

for SAB voices, accompanied

# A Festival of Lessons and Carols

by Hal H. Hopson

*Available:*

Choral Score (SATB) ..... GB9710

Choral Score (SAB) ..... 46514

Orchestration (Conductor's Score and Parts) ..... GB9710A

Handbell Score ..... GB9710HB

Congregational Part (Pack of 50 bulletins) ..... GB9710CP

Listening CD ..... GB9710CD

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## PERFORMANCE NOTES

A **FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS** has several unique characteristics:

1. It is extremely flexible. At approximately 50 minutes in length, it can be a full service unto itself. If necessary, however, some of the lessons may be omitted in order to adapt the service to various worship situations.
2. The service is easily adaptable to a graded choir program, encouraging young choirs to participate on many of the unison and two-part stanzas of the hymns.
3. The optional orchestration (GB9710A) for strings, handbells and percussion offers a variety and color that the organ alone cannot provide. The handbell score is also available separately (GB9710HB).
4. The lessons have been updated using today's English and reflect important linguistic considerations, such as inclusive language, natural poetic phrasing, and clarity of expression.
5. The work is of moderate difficulty, offering a challenge for some groups, but well within reach of most church choirs.
6. A variety of carols are included - some familiar, some unfamiliar - as well as an original setting of a medieval text.
7. To feature the inherent beauty of both male and female voices, one carol is provided for SSA and another for TB voices.
8. A congregational part (GB9710CP) is available separately, which includes all the lessons as well as those carols sung by the congregation.
9. The work may be performed with string quartet, quintet, or a full string orchestra.
10. The Carol Prelude uses the full instrumentation (organ, strings, handbells, and percussion), and features some of the carols sung in the service. The prelude may also be played by organ alone.
11. The Postlude is left to the discretion of the director. One suggestion would be to repeat measures 27-55 of the CAROL PRELUDE.
12. Directors are encouraged to be creative in the use of various carols, adapting them to their own situation. For example, many of the hymn stanzas may be performed by choir (or the choirs) alone rather than with congregation.
13. The Readers of the lessons should announce each lesson with its descriptive phrase.

## A BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

Lessons and Carols had its origin at Truro Cathedral (England) on Christmas Eve 1880, when a service of scripture and supporting carols was developed by the Bishop of Truro, F.W. Benson. Some 38 years later in 1918, this format was adapted for Christmas Eve at King's College Chapel, Cambridge, England. The BBC broadcast from King's College helped to popularize the Service of Lessons and Carols, and it was quickly duplicated by cathedrals and small churches throughout the world. The heart of the service continues to this day - that is, the retelling of the Christian's story of faith from the fall of Adam to the coming of the Word Incarnate.

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# 1. CAROL PRELUDE

(including: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*; *Angels We Have Heard on High*;  
*From a Distant Home*; *God Walked in Eden's Garden Fair*)

for organ, with optional strings, handbells and percussion

Arranged by  
**HAL H. HOPSON**

Slowly, gently, with expressive mystery, chant-like (♩ = ca. 60)

HANDBELLS

*p*

Slowly, gently, with expressive mystery, chant-like (♩ = ca. 60)

ORGAN

\* *p*

Man.

5

*mf*

5

*mf*

Ped.

9

9

*p*

\*When strings are used, organ should omit bracketed passages (measures 1-8, 23-26, 111-119).

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