



A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols



FINE MUSIC RADIO
101.3

**Broadcast at 7 PM (South African Standard Time)
on Sunday 24 December 2023**

The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols

The 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 has also broadcast a local adaptation 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 the selection of music

Every 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 Huysen.

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 in 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, two years ago, 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 Fine Music Radio tonight. On behalf of VOX Cape Town and the musicians, we wish you a safe, happy and music-filled Christmas.

Instrumental Prelude

Coetzer-McConnachie Carol

Composed by Jan-Hendrik Harley (South Africa)

Opening Hymn

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

Read by Reverend Natalie Gordon

Beloved 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

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

*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

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,
Lord have mercy!
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?
Lord have mercy!
A little child doth Mary bear,
Beneath her heart he nestles there.
Jesus and Mary.

And as the two are passing near
Lord have mercy!
Lo! Roses on the thorns appear!
Jesus and Mary.

*Words from 15th-century Germany
Traditional German carol arranged by Stefan Claas*

Second Lesson

*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

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

God the prophet foretells the coming of the Saviour.

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

Hymn

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

The prophet Micah foretells the glory of little Bethlehem.

Micah 5:1–3 (Read by David Patrick)

Carol

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

The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

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

Carol

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

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

St Matthew tells of the birth of Jesus.

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

Carol

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

The shepherds go to the manger.

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

Hymn

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

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

The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

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

Carol

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

St John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

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

Hymn

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

Read by Reverend Natalie Gordon

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

Read by Reverend Natalie Gordon

May 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

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

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 in December 2021 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 (chitarrone, baroque guitar), Mariechen Meyer (double bass), Jan-Hendrik Harley (baroque violin, baroque guitar, mandolins, direction)



VOX CAPE TOWN 2023

Soprano: Suzanne Buchanan, Megan Gardner*, Christina Goodall, Lia Hall, Fran Laenen, Maryanne McLachlan, Kirsten Rowe*, Vera Vuković, Christine Venter*, Anthea van Wieringen

Alto: Elinor Driver*, Tessa Gawith, Karen Hahne, Lesley Jennings, Sarah McArthur, James Nilsen-Misra, Esma Pretorius, Jean Westwood, Karin-Marie Wilson

Tenor: Matt Beck, Dane Bezuidenhout, Dirk Binneman, Peter Borchers, Casey Driver, Jennifer Matlock, Kyle Paulssen, Roxane Steffen

Bass: Chris Arnold, Jan Buys*, Simon Hartley, Aaron Juritz, James Lister*, John Rennie, Hedley Twidle, Stefan van der Westhuizen, Phillip Venter

Founder and Director: John Woodland

* = on leave

Two live recordings from earlier this month

We have two musical surprises lined up for you tonight! The first is a duo of carols that we performed and recorded just a fortnight ago at St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Cape Town. Hot off the press, they are a lilting traditional Catalan carol that describes Mary and Joseph's search for shelter shortly before Jesus's birth, and the *Sussex Carol*, an arrangement by David Willcocks of a carol first heard (and collected) by Ralph Vaughan Williams from a small town in Sussex (hence the name of the carol).

Sant Josep I La Mare De Déu

Mary, Mother of God's dear child,
With Saint Joseph made a journey.
'Twas from Nazareth they came;
It was as the sun was rising.

Mary is singing her baby to sleep.

All the day they travel far.
In the evening, faint and weary
They seek rest in Bethlehem;
But all folk their doors are closing.

Mary is singing her baby to sleep.

They have found no lodging there,
Far too poor they seem for pity.
They must seek a shelter mean
All of reeds and rushes woven.

Mary is singing her baby to sleep.

Now Saint Joseph finds wood for a fire,
Though the wood is far to carry.
In the cave, so dark, so cold,
Jesus Christ is born to Mary.

Mary is singing her baby to sleep.

Words by J. Woodhouse

Traditional Catalan carol arranged by Pere Jorda

Sussex Carol

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 newborn 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.'

English Traditional carol arranged by David Willcocks

Organ: Mikyle Adams



A musical Advent calendar

Husband-and-wife team Jan-Hendrik Harley and Mariechen Meyer formed the Gqeberha-based Yellowwood Duo during lockdown in 2020. Last year, they prepared a musical Advent calendar comprising 24 short carols from around the world, releasing one carol per day – and this year they have done the same! Tonight we are delighted to share most of this new musical offering with you.



1 **Beata Viscera**

The French Medieval composer Perotin wrote the timeless masterpiece 'Beata Viscera' in the late 12th century within the legendary Notre Dame Cathedral, an icon of French Gothic brilliance – no doubt enchanted by the ethereal sounds that echoed through its hallowed halls.

2 **Old Christmas**

Manon Campbell (1890–1987) was from an established family of Scotch settlers who came to the Kentucky region in 1809. Campbell's first instrument was a gourd banjo. He learned tunes from his father's sister, 'Viney' Lusk, and her son, 'Dandy' Lusk, and Will Christian (born c. 1872), an older African-American fiddler and a contemporary of Manon's father who had a reputation as a dance fiddler.

3 **El Noi de la Mare**

'El Noi de la Mare' is a Catalan folk song, both a lullaby and a Christmas song. The title is Catalan for 'the mother's baby boy', where the mother refers to the Virgin Mary and the boy is the baby Jesus. It is one of Miguel Llobet's best known arrangements of a Catalan folk song.

