*Kyrieleison!*

A little child doth Mary bear,

Beneath her heart he nestles there.

*Jesus and Mary.*

And as the two are passing near

*Kyrieleison!*

Lo! Roses on the thorns appear!

*Jesus and Mary.*

*Words from 15th-century Germany*

*Traditional German carol arranged by Stefan Claas*

## Second Lesson

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

Genesis 22:15-18 (Read by Jenni van Doesburgh)

## Carol

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### By-By, Lullaby\*

In a dream late as I lay,  
Methought I heard a maiden say  
And speak these words so mild:  
“My little son, with thee I play,  
And come, and come,” she sang,  
“By-by, lullaby; by-by, lullaby.”  
Thus rocked she her child.

*Solo line sung by Margot Dower*

*Words from the English Renaissance (c. 1530)*

*Music by Stephen Carletti (b. 1965, South Africa)*

*\* First recording*

## Third Lesson

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*God the prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour.*

Isaiah 9:2,4-7 (Read by Anthea van Wieringen)

## Hymn

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All            Lo! He comes with clouds descending,  
                  Once for favoured sinners slain;  
                  Thousand thousand saints attending  
                  Swell the triumph of his train:  
                  Alleluia! (*three times*)  
                  God appears, on earth to reign.

Every eye shall now behold him  
    Robed in dreadful majesty;  
Those who set at naught and sold him,  
    Pierced and nailed him to the tree,  
        Deeply wailing, (*three times*)  
Shall the true Messiah see.

Those dear tokens of his passion.  
    Still his dazzling body bears,  
Cause of endless exultation  
    To his ransomed worshippers:  
        With what rapture, (*three times*)  
Gaze we on those glorious scars!

Yea, amen! Let all adore thee,  
    High, on thine eternal throne;  
Saviour, take the power and glory:  
    Claim the kingdom for thine own:  
        O come quickly! (*three times*)  
Alleluia! Come, Lord, come!

*Words by C. Wesley and J. Cennick  
18th-century French melody arranged by Sir David Willcocks*

## Fourth Lesson

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*The prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem.*

Micah 5:1-3 (Read by David Patrick)

## Carol

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### Ubi caritas

Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.  
Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor.  
Exultemus, et in ipso jucundemur.  
Timeamus et amemus Deum vivum.  
Et ex corde diligamus nos sincero.  
Amen.

#### Translation:

Where charity and love are, God is there.  
The love of Christ has gathered us together.  
Let us rejoice and be pleased in Him.  
Let us revere and love the living God.  
And may we love each other with a sincere heart.  
Amen.

*Words from the 8th century*

*Music by Ola Gjeilo (b. 1978, Norway)*

*Piano: Clinton Claasen*

## Fifth Lesson

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*The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

St Luke 1:26-38 (Read by Dr Barry Smith)

## Carol

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### There is no rose

There is no rose of such virtue  
As is the rose that bare Jesu:  
*Alleluia.*

For in this rose containèd was  
Heav'n and earth in little space:  
*Res miranda.*

By that rose we may well see  
There be one God in Persons Three:  
*Pares forma.*

Now leave we all this worldly mirth  
And follow we this joyful birth:  
*Transeamus.*

*Words from the 15th century*

*Music by John Joubert (1927-2019, South Africa then England)*

## Hymn

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**All** 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.

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

**All**            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.

*Words by Bishop Phillips Brooks*

*English traditional tune arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams*

*Descant by Thomas Armstrong*

## Sixth Lesson

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*St Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.*

St Matthew 1:18-23 (Read by Lesley Jennings)

## Carol

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### **Thula! Nunu, zola ulale**

Thula! Nunu, zola ulale  
Lingelosi zinawe!  
Ubabalo olungako  
Lufefeziwe kuwe.

*Lala baba, lala baba,*

*Thula, baba, ulale.*

Lala, sana; ukutya nempahla  
Nekhaya, zikho zonke  
Azihlawulelwanga nguwe:  
Zonke zibonelelwe.

Ibhedi yakh' intofontofo  
EyeMvan' iqinile,  
Xa wayezalw' estalini  
Eyakhe ilifula.

Bon' usana lunxibile;  
Mamathse, olo Ncumo!  
Xa Elila, unina wakhe  
Wayithuthuzel' imvana.

**Translation:**

Hush! My dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed!  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently falling on thy head.

*Lullaby, lullaby,  
Hush, my baby, lullaby.*

Sleep, my babe; thy food and raiment,  
House and home, thy friends provide;  
All without thy care or payment:  
All thy wants are well supplied.

Soft and easy is thy cradle:  
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay,  
When His birthplace was a stable  
And His softest bed was hay.

