



ASCENSION

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CHRISTMAS EVE, 2015



Nativitye

Immensity cloystered in thy deare wombe,
Now leaves his wellbelov'd imprisonment,
There he hath made himselfe to his intent
Weake enough, now into our world to come;
But Oh, for thee, for him, hath th'Inne no roome?
Yet lay him in this stall, and from the Orient,
Starres, and wisemen will travell to prevent
Th'effect of Herods jealous generall doome.
Seest thou, my Soule, with thy faiths eyes, how he
Which fills all place, yet none holds him, doth lye?
Was not his pity towards thee wondrous high,
That would have need to be pittied by thee?
Kisse him, and with him into Egypt goe,
With his kinde mother, who partakes thy woe.

John Donne (1572-1631)

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CALL TO WORSHIP • Revelation 22:17

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come."
And let the one who hears say, "Come."
And let the one who is thirsty come;
let the one who desires take the water of life without price.

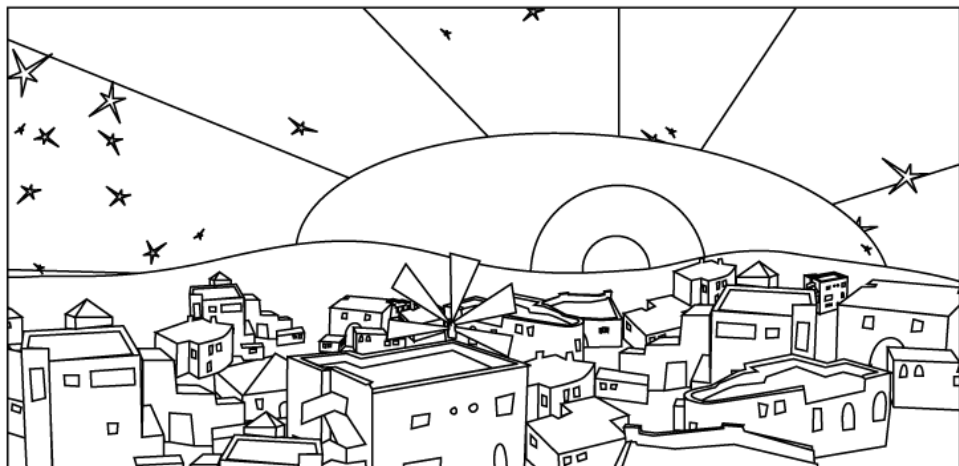
O Holy Night

Text: John S. Dwight • Music: Adolphe Adam • Public Domain

Tenor

8 O ho - ly night - the stars are bright - ly shin -
5 Tru - ly He taught - us to love one a - noth -
8 ing, it is the night of our dear Sav - ior's birth.
10 er, His law is love and His gos - pel is peace.
8 Long lay the world - in sin and er - ror pin -
14 Chains shall He break - the slave he is our bro -
8 ing till He ap - peared and the soul felt its worth.
18 ther, and in His name all op - res - sion shall cease.
8 A thrill of hope the wear - y soul re -
22 Sweet hymns of joy in grate - ful cho - rus
8 joic - es, for yon - der breaks a new and glor - ious
26 raise we, let all with - in us praise His ho - ly
8 morn. Fall - - - on your knees - - - O hear -
32 name.
8 the an - gel voice - es! O night - - - di -
37 vine - - - O - night - - - when Christ was born!
42 O night! Di - vine! O night!
48 O night di - vine!

PRAYER OF INVOCATION



FIRST LESSON • Micah 5:2-5

² You, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel.

⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.

⁵ And he shall be their peace.

O Little Town Of Bethlehem

Text: Phillip Brooks • Music: Lewis H. Redner • Public Domain

Tenor

The musical score is written for a Tenor voice part. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score includes measure numbers 4, 7, 10, 13, and 16. The music ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee
lie; a - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the
si - lent stars go by: yet in thy dark streets
shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing Light; the
hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to -
night.

For Christ is born of Mary; and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love.

O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming, but in the world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.

O Holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in; be born to us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.



