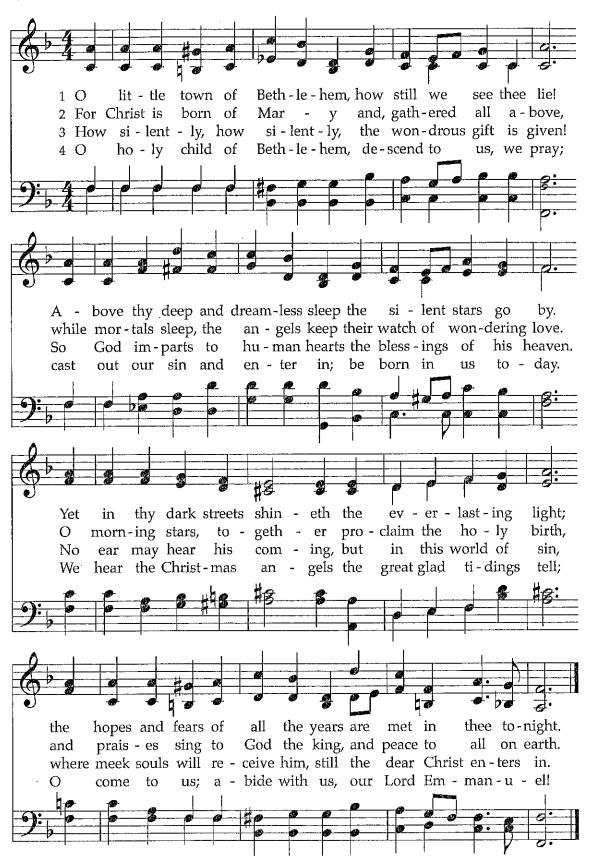


From its Roman Catholic origins, this 18th-century hymn has spread to worldwide use by many denominations in both Latin and vernacular versions. Once popular with a wide range of hymn texts, this tune is now firmly associated with this Christmas text from which it is named.

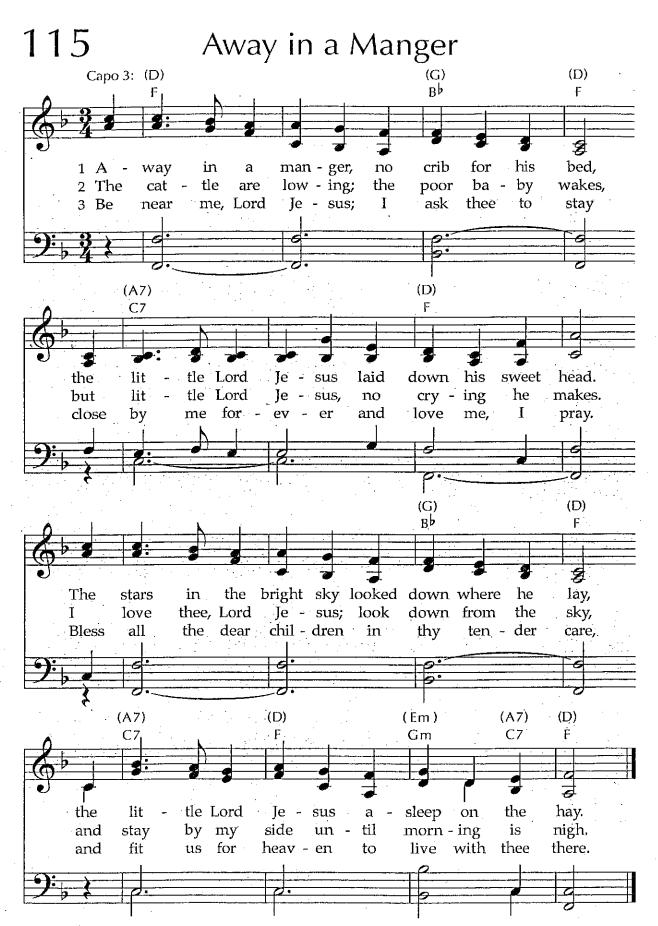
121 O Little Town of Bethlehem



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.



