

Join us on Sunday, December 27, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. on Facebook for our traditional Lessons & Carols service!

The Nine Lessons and Carols service is held in churches all across the world today. Edward White Benson, the first Bishop of Truro, devised a new service in 1880: the Nine Lessons with Carols. His intention was at least partly to keep his flock from enjoying too much of the wrong kind of festive spirit in the local pubs. Taking nine biblical passages from the old and new testaments he interspersed them with various carols, hymns and three "anthems" (from Handel's Messiah – For unto us a child is born, There were shepherds abiding in the field and the Hallelujah chorus) to tell the story.

The Nine Lessons with Carols service was an immediate success. Truro's citizens packed into the temporary wooden shed that stood as their cathedral for seven years while their cathedral was constructed. Not only was it a satisfying format theologically and liturgically, it also tapped into the carol revival that was in full swing in late Victorian England and had strong roots in the west of England. It was also a vehicle for bringing the community together at an unsettling time.