See the lovely babe a-dressing;  
Lovely infant, how He smiled!  
When He wept, the mother's blessing  
Soothed and hush'd the holy child.

*Words by Isaac Watts (1674-1748, England)*

*Translated into isiXhosa by Folio Translation Consultants (2019)*

*Music by Malcolm Archer (b. 1952, England)*

# Seventh Lesson

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*The shepherds go to the manger.*

St Luke 2:8-16 (Read by Kyle Paulssen)

## Hymn

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**All** While shepherds watched their flocks by night,  
All seated on the ground,  
The angel of the Lord came down,  
And glory shone around.

**Men** 'Fear not,' said he (for mighty dread  
Had seized their troubled mind);  
'Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To you and all mankind.'

**All** 'To you in David's town this day  
Is born of David's line  
A Saviour, who is Christ the Lord;  
And this shall be the sign:

**Ladies** 'The heav'nly babe you there shall find  
To human view displayed,  
All meanly wrapped in swathing bands,  
And in a manger laid.'

**All** Thus spake the seraph; and forthwith  
Appeared a shining throng  
Of angels praising God, who thus  
Addressed their joyful song:  
  
'All glory be to God on high,  
And to the earth be peace;  
Goodwill henceforth from heav'n to men  
Begin and never cease.'

*Words by Nahum Tate*

*Music from Este's Psalter*

*Descant by Bob Chilcott*

# Carol

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## What sweeter music

What sweeter music can we bring  
Than a carol, for to sing  
The birth of this our heav'nly King?  
Awake the voice! Awake the string!  
Dark and dull night, fly hence away,  
And give the honour to this day  
That sees December turn'd to May.

Why does the chilling winter's morn  
Smile, like a field beset with corn?  
Or smell like a meadow newly shorn  
Thus on the sudden? Come and see  
The cause, why things thus fragrant be:  
'Tis he is born, whose quick'ning birth  
Gives life and lustre, public mirth,  
To heaven, and the under-earth.

We see him come, and know him ours,  
Who, with his sunshine and his show'rs,  
Turns [all] the patient ground to flow'rs.  
The darling of the world is come,  
And fit it is, we find a room  
To welcome him.

The nobler part of all the house here, is the heart,  
Which we will give him; and bequeath  
This holly, and this ivy wreath,  
To do him honour; who's our King,  
And Lord of all this revelling.

What sweeter music can we bring  
Than a carol, for to sing  
The birth of this our heav'nly King.

*Words by Robert Herrick (1591-1674, England)*

*Music by John Rutter (b. 1945, England)*

*Piano: Clinton Claasen*

## Eighth Lesson

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*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.*

St Matthew 2:1-11 (Read by Michael Marchant)

## Carol

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### Somerkersfees\*

Welkom o stille nag van vrede  
Onder die suiderkruis,  
Wyl stemme uit die verlede  
Oor sterrevelde ruis.

*Kersfees kom, kersfees kom,  
Gee aan God die eer.  
Skenk ons 'n helder somerkersfees  
In hierdie land, o Heer.*

Hoor jy hoe sag die klokke beier  
In eeue-oue taal?  
Kyk, selfs die nagtelike swye  
Vertel die ou verhaal.

Voel jy ook nou sy warm liefde  
As ons die dag gedenk,  
Toe Hy sy seun aan ons gegee het  
Ons grootste kersgeskenk.

### Translation by Fi Smit:

Welcome O silent night of peace  
beneath the stars of the Southern Cross.  
While voices from long ago,  
travel to us over fields of stars.

*Christmas is coming, Christmas is coming,  
Give unto God all honour.  
Gift us a bright summer's Christmas  
In this land of ours, O Lord.*

Do you hear how softly the bells are chiming,  
In language that is centuries old?  
Look, even the silence of the night-time,  
Tells the old story.

Do you also feel the warmth of his love now,  
As we commemorate the day?  
When He gave us his son,  
Our greatest Christmas gift!

*Written in 1971 by Koos du Plessis (1945-1984, South Africa)*

*Arranged in 2017 by Hans Huyssen (b. 1964, South Africa)*

*\* First recording*

## Ninth Lesson

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*St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.*

St John 1:1-14 (Read by Reverend Douglas Bax)

## Hymn

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**All** 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:

*Refrain*

Sing, choirs of angels,  
Sing in exultation,  
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above;  
Glory to God in the highest:

*Refrain*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee,  
Born on Christmas 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!*

*Words translated by F. Oakeley and W. T. Brooke*

*Composer unknown*

*Music arranged by Sir David Willcocks*

## The Collect for Christmas Eve

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*Read by Reverend Natalie Barnard*

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

Amen.

