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[1] This is the truth

Music: Bob Chilcott (b. 1955)

Words: Traditional English and Cecil Frances Alexander (1823-95)

This is the truth sent from above,
The truth of God, the God of love;
Therefore don't turn me from the door,
But hearken all, both rich and poor.

The first thing that I will relate,
That God at first did man create;
The next thing which to you I tell,
Woman was made with him to dwell.

Thus we were heirs to endless woes
Till God the Lord did interpose;
And so a promise soon did run:
That he'd redeem us by his Son.

*Once in Royal David's City
stood a lowly cattle shed
Where a mother laid her baby
in a manger for a bed
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.*

[2] Gabriel's Message (The Angel Gabriel)

Music: Traditional, arr. Jonathan Rathbone (b. 1957)

Words: Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924)

Gloria

The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow his eyes as flame.
"All Hail," said he, "Thou lowly maiden, Mary.
Most highly favoured lady."

Gloria

"For known a blessed Mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honour thee,
Thy Son shall be Emmanuel by seers foretold,
Most highly favoured lady."

Gloria

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said.
"My soul shall laud and magnify His holy name."
Most highly favoured lady.

Gloria

Of her Emmanuel the Christ was born,
In Bethlehem all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
"Most highly favoured lady."

Gloria

[3] Hodie Christus natus est

Music: Jan Sweelinck (1562-1621)

Words: Magnificat antiphon for Christmas Day

Hodie Christus natus est,
Noe!
Hodie Salvator apparuit,
Alleluia!
Hodie in terra canunt angeli,
Laetentur Archangeli,
Noe!
Hodie exultant justi dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Alleluia!
Noe!

Today Christ is born,
Noel!
Today the Saviour hath appeared,
Alleluia!
Today, angels sing on earth,
and Archangels rejoice,
Noel!
Today the just exult, saying:
Glory to God in the highest,
Alleluia!
Noel!

[4] Es ist ein Ros entsprungen

Music: Michael Praetorius (c. 1571-1621), arr. Jan Sandström (b. 1954)
Words: Anonymous

Es ist ein Ros entsprungen
Aus einer Wurzel zart,
Als uns die Alten sungen:
Von Jesse kam die Art
Und hat ein Blümlein bracht
Mitten im kalten Winter
Wohl zu der halben Nacht.

A rose has sprung up
from a tender root,
As the elders sang to us:
It came from Jesse's lineage
And it has brought forth a bud
Amid the cold winter
In the middle of the night.

[5] Sing Lullaby

Music: Herbert Howells (1892-1983)
Words: F.W. Harvey (1888-1957)

Sing lullaby, sing lullaby,
While snow doth gently fall,
Sing lullaby to Jesus.
Born in an oxen-stall,
Sing lullaby to Jesus.
Born now in Bethlehem,
The naked blackthorn's growing
To weave his diadem.

Sing lullaby,
While thickly snow doth fall,
Sing lullaby to Jesus,
The Saviour of us all.

Sing lullaby.

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[6] Hymne à la Vierge

Music: Pierre Villette (1926-98)
Words: Roland Bouhéret (1930-95)

O toute belle, Vierge Marie,
Votre âme trouve en Dieu
Le parfait amour.
Il vous revêt du manteau de la Grâce
Comme une fiancée
Parée de ses bijoux.
Alléluia, Alléluia,
Je vais chanter ta louange, Seigneur,
Car tu as pris soin de moi,
Car tu m'as enveloppée du voile de l'innocence.

Oh Virgin Mary most fair
Your soul in God finds
Perfect love.
He clothes you in the mantle of Grace
As a bride
Arrayed in her jewels.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
I will sing your praise, Lord,
For you have taken care of me,
For you have wrapped me in the veil of innocence.

Vous êtes née avant les collines,
O sagesse de Dieu
Porte du Salut.
Hereux ce lui qui marche dans vos traces,
Qui apprête son coeur
A la voix de vos conseils.
Alléluia, Alléluia,
Je vais chanter ta louange, Seigneur,
Car tu m'as faite, avant le jour,
Car tu m'as fait précéder le jaillissement des sources.

You were born before the hills,
Oh wisdom of God,
Gate of Salvation.
Happy is he who follows in your footsteps,
Who opens his heart
To the voice of your counsel.
Alleluia, Alleluia,
I will sing your praise, Lord
For you made me, before time began,
For you made me, before the bubbling of the springs.

Avant les astres
Vous étiez présente
Mère du Créateur
Au profound du ciel
Quand Dieu fixait les limites du monde
Vous partagiez son coeur
Etant à l'oeuvre avec lui.
O toute belle Vierge Marie.

Before the stars
You were there
Mother of the Creator
In the highest firmament
When God decreed the limits of the world
You shared his heart
And were with him in his labours.
Oh Virgin Mary most fair.

