

**“THE FIRST CAROL”
DECEMBER 2008**

One of the great joys of the Christmas season is the opportunity to sing carols. It's not enough just to be able to listen to them as they are played on the radio or in stores. Christmas carols were not meant to be only “background music.” They were composed in order to give us the opportunity to lift up our voices in praise to Mary's baby born in Bethlehem.

When Luke writes about the birth of Jesus, he records the first Christmas carol. Shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem received a visit from an angel. The well-known words of the King James Version read,

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men.”
(Luke 2:13-14)*

Centuries later, poets and composers would use these words to pen some of our most beloved Christmas carols. They inspired Charles Wesley to write, “Hark! the Herald Angels Sing.” James Montgomery was moved to pen, “Angels, from the Realms of Glory.”

When we held our first Community Christmas Eve Carol Sing last year, we found that many of our neighbors love to sing these festive songs. They long to experience the carols as more than just “background music.” If you were at that joyful service, you remember that visitors, both young and old, joined us in praising Mary's the new-born King. Whole families came in order to share the opportunity of honoring the Christ Child in song.

Because of the success of last year's carol sing, we are going to have another one this Christmas Eve. Circle December 24th on your calendar and plan on joining us. Beginning at 6:30 p.m., Karl Ross will play special Christmas arrangements on the organ. The carol sing itself will begin at 7:00 p.m. and be accompanied by a live nativity presentation. This special service will end with a candlelight communion. It's our prayer that this service will help you experience the true and genuine joy of the season. Rejoice and sing because the Savior has come!

Pastor Robert Wierenga
Lake Seminole Presbyterian Church
www.lakeseminolepc.org