## The Blessing

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*Read by Reverend Natalie Barnard*

**M**ay he who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, grant you the fullness of inward peace and goodwill; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

# Final Hymn

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All        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 the angelic host proclaim,  
              Christ is born in Bethlehem.  
                  *Hark! The herald-angels sing*  
                  *Glory to the new-born King.*

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

              Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!  
              Hail the Sun 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 new-born King.*

*Words by C. Wesley, T. Whitefield, M. Madan and others*  
*Music by Mendelssohn*  
*Descant by Sir David Willcocks*

# Finale

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Tonight's broadcast of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols is brought to a close with a sparkling live recording from VOX Cape Town's performance with Here be Dragons last December entitled *Follow That Star: A Traveller's Companion to Christmas*.

## Follow That Star

*Peter Gritton (b. 1963, England)*

### HERE BE DRAGONS

Lente Louw (vocals), Josh Frank (recorders/guitar), Annien Shaw (baroque violin), Emile de Roubaix (nyckelharpa/baroque viola), Uwe Grosser (chitarone/baroque guitar), Mariechen Meyer (double bass), Jan-Hendrik Harley (baroque violin/baroque guitar/mandolins/direction)



### VOX CAPE TOWN 2022

Dane Bezuidenhout, Peter Borchers, Suzanne Buchanan, Jan Buys, Jitske Cnossen, Andrew Curtis, Casey Driver, Elinor Driver, Shaun February, Megan Gardner, Tessa Gawith, Christina Goodall, Karen Hahne, Lia Hall, Simon Hartley, Lesley Jennings, Aaron Juritz, Fran Laenen, James Lister, Jennifer Matlock, Sarah McArthur, Robyn McKechnie, Maryanne McLachlan, James Nilsen-Misra, Kyle Paulssen, John Rennie, Owen Rogers, Kirsten Rowe, Bernice Toweel, Hedley Twidle, Stefan van der Westhuizen, Anthea van Wieringen, Christine Venter, Phillip Venter, Vera Vuković, Jean Westwood, John Woodland (direction)

## Three live recordings from earlier this month

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We have some musical surprises lined up for you tonight! The first is a triptych of carols that we performed and recorded just a fortnight ago at St Andrew's Church in Newlands. They are the traditional German carol *In dulci jubilo*, the *Carol of the Bells* from Ukraine, and an isiZulu lullaby, *Ukuthula* ('Peace') – our wish for you, and for our planet, for the New Year.

### **In dulci jubilo (“In sweet rejoicing”)**

In dulci jubilo [In sweet rejoicing]  
Now sing with hearts aglow!  
Our delight and pleasure  
Lies in praesepio [in a manger]  
Like sunshine is our treasure  
Matris in gremio [In the mother's lap]  
Alpha es et O! [Thou art Alpha and Omega!]

O Jesu parvule [O tiny Jesus]  
For thee I long alway  
Comfort my heart's blindness  
O puer optime [O best of boys]  
With all thy loving kindness  
O princeps gloriae [Prince of glory]  
Trahe me poste! [Draw me unto thee!]

O Patris caritas [O Father's caring]  
O nati lenitas [O newborn's mildness]  
Deeply were we stained  
Per nostra crimina [By our crimes]  
But thou for us hast gained  
Coelorum gaudia [Heavenly joy]  
O that we were there!

Ubi sunt gaudia [Where be joys]  
In any place but there?  
There are angels singing  
Nova cantica [New songs]  
And there the bells are ringing  
In Regis curia [At the King's court]  
O that we were there!

*Words (German/Latin) from the Middle Ages  
Harmonised by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)*

## Carol of the Bells

Hark! How the bells,  
Sweet silver bells,  
All seem to say,  
'Throw cares away'.  
Christmas is here  
Bringing good cheer,  
To young and old,  
Meek and the bold.

Ding, dong, ding, dong,  
That is their song,  
With joyful ring.  
All carolling.  
One seems to hear  
Words of good cheer  
From ev'rywhere,  
Filling the air!

Oh, how they pound,  
Raising the sound,  
O'er hill and dale  
Telling their tale.  
Gaily they ring  
While people sing,  
Songs of good cheer,  
Christmas is here!

Merry Christmas!  
Merry Christmas!  
On, on they send,  
On without end,  
Their joyful tone  
To every home.