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[7] Sweet was the song

Music: Bob Chilcott

Words from William Ballet's Lute Book (16th century) and Franz Gruber (1787-1863)

Sweet was the song the Virgin sang,
When she to Bethlem Judah came
And was delivered of a Son
That blessed Jesus hath to name.
*Lulla, lulla, lulla, lullaby,
Lulla, lulla, lullaby.*

'Sweet babe, sweet babe', sang she
'My son, and eke a Saviour born,
Who has vouchsafed from on high
To visit us that were forlorn.'
*Lalulla, lalulla, lalullaby,
Lulla, lalulla, lalullaby.*

'Sweet babe', sang she, sang she,
And rocked him sweetly on her knee.

Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright;
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child,
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.

[8] Of the Father's heart begotten

Melody from Piaae Cantiones, Theodorici Petri Nylandensis, 1582, arr. David Willcocks (b. 1919)

Words: Prudentius (b. 348), trans. R.F. Davis (d. 1937)

Of the Father's heart begotten,
Ere the world from chaos rose,
He is Alpha: from the Fountain
All that is and hath been flows;
He is Omega, of all things
Yet come the mystic Close,
Evermore and evermore.

By his word was all created;
He commanded and 'twas done;
Earth and sky and boundless ocean,
Universe of three in one,
All that sees the moon's soft radiance,
All that breathes beneath the sun,
Evermore and evermore.

He assumed this mortal body,
Frail and feeble, doomed to die,
That the race from dust created
Might not perish utterly,
Which the dreadful Law had sentenced
In the depths of hell to lie,
Evermore and evermore.

Sing, ye heights of heav'n, his praises;
Angels and Archangels, sing!
Wheresoe'er ye be, ye faithful,
Let your joyous anthems ring,
Ev'ry tongue his name confessing,
Countless voices answering,
Evermore and evermore.

[9] Hodie Christus natus est

Music: Giovanni Gabrieli (c.1555-1612)

Words: Magnificat antiphon for Christmas Day

Hodie Christus natus est,
Alleluia.
Hodie Salvator apparuit,
Alleluia.
Hodie in terra canunt angeli,
Laetantur Archangeli,
Alleluia.
Hodie exultant justi dicentes:
Gloria in excelsis Deo,
Et in terra pax hominibus
Bonae voluntatis,
Alleluia.

Today Christ is born,
Alleluia.
Today the Saviour hath appeared,
Alleluia.
Today, angels sing on earth,
and Archangels rejoice,
Alleluia.
Today the just exult, saying:
Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace
good will towards men,
Alleluia.

[10] Rejoice and be merry

Music: Bob Chilcott

Words: Traditional English

Rejoice, Rejoice!

Rejoice and be merry in songs and in mirth!
O praise our Redeemer, all mortals on earth!
For this is the birthday of Jesus our King,
Who brought us salvation: his praises we'll sing!

A heavenly vision appeared in the sky;
Vast numbers of angels the shepherds did spy,
Proclaiming the birthday of Jesus our King,
Who brought us salvation: his praises we'll sing!

Likewise a bright star in the sky did appear,
Which led the wise men from the east to draw near;
They found the Messiah, sweet Jesus our King,
Who brought us salvation: his praises we'll sing!

And when they were come, they their treasures unfold
And unto him offered myrrh, incense and gold
So blessed for ever be Jesus our King
Who brought us salvation, his praises we'll sing,
Rejoice!

*On Christmas night all Christians sing
to hear the news the angels bring
news of great joy
News of great mirth
News of our merciful King's birth.
Rejoice!*

[11] O little town of Bethlehem

Music: Walford Davies (1869-1941)

Words from St Luke 2, vv. 11, 12, and Phillips Brooks (1835-93)

Unto you is born this day in the city of David
A Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
And this shall be a sign to you;
Ye shall find the Babe, wrapped in swaddling clothes,
And lying in a manger.

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of his heaven.

No ear may hear his coming;
But in this 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 in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell:
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

[12] The Stable Door

Music: C. Armstrong Gibbs (1889-1960)
Words: Lilian Cox (b. ca. 1878)

A soft light from a stable door
Lies on the midnight lands;
The Wise Man's star burns evermore
Over all desert sands.

Unto all peoples of the earth
A little child brought light;
And never in the darkest place
Can it be utter night.

No flick'ring torch, no wav'ring fire,
But life, the Light of men;
Whatever clouds may veil the sky
Never is night again.

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[13] O Holy Night

Music: Adolphe Adam (1803-56), arr. John E. West (1863-1929)
Words: J.S. Dwight (1813-93)

O holy night, the stars are brightly shining
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth
Long lay the world, in sin and error pining,
Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth
A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!
Fall on your knees, O hear the angel voices!
O night, divine! O night when Christ was born
O night divine, O night divine!

Led by the light of faith serenely beaming
With glowing hearts by his cradle we stand
So, led by light of a star sweetly gleaming,
Here came the wise men from the Orient land
The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger,
In all our trials, born to be our friend;
He knows our need, he guardeth us from danger;
Behold your King, before the Lowly bend!
Behold your King, before the Lowly bend!

