

First hymn

We three kings of Orient are,
bearing gifts we travel afar,
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star:

*O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.*

Born a king on Bethlehem plain,
gold I bring to crown him again:
King for ever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign.

Frankincense to offer have I,
incense owns a Deity nigh;
prayer and praising all men raising:
worship him, God most high.

Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in a stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now, behold him arise,
King, and God, and sacrifice!
Heav'n sings "Alleluia",
"Alleluia" the earth replies.

J.H. Hopkins 1822-1900 Tune: Kings of Orient

Reading

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah (60.1-6)

Psalm Response

We remain seated as the Choir sings part of Psalm 72 we join in the response :

Gospel Acclamation

We saw his star as it rose and have come to do the Lord homage

Gospel

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

(1. 1 – 12)

Offertory hymn:

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.

Angels and archangels
may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim
thronged the air -
but only his mother
in her maiden bliss
worshipped the beloved
with a kiss.

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.

Christina Rossetti 1830-94

Tune: Cranham

Communion Hymn

As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright;
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore be led to thee.

As with joyful steps they sped,
Saviour, to thy lowly bed,
there to bend the knee before
thee whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with willing feet
ever seek thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare
at thy cradle rude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,

Holy Jesu, every day
keep us in the narrow way,
and, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds thy glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright
need they no created light;
thou its light, its joy, its crown,
thou its sun which goes not down;
there forever may we sing
alleluias to our King.

W Chatterton Dix Tune Dix

all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to thee our heavenly King

Final Hymn

The first Nowell the angel did say
as to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;
in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep,
on a cold winter's night that was so deep:
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell!
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star,
shining in the east, beyond them far;
and to the earth it gave great light,
and so it continued both day and night:

And by the light of that same star,
three Wise Men came from country far;
to seek for a king was their intent,
and to follow the star wherever it went:

This star drew nigh to the north-west;
o'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
and there it did both stop and stay
right over the place where Jesus lay:

Then enter'd in those wise men three,
full rev'rently upon their knee,
and offer'd there in his presence

their gold and myrrh and frankincense:

Then let us all with one accord
sing praises to our heav'nly Lord,
that hath made heav'n and earth of naught,
and with his blood mankind hath bought:

Traditional

Tune: The First Nowell

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