*Words by Peter J. Wilhousky (1902-1978, United States)  
Music by Mykola Leontovych (1877-1921, Ukraine)*

## Ukuthula

Ukuthula ('Peace')  
Ukubonga ('Praise')  
Ukukholwa ('Faith')  
Ukunqoba ('Victory')  
Induduzo ('Comfort')

*Traditional isiZulu lullaby*

*Soloists: Kirsten Rowe,  
Lia Hall and Casey Driver*



# A musical Advent calendar

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Husband-and-wife team Jan-Hendrik Harley and Mariechen Meyer formed the Gqeberha-based Yellowwood Duo during lockdown in 2020. This year, they have prepared a musical Advent calendar comprising 24 short carols from around the world. Each day this month, they have been releasing one carol – and tonight we are delighted to share this musical offering with you in full!



## 1 **The First Nowell**

This English Christmas carol is of Cornish origin and was first published in *Carols Ancient and Modern* in 1879. 'Nowell' is an Early Modern English synonym for Christmas, derived from the French 'Noël'.

## 2 **Puer nobis nascitur**

This medieval carol can be found in a number of manuscript sources from the 14th and 15th centuries but was first published in the 1582 Finnish song book *Piae Cantiones* by the Lutheran cleric Jaakko Suomalainen.

## 3 **Patapan**

This moving French carol, written by Bernard de La Monnoye in the 18th century, was originally titled *Guillô, Pran Ton Tamborin*. 'Patapan' refers to the sound of the drum.

## 4 **Silent Night**

*Silent Night* is a German carol and was written in 1818 by the Austrian composer Franz Xaver Gruber. It has gained much popularity since it was first recorded in 1905 and was declared an 'intangible cultural heritage' by UNESCO in 2011.

## 5 **The Wassail Song**

Originating as a borrowing from the Old Norse salutation 'ves heill', in modern times 'wassailing' refers to going from house to house singing carols at Christmas time.

## 6 **Carol of the Bells**

Written by the Ukrainian composer Mykola Leontovych in 1916 with lyrics by Peter Wilhousky, this lively carol is based on the Ukrainian folk chant *Shchedryk*.

## 7 **Carol of the Birds**

*El cant dels Ocells* is a traditional Catalan Christmas song and lullaby, made famous by the legendary cellist Pablo Casals.

## 8 **Ma bregada, levatz-vos**

This beautiful tune is from a collection of Provençal carols from the Notre Dame des Doms in Avignon. Dating from between 1570 and 1610, these carols were written in the vernacular and were often set to well-known folk tunes to reach a wider audience.

## 9 **Somerkersfees**

This beautiful South African and Afrikaans Christmas carol was written by Koos du Plessis and translates to 'Summer Christmas'.

## 10 **Nova! Nova! Ave fit ex Eva**

This is a lively 15th-century carol set to a macaronic text (a text in two languages; in this case, Latin and English).

## 11 **En etsi valtaa, loistoa**

This Christmas carol was written by Zacharias Topelius in 1887. The original text was in Swedish, and it was entitled 'Julpsalm' (Christmas Carol). The author of the Finnish text, set to music by Jean Sibelius in 1909, is not known; however, it is believed to be a translation by Martti Korpilathi.

