



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15TH, 2023



Dearly Beloved,

Begun in the Church of England on Christmas Eve, 1918, Lessons & Carols is traditionally a service of Christmas carols interspersed with nine lessons from the Christian scriptures that recount “the fall of man, the promise of a messiah, the incarnation, and the great commission to preach the good news” (I may be missing some capital letters in that sentence). Years ago, loving the idea but not the theology, I reimagined the service for us; like good Unitarian Universalists, we’ve made it our own, and it has become a beloved holiday tradition at Arlington Street.

Thanks to Elf Jefe and the saving remnant, the sanctuary is now completely decorated for the holidays! This coming Sunday, our Executive Minister, Rev. Beth Robbins, and I will be joined in the high pulpit by four of our community ministers: Rev. Ali Jablonsky (Chaplain, Tufts Medical Center), John O’Connor (all but ordained!), Rev. John Gibbons (Community Minister for Good Trouble), and Rev. Dr. Kelly Murphy Mason (Community Minister for Spiritual Direction). Each of us will share a brief “lesson” — a reflection or story — from our holiday storehouse. In between, we’ll all sing some of our favorite carols: *Angels We Have Heard on High*; *Come Darkness, Come Light*; *Go Tell It on the Mountain*; and *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*. There will be versions of both the Wexford and Sussex Carols; the Arlington Street Choir will sing new arrangements of *Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming* and *Deck the Hall(s)*; and Bek Zehr (mezzo soprano) and Sam LaGrego (tenor) will sing *O Come, All You Unfaithful*.

Following the service, if you’re attending in person, Gaby & George Whitehouse invite you to join them for Sunday brunch at Precinct Kitchen (154 Berkeley Street). Gather on the Arlington Street steps for the short walk over. They’d love to know

that you're coming; you can write to gabygeo@tiac.net or call Gaby at (617) 212-0419. BYO wallet!

Zoomers, please keep an eye on your mailbox for some Christmas Eve love coming your way from Arlington Street, thanks to Tom Anderson & Bruce Dallaire! I spent two hours at the post office as an aide-de-elf, doing a small part of this project; Tom and Bruce, yours is truly a labor of love and generosity, and we are so grateful!

Ready or not, here comes a very busy holiday week! At 5:15 on Wednesday evening, December 20th, we'll gather on Arlington Street in front of the meetinghouse and in the Arlington Street Zoom room for a candle light walking meditation in the Public Garden, honoring the winter solstice. Candles will be provided.

*What would you like to leave behind in the darkness?
What would you like to welcome into the light?*

Immediately following the walk, we'll return to the meetinghouse for our 17th Annual Carol Sing! Once again, we'll gather with Sanctuary Boston (Zoomers, please note that you will have to leave the Arlington Street Zoom room and enter the Sanctuary Boston Zoom room) as Director of Music Mark David Buckles leads us in singing seasonal favorites! As always, more information is available on the homepage at ASCBoston.org.

Next week, I'll tell you about Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* and our three services on Christmas Eve (11:00 a.m.; 7:00 and 9:00 p.m.)! For now, with the earliest sunset this coming Tuesday and the shortest day on Thursday, let's enjoy the light and warmth we gather from one another!

Happy Winter Solstice!

*Faithfully yours, with love,
Kim*

