

121 O Little Town of Bethlehem



1 O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, how still we see thee lie!
 2 For Christ is born of Mar - y and, gath - ered all a - bove,
 3 How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, the won - drous gift is given!
 4 O ho - ly child of Beth - le - hem, de - scend to us, we pray;



A - bove thy deep and dream - less sleep the si - lent stars go by.
 while mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep their watch of won - dering love.
 So God im - parts to hu - man hearts the bless - ings of his heaven.
 cast out our sin and en - ter in; be born in us to - day.



Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth the ev - er - last - ing light;
 O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er pro - claim the ho - ly birth,
 No ear may hear his com - ing, but in this world of sin,
 We hear the Christ - mas an - gels the great glad ti - dings tell;



the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee to - night.
 and prais - es sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.
 where meek souls will re - ceive him, still the dear Christ en - ters in.
 O come to us; a - bide with us, our Lord Em - man - u - el!



Though he was famed during his lifetime as a great preacher, no sermon Phillips Brooks ever preached has been heard or read by as many people as have sung this carol he wrote in December 1868 for the Sunday School children of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Philadelphia.

115

Away in a Manger

Capo 3: (D) F (G) B \flat (D) F

1 A - way in a man - ger, no crib for his bed,
 2 The cat - tle are low - ing; the poor ba - by wakes,
 3 Be near me, Lord Je - sus; I ask thee to stay

(A7) C7 (D) F

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down his sweet head.
 but lit - tle Lord Je - sus, no cry - ing he makes.
 close by me for - ev - er and love me, I pray.

(G) B \flat (D) F

The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
 I love thee, Lord Je - sus; look down from the sky,
 Bless all the dear chil - dren in thy ten - der care,

(A7) C7 (D) F (Em) Gm (A7) C7 (D) F

the lit - tle Lord Je - sus a - sleep on the hay.
 and stay by my side un - til morn - ing is night.
 and fit us for heav - en to live with thee there.

Though erroneously attributed to Martin Luther, this anonymous carol has North American roots, probably originating among Pennsylvania Lutherans. Although more than forty melodies have been connected with these words, this tune was among the earliest written for them.

119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

1 Hark! The her - ald an-gels sing, "Glo - ry to the new-born king.
 2 Christ, by high - est heaven a-dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord,
 3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righ-teous-ness!


Peace on earth and mer - cy mild, God and sin - ners rec - on - ciled!"
 late in time be-hold him come, off-spring of the vir-gin's womb.
 Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

Joy - ful, all ye na - tions, rise; join the tri-umph of the skies;
 Veiled in flesh the God-head see; hail the in-car - nate de - i - ty,
 Mild he lays his glo - ry by, born that we no more may die,

with the an-gel - ic host pro-claim, "Christ is born in Beth - le - hem!"
 pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Je - sus, our Em-man - u - el.
 born to raise us from the earth, born to give us sec - ond birth.

Brought together in the mid-19th century, the text and tune of this familiar carol began in quite different forms. The text had ten stanzas and began, "Hark, how all the welkin rings." The tune was created for a festival celebrating Gutenberg's introduction of moveable type.

136 Go, Tell It on the Mountain

Refrain 

Go, tell it on the moun-tain, o-ver the hills and ev - ery - where;

go, tell it on the moun - tain that Je - sus Christ is born!

1 While shep-herds kept their watch-ing o'er si - lent flocks by night,
 2 The shep-herds feared and trem-bled when lo! a - bove the earth
 3 Down in a low - ly man - ger the hum - ble Christ was born,

be - hold, through-out the heav-ens there shone a ho - ly light.
 rang out the an - gel cho - rus that hailed our Sav - ior's birth.
 and God sent us sal - va - tion that bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

Like other material from oral traditions, 19th-century African American spirituals flourished without being written down. Their refrains were their most stable parts, and narrative stanzas were often improvised to fit. These Nativity stanzas attempt to recall that tradition.