- 12 Deilig er Jorden**  
Originally a Selisian folk song, it was combined with the German text *Schönster Herr Jesu* in 1842 by Hoffmann von Fallersleben and Richter. In 1850, B. S. Ingemann wrote *Dejlig er Jorden* which he set to the same melody.
- 13 Nesem vám voviny**  
Although little is known about the origins of this lively carol, it remains to this day a part of a rich tradition of Czech Christmas songs or 'Koledy', dating back to the Middle Ages.
- 14 The Holly and the Ivy**  
This traditional British folk Christmas carol can be traced back as far as the early nineteenth century. The lyrics and melody varied significantly in traditional communities, but the song has since become standardised as the version which was collected in 1909 by the English folk song collector Cecil Sharp in the market town of Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire, England, from a woman named Mary Clayton.
- 15 What Child Is This?**  
Quite a number of Christmas songs and carols are based on existing, and usually popular, folk tunes. The text was written by William Chatterton Dix in 1865 and set to the tune of *Greensleeves*, a traditional English folk song, in 1871.
- 16 Noël nouvelet**  
There are several versions (and tunes) to this traditional French carol that dates back to the 15th century. The oldest printed version can be found in a song collection from after 1483, made by Jehan Tisserand.
- 17 I Saw Three Ships**  
The story around this English folk carol can be traced back to the 12th century, when three ships brought the relics of the alleged Wise Men to Köln, Germany, giving rise to the legend about sailing into landlocked Bethlehem. Another more romantic notion is that the ships refer to the camels that carried the Wise Men, as camels are often referred to as the 'ships of the desert'.
- 18 In the Bleak Midwinter**  
Written in the 1870s by the English poet Christina Rossetti, Gustav Holst composed a setting of the poem in 1906 for the English Hymnal entitled *Cranham*.
- 19 Puer Natus in Bethlehem**  
This 16th-century version of the song, as found in the songbook of Anna von Köln, can be traced back even further to a Gregorian chant entitled *Benedictine Process, XIV. C*.
- 20 Trent Bridge Carol**  
This carol, composed by Jan-Hendrik Harley, is the result of an impromptu music-making session with friends at a farm outside Kirkwood in the Eastern Cape. It is written in the style of a *polska* (Scandinavian dance).
- 21 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**  
First appearing in 1739 in the collection *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, this carol was set to a piece of secular music by Mendelssohn (originally written in 1855) by British musician William Hayman Cummings.
- 22 God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen**  
The phrase 'God rest you merry' historically means that God grants you peace and happiness. (The phrase appears in Shakespeare's 1599 play, *As you like it*.) This carol first appears in print on a broadsheet dated to c. 1760, but an earlier version dating from the 1650s can be found in an anonymous manuscript.
- 23 Huron Carol**  
This Canadian Christmas hymn was written in the 1640s by Jean de Brébeuf, a Jesuit missionary at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons in Canada. He wrote the lyrics in the native language of the Huron/Wendat people, and the song's melody is based on a traditional French folk song, *Une Jeune Pucelle* ('A Young Maid').
- 24 Joy to the World**  
This English Christmas carol was written in 1719 by Isaac Watts. The lyrics are an interpretation of Psalm 98, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. The tune as it is sung today was published in 1848 by the American composer Lowell Mason, who attributed it to Georg Friedrich Handel. There are striking similarities between his tune and some tunes found in *Messiah*, but these have been dismissed by Handel scholars as chance resemblances.

# Organ Voluntary

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## In dulci jubilo (“In sweet rejoicing”) BWV 729

*Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)*

*Organ: Erik Dippenaar*



**What did you think of this year’s broadcast of the Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols? Did you enjoy the selection of music?**  
We’d love to hear from you! Email us at [hello@voxcapetown.com](mailto:hello@voxcapetown.com)  
or connect with us on social media @VOXCapeTown



*Choral items (excluding live recordings) recorded at  
CapeTown Sound, Woodstock, in December 2019 by Sergio Trout*

*Hymns and organ music recorded in St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church,  
Cape Town, in December 2017 by Paul Petersen and Sergio Trout*

*Readings recorded in St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church,  
Cape Town, in December 2016 by Nolan Chiat*

*Executive Producers: Patric van Blerk, John Woodland,  
Kyle Paulssen and Paul Petersen*

*Mastered at CapeTown Sound*

*The music that forms part of tonight’s broadcast (excluding live recordings) is available on  
YouTube and online streaming platforms such as Apple Music, Spotify and Amazon Music*

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*Artwork by Casey Driver*



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## About VOX Cape Town

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**V**OX Cape Town was founded in 2015 with a vision to create fresh, mesmerising choral experiences to enrich the musical life of the Mother City and to continue the legacy of the St George's Singers, led for over 50 years by Barry Smith.



Since then, it has been written that VOX has ‘developed a reputation for its imaginative programming and performances of seldom-heard choral music in unconventional spaces, and has continually impressed audiences both with its fresh approach to new and interesting repertoire, including commissioning several new works by local composers, and its approach to concert staging including lighting and visual effects’.

Over the past seven years, we have presented scores of immersive performances in venues ranging from the intimacy of the Irma Stern Museum and the Tasting Cellar at Groot Constantia to the breathtaking grandeur of the Norval Foundation and St George’s Cathedral. Our flagship performances have spanned millennia, juxtaposed the classical and the contemporary, and taken us on a voyage to the mystical Northern Lights. Through special relationships with Fine Music Radio and CapeTown Sound, we aim to promote South African choral music locally and across the globe. To find out more, visit [www.voxcapetown.com](http://www.voxcapetown.com)

## About St Andrew’s Presbyterian Church

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**S**t Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Cape Town, is the mother church of Presbyterianism in South Africa. It was built with the assistance of the British Government as a Scottish Presbyterian Church and opened in 1828 for the Scottish community including the Scottish garrison in Cape Town which was well represented in the church. As a result of the latter, St Andrew’s is still the regimental church of the Cape Town Highlanders. Their roll of honour is kept there and their flags are laid up in the church.

St Andrew's has a beautiful organ that is over a century old. Every Sunday, there is an Afrikaans service at 9 am and an English service at 10:30 am. A service is also held at 9:30 am on Christmas Day. The church may be contacted on 021 419 1059.

