



The Traditional Candlelight Service at Albert College

When the holiday season was approaching, we knew that an in-person Candlelight Service at the Senior School was not going to be possible due to the pandemic. This annual event of Nine Carols and Lessons is an important Albert College tradition that is held in the Memorial Chapel and showcases our choirs and bands. It has been an event that many look forward to and is part of their own annual Christmas celebrations. We felt that this was a tradition that we did not want to miss. It was decided that a virtual event was a must. This would be the first-ever virtual Candlelight Service in Albert College's 163 years of history, so we had to get it right.

Our annual Candlelight Service is usually offered on two separate evenings to accommodate the wonderful crowd of Albert College parents, staff, grandparents, and community members who attend this event every year. The Memorial Chapel is filled both nights and many people from the local community join us to enjoy this service. Our virtual event was held on Friday evening and we provided a link to families so they could all log in at the same time. Although the Chapel would be empty, we would all be watching simultaneously, as if it were a live event.

To provide the best quality experience possible, we used local videographer, Victor Cooper, to make our dreams a reality and bring our vision of a virtual Candlelight Service to life. As in the past, students from Grade 6 to 12 were chosen by their teachers to each read one of the lessons and these were pre-taped in the Chapel. We also had prayers recorded by our faculty members and messages from the Head of School. Video recording the actual candle lighting - always done by two Grade 1 students - was a little tricky, as we needed to be physically distanced while at the same time, highlighting this focal part of the service. Our students did a fantastic job!

As students are not able to sing or play wind instruments at school this year, we used recordings of musical performances from years past. We also decided that we did not want to let our other December traditions just pass us by, and so, these were also highlighted in our video. After the Nine Carols and Lessons concluded, we included footage of the singing of the Boar's Head Carol – an annual tradition at our Christmas Dinner. Using footage and photos from past years, we were able to pay tribute to this wonderful tradition. The video concludes with another rather boisterous tradition: the singing of the 12 Days of Christmas, after the Christmas meal in Ackerman Hall. Using admittedly raw footage from past renditions, this snippet certainly captures the energy, spirit, and enthusiasm present at Albert's annual Christmas dinner.

The Candlelight Service was broadcast on the Albert College website for everyone to watch and enjoy together on December 12, 2020. The magic of the Candlelight Service was shining through television and computer screens around the globe. It was a wonderful experience for alumni, former faculty and staff, parents and students to enjoy together virtually and a way we were able to continue this important Albert College tradition.

WATCH THE VIDEO