4 **Il est né, le Divin Enfant**

The song was published for the first time in 1862 by Jean-Romain Grosjean, Dawot Michel and Pol Wobber, organist of the Cathedral of Saint-Dié-des-Vosges, in a collection of carols entitled 'Airs des Noël's lorrains'. The text of the carol was published for the first time in a collection of ancient carols, either in 1875 or 1876, by Dom G. Legeay.

5 **Christmastide**

This delightful modern carol was written by Donald Fraser at a party, as a gift for the hostess Jessye Norman. This gentle, lilting carol is fast becoming a favourite and has been arranged for many different instrumentations, from full orchestra and chorus to more intimate settings such as this one.

6 **Keys of Bethlehem**

The melody of this traditional American folk song was sourced from Ruth Crawford Seeger's collection of traditional American folk songs.

7 **L'Âne Petit (Jan-Hendrik Harley)**

'L'Âne Petit' is a concept piece, crafted as a traditional Provençal folk song, 'The Little Donkey'. This composition pays homage to a common practice from the 16th to 18th centuries in which existing folk tunes often served as the foundation for Christmas carols.

8 **A Virgin Most Pure**

This is one of the most venerable and widely distributed of all English Christmas carols. The earliest known version of the text is from 'New Carols for this Merry Time of Christmas' (London, 1661). This version begins 'In Bethlehem city, in Jewry it was'. The familiar first verse, 'A virgin unspotted' or 'A virgin most pure' had been added when the carol next surfaced in the 18th century.

- 9 Down in Yon Forest**
This hauntingly beautiful English carol, collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams in 1906, has unusually cryptic lyrics, and it weaves an enchanting narrative, believed by some to reference the Holy Grail.
- 10 Christmas Tune (Jan-Hendrik Harley)**
This composition pays homage to 19th-century Christmas music, capturing the emotionally charged simplicity often found in carols from this era.
- 11 Lo! Christ the Lord is Born**
This exquisite little piece, meant as a Christmas card gift from Edward Elgar and his wife to their close friends, resonates with the warmth and joy of the holiday season, and captures the essence of Christmas, conveying a sense of celebration and togetherness.
- 12 Julottan**
'Julottan' is a modern Scandinavian Christmas carol by Mats Wallman. Also known as 'Julpolska', the piece has the interesting polska characteristic where the emphasised second beat of the bar often comes slightly early.
- 13 Christ the Lord is Born Today (Jan-Hendrik Harley)**
Revel in the homage to late 19th-century English choral Christmas carols with 'Christ the Lord is Born Today'. This composition unfolds with a spritely A section, echoing the joyous spirit of festive celebrations, transitioning into a slower, more melodious B section before returning to the A section for a second time.
- 14 Old Christmas Morning**
The next piece was written by the Appalachian fiddler French Carpenter. In keeping with the tradition of old-timey fiddle pieces, the violin is tuned in cross-tuning (scordatura). The unique tuning adds an extra layer of authenticity to the magic of 'Old Christmas Morning'.
- 15 La Nit da Nadal**
Another arrangement of a Catalan melody by Miguel Llobet. He was quite famous for his many incredible arrangements of folk songs for the classical guitar.
- 16 Christmas in the Morning**
Fredamann Stickle was a legendary Shetland fiddler who is said to have played this tune for the Laird of Burness and Unst every Christmas morning. G. M. Nelson writes this about Stickle in his 'Notes on some Shetland fiddlers': 'Two brothers, the name of Stickle, and there are conflicting stories as to their method of arrival, but that does not concern us here. They were contemporaries of Thomas and James Stout of Delting, and Fredamond [sic] Stickle was reckoned the first fiddler of the day in the island of his adoption. Stickle was also a composer, and could teach the harp, piano or guitar with the grace equal to that he displayed in playing the violin.'
- 17 Psallite Unigenito**
Written by Michael Praetorius in 1609, this rhythmic and joyful piece is set to a macaronic text in Latin and German.
- 18 Troika**
While 'Troika' is not a Christmas song per se, it has been adopted by Christmas programmes regularly and evokes the joy of a Winter Christmas perfectly. It is part of Prokofiev's score for the film 'Lieutenant Kijé', which was later adapted to an orchestral suite with much success.
- 19 Pifa**
Also known as the Pastoral Symphony, the 'Pifa' is one of the most endearing instrumental movements penned by G. F. Handel. This arrangement of the piece places literal emphasis on the title, which refers to the pifferari who played their bagpipes in Rome (and sometimes London) on Christmas morning.
- 20 Good King Wenceslas (Tempus adest florum)**
Also known as the flower carol, this tune was composed around the 13th century. In 1853, John Mason Neale (author of the English language version of 'In Dulci Jubilo') penned new lyrics for the 13th-century carol and called it 'Good King Wenceslas', referring to the legend that was based on the life of Saint Wenceslaus I, Duke of Bohemia (907-935), who was not a king but a duke.

Organ Voluntary

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 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 Pefersen

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



VOX Cape Town is grateful to Eon de Vos, Rodney Trudgeon, Mawande Lobi and the entire team at Fine Music Radio for making this broadcast possible.

FMR broadcasts on 101.3 FM in Cape Town, 107.9 FM in Fish Hoek and Noordhoek, 94.7 FM in Hout Bay and Llandudno, 97.1 FM on the Atlantic Seaboard, DStv Audio Channel 838 and worldwide on www.fmr.co.za.

About VOX Cape Town

VOX 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 eight 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.

About St Andrew's Presbyterian Church

St 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 083 738 1710.