SECOND LESSON • Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸ And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Il Est Né, Le Divin Enfant

Traditional French Carol • Public Domain

*He is born, the divine Christ child,
play the oboe and bagpipes merrily!
He is born, the holy child,
sing we all of the Savior mild.*

Through long ages of the past
prophets have foretold his coming;
through long ages of the past,
now the time has come at last!

(Chorus)

O how lovely, O how pure
is this perfect child of heaven;
O how lovely, O how pure,
gracious gift of God sent down.

(Chorus)

Jesus, Lord of all the world,
coming as a Child among us,
Jesus, Lord of all the world,
grant to us your heav'nly peace.

(Chorus)



THIRD LESSON • Luke 2:1-7

¹ In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶ And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

It Came Upon A Midnight Clear

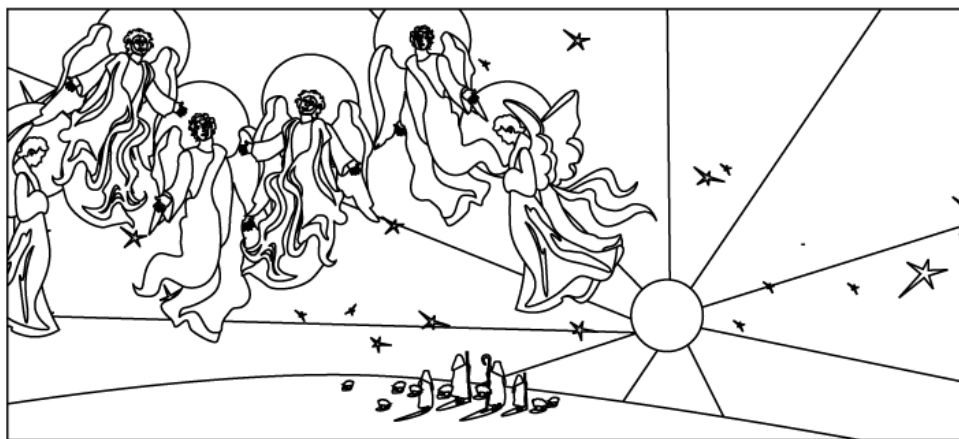
Text: Edmund H. Sears • Music: Richard S. Willis • Public Domain

Alto

It came up - on the mid - night clear, that
 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with
 And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose
 glo - rious song of old, from
 peace - ful wings un - furled, and
 form are bend - ing low, who
 an - gels bend - ing near the earth to
 still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er
 toil a - long the climb - ing way with
 touch their harps of gold: "Peace
 all the wea - ry world: A -
 pain - ful steps and slow, Look
 on the earth good will to men, from
 bove its sad and low - ly plains they
 now! For glad and gold - en hours come
 heav - en's all - gra - cious King;" the
 bend - on hov - 'ring wing, and
 swift - ly on the wing: O
 world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels
 ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds the bles - sed an - gels
 rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels

19
 sing.
 sing.
 sing.

For lo, the days are hast'ning on, by prophet bards foretold,
 When with the evercircling years comes round the age of gold;
 When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
 And the whole world give back the song which now the angels sing.



FOURTH LESSON • Luke 2:8-18

⁸ And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷ And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸ And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

On Christmas Night, All Christians Sing
Traditional English Carol • Public Domain

Tenor

On Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing, to
hear the news - the an - gels bring; On
Christ - mas night all Chris - tians sing, to
hear the news - the an - gels bring: News of great
joy, news of great mirth,
news of our mer - ci - full - King's
birth.

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the Tenor part of the carol 'On Christmas Night, All Christians Sing'. The score is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. It consists of 14 measures. The lyrics are written below the staff, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across measures. The melody is simple and traditional, with a final cadence in the last measure.

Then why should men on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad;
then why should men on earth be sad, since our Redeemer made us glad,
when from our sin he set us free, all for to gain our liberty.

When sin departs before Your grace, then life and health come in its place;
when sin departs before Your grace, then life and health come in its place;
angels and men with joy may sing, all for to see the newborn King.

All out of darkness we have light which made the angels sing this night;
all out of darkness we have light which made the angels sing this night;
"Glory to God and peace to men, now and forevermore, Amen!"



FIFTH LESSON • John 1:1-14

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. ⁸ He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

HOMILY • Rev. Eric Costa

BENEDICTION • Matthew 13:16-17

“Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear. For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.”

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