This French carol probably dates from the 1700s, though it was not printed until the following century. Because it uses a vernacular language for the narrative stanzas and Latin for the refrain, it belongs to a special category called "macaronic" or mixed-language texts.

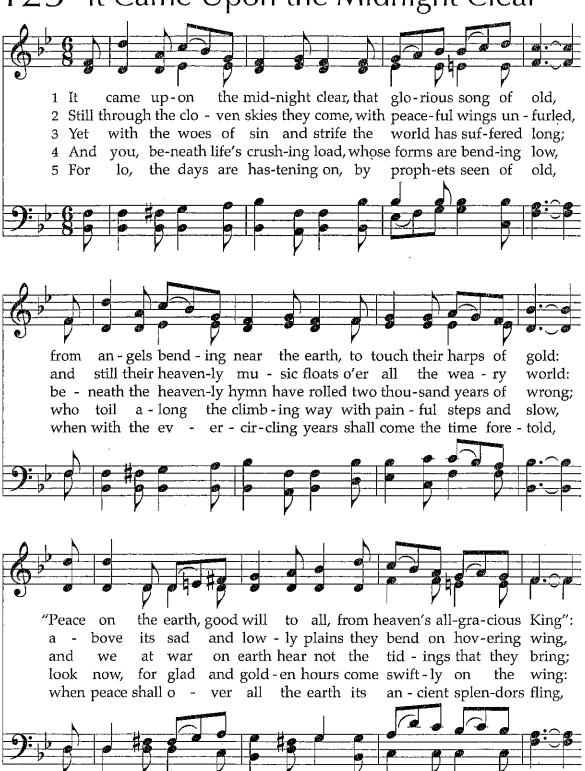


Though erroneously attributed to Martin Luther, this anonymous carol has North American roots, probably originating among Pennsylvania Lutherans. Although more than forty melodies have been connected with these words, this tune was among the earliest written for them.

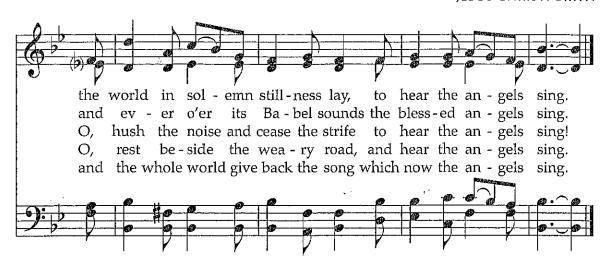
What Child Is This 1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mar-y's lap is sleep-ing? Why lies he in such mean es - tate where ox and ass are feed - ing? bring him in-cense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him. Whom an - gels greet with an-thems sweet while shep-herds watch are keep-ing? Good Chris-tian, fear; for sin-ners here the si - lent Word is plead-ing. King of kings sal-va-tion brings; let lov - ing hearts en-throne him. is Christ the King, whom shep-herds guard and an-gels sing; This, this Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you. the song on high. The vir - gin sings her Raise, raise lul - la - by. haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mar - y! Hail, the Word made flesh, hail, the babe, the Mar - y! son Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the Mar - y! son

This Victorian text gains scope and power by having the original second halves of stanzas two and three restored. They give a stark forward glimpse of what lies ahead for this "babe, the son of Mary!" The tune is much older, dating from Tudor England.

123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



The "it" of the first line of this text by a Unitarian minister does not refer to the birth of Jesus, but to "that glorious song of old," the angelic tidings of peace on earth. The restored third stanza laments how often the noise of human strife has obscured that message.



119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing



.)



While Isaac Watts did not write this text strictly for Christmas use, he did purposely cast his paraphrase of Psalm 98:4–9 in Christian terms, titling it "The Messiah's coming and kingdom." So "the Lord" here is Jesus Christ, rather than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.