[14] In the bleak mid-winter

Music: Harold Darke (1888-1976)
Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-94)

In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak mid-winter, long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign.
In the bleak mid-winter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim worship night and day.
A breast full of milk and a manger full of hay.
Enough for Him, whom angels fall down before,
the ox and ass and camel, which adore.

What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

[15] The Christ-child

Music: Gabriel Jackson (b. 1962)

Words: G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's lap
His hair was like a light
(O weary, weary were the world
But here is all a-right.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's breast
His hair was like a star.
(O stern and cunning are the kings,
But here the true hearts are.)

The Christ-child lay on Mary's heart
His hair was like a fire
(O weary, weary is the world
But here the heart's desire.)

The Christ-child stood at Mary's knee,
His hair was like a crown,
And all the flowers looked up at Him,
And all the stars looked down.

[16] Nativity Carol

Words and music: John Rutter (b. 1945)

Born in a stable so bare
Born so long ago
Born 'neath light of star
He who loved us so.

*Far away
Silent lay
Born today
Your homage pay
For Christ is born for aye
Born on Christmas Day.*

Cradled by mother so fair,
Tender her lullaby
Over her son so dear
Angel hosts fill the sky.
Far away...

Wise men from distant far land,
Shepherds from starry hills
Worship this babe so rare
Hearts with his warmth he fills.
Far away...

Love in that stable was born
Into our hearts to flow;
Innocent dreaming babe,
Make me thy love to know.
Far away...

'Nativity Carol' words and music by John Rutter

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[17] Jingle Bells

Words and music: James Lord Pierpont (1822-93), arr. Ben Parry (b. 1965)

Jingle bells, jingle bells
Jingle all the way,
Oh what fun it is to ride
In a one-horse open sleigh, hey!

Dashing through the snow
In a one-horse open sleigh
Over fields we go, laughing all the way
Bells on bobtail ring, making spirits bright
What fun it is to ride and sing this sleighing song tonight.

[18] Christmas-tide

Music: Bob Chilcott
Words: Janet Lewis (1899-1998)

Lullee, lullay
I could not love thee more
if thou wast Christ the King.
Now tell me, how did Mary know
that in her womb should sleep and grow
The Lord of everything?

Lullee, lullay
An angel stood with her,
who said 'That which doth stir
Like summer in thy side
shall save the world from sin.
Then stable, hall and inn
shall cherish Christmas-tide.'

Lullee, lullay
And so it was that Day.
And did she love him more
because an angel came
to prophesy his name?
Ah no, not so,
she could not love Him more,
But loved Him just the same.

Lullee, lullee, lullee, lullay.

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[19] I believe in Father Christmas

Music: Greg Lake (b. 1947), arr. Jonathan Rathbone
Words: Peter Sinfield (b. 1943)

They said there'll be snow at Christmas,
They said there'll be peace on earth.
But instead it just kept on raining,
A veil of tears for the Virgin birth.
I remember one Christmas morning
A winter's light and a distant choir
And the peal of a bell and that Christmas-tree smell
And their eyes full of tinsel and fire.

They sold me a dream of Christmas,
They sold me a silent night.
And they told me a fairy story
Till I believed in the Israelite
And I believed in Father Christmas
And I looked to the skies with excited eyes
Till I woke with a yawn in the first light of dawn
And I saw him and through his disguise.

We wish you a hopeful Christmas,
We wish you a brave new year.
All anguish pain and sorrow,
Leave your heart and let your road be clear.

They said there'll be snow at Christmas,
They said there'll be peace on earth.
Hallelujah, Noël, be it Heaven or Hell,
The Christmas we get, we deserve.

I Believe In Father Christmas
Words & Music by Greg Lake & Peter Sinfield
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[20] Carol Medley
Music: Jonathan Rathbone

Deck the hall with boughs of holly,
Fala lalala, lala lala,
'Tis the season to be jolly,
Fala lalala, lala lala.

I saw three ships come sailing in,
On Christmas Day, on Christmas Day,
I saw three ships come sailing in,
On Christmas day in the morning.

And what was in those ships all three?

(On Christmas Day etc.)

Our saviour Christ and his Lady,
(On Christmas day etc.)

Deck the hall with boughs of holly,
Fala lalala, lala lala.

We wish you a merry Christmas
And a happy New Year.
Good tidings we bring
To you and your kin.
We wish you a merry Christmas
And a happy New Year.

Now bring us some figgy pudding
And bring some out here.

(Good tidings etc.)

For we all like figgy pudding
So bring some out here.

The holly and the ivy,
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood
The holly bears the crown.
Nowell, Nowell.

We wish you a merry Christmas
And a happy New Year.

And we won't go until we've got some
So bring some out here.
(Good tidings etc.)

Past three o'clock
And a cold frosty morning.

Born is the King of Israel.

The rising of the sun,
And the running of the deer,
The playing of the merry organ,

Sweet singing in the choir.

Good tidings we bring
To you and your kin.
We wish you a merry Christmas
And a happy New Year.

Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
Fala lalala, lala lala.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

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