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Palaeography Group Holiday Party

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Penn Ph.D student Alex Devine has been a regular at meetings of the Manuscript Collective. As organizer of the Penn Palaeography Group, he leads a monthly gathering of graduate students that share about current research, discuss new texts acquired by the Kislak Center, and work together on transcriptions.

— Alex Devine
Penn Manuscript Collective to join the Paleography Group’s holiday party. Plenty of food and drink were on hand as the group read through medieval manuscripts of carols and Christmas recipes.

— edible gingerbread Palaeography flair, courtesy Anne Dutlinger

We began with a reading of “Now ys the tyme of crystymas” from a 16th century commonplace book (find the entire book here). This jaunty rhyme calls for a festive celebration—those who can bring no sport to the hall should be sent to the stocks!

— Make we mery bothe more and lasse / For now ys t[h]e tyme of Crystymas

Next, we read through ‘Adam lay ybounden’ from a 15th-century British Library Manuscript, a favorite carol of Alex’s.
The evening finished with the Nativity story from the Gospel of Luke: we had Penn’s own Wycliffite New Testament (MS Codex 201) on hand and read through the story sentence by sentence.

As we read through the story, we were pleasantly surprised to find a marginal addition in the left-hand column next to the shepherds’ arrival at the stable and the resulting appearance the angelic host. As the angels are praising God, a reader has marked the passage simply ‘in excelsis.’
A warm thanks to Alex Devine and the Penn Paleography Group for their hospitality and good cheer! Happy New Year!