

Parish of Central Exeter

Celebration of Christmas in music, poetry and art

December 2020

Carol and song lyrics

(Please note that several carols exist in more than one version, and I don't guarantee that the words match exactly those sung.)

Wolcum Yole

Wolcum, Wolcum
Wolcum be thou hevenè king
Wolcum Yole!
Wolcum, born in one morning
Wolcum for whom we sall sing!

Wolcum be ye Stevene and Jon
Wolcum Innocentes every one
Wolcum, Thomas marter one
Wolcum, be ye, Good Newe Yere
Wolcum Twelfth Day both in fere
Wolcum, seintes lefe and dere
Wolcum Yole!

Candelmesse, Quene of bliss
Wolcum bothe to more and lesse
Wolcum be ye that are here
Wolcum Yole!
Wolcum alle and make good cheer
Wolcum alle another yere
Wolcum Yole! Wolcum!

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree
The tree of life my soul hath seen
Laden with fruit and always green
The tree of life my soul hath seen
Laden with fruit and always green
The trees of nature fruitless be
Compared with Christ the apple tree

His beauty doth all things excel
By faith I know but ne'er can tell
His beauty doth all things excel
By faith I know but ne'er can tell
The glory which I now can see
In Jesus Christ the apple tree.

For happiness I long have sought
And pleasure dearly I have bought
For happiness I long have sought
And pleasure dearly I have bought
I missed of all but now I see
'Tis found in Christ the apple tree.

I'm weary with my former toil
Here I will sit and rest a while
I'm weary with my former toil
Here I will sit and rest a while
Under the shadow I will be
Of Jesus Christ the apple tree.

This fruit does make my soul to thrive
It keeps my dying faith alive
This fruit does make my soul to thrive
It keeps my dying faith alive
Which makes my soul in haste to be
With Jesus Christ the apple tree.

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven came

1. The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
his wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
'All hail,' said he, 'O lowly maiden Mary,'
most highly favoured lady: Gloria!
2. 'For know a blessed mother you shall be,
all generations praise continually,
your son shall be Emmanuel, by seers foretold,'
most highly favoured lady: Gloria!
3. Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
'To me be as it pleases God,' she said,
'my soul shall laud and magnify God's holy name,'
most highly favoured lady: Gloria!

4. 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!

Of the Father's love begotten

Of the Father's love begotten,
Ere the worlds began to be,
He is Alpha and Omega,
He the source, the ending He,
Of the things that are and have been,
And that future years shall see,
Evermore and evermore.

2

This is He whom they in old time
Chanted of with one accord,
Whom the voices of the prophets
Promised in their faithful word;
Now He shines, the long-expected;
Let creation praise its Lord,
Evermore and evermore.

3

O ye heights of heav'n, adore Him;
Angel hosts, His praises sing;
All dominions, bow before Him,
And extol our Lord and King.
Let no tongue on earth be silent,
Every voice in concert ring,
Evermore and evermore.

4

Christ, to Thee, with God the Father,
And, with Holy Ghost, to Thee,
Hymn and chant and high thanksgiving,
And unwearied praises be;
Honour, glory, and dominion,
And eternal victory,
Evermore and evermore.

The Song of the Wise Men

We are known as wise men 'cos we often read a book,
There is simply nothing written that we overlook.
We do calculations of a very clever kind,

The sort you shouldn't try at home in case they blow your mind.

Late last night we saw a star appearing in the sky,
Not a star we'd seen before, it made us wonder why;
Looking in our books we find it means a special birth:
A mighty king more mighty than the mightiest king on earth.

We are off to visit him each with a special gift:
A sack of gold for royalty which takes three men to lift;
Some frankincense quite frankly means we think he is a god;
And add some myrrh 'cos he will die, which for a god is odd.

We are known as wise men but we got it from a book;
There was simply nothing written that we'd overlook.
We did calculations of a very clever kind,
And when we tried them out at home they really blew our mind!

On Christmas night all Christians sing

On Christmas night all Christians sing to hear the news the angels bring
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

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 His grace then life and health come in its place
When sin departs before His 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 forever more amen

Continues

In Stable Straw

See the child that Mary bore
Heaven meets earth in stable straw
Word in flesh is come to dwell
God with us, Emmanuel.

Chorus

Come let us worship Him
Bring our lives as an offering
Heavenly Hosts sing Alleluia
Glory to the new-born King.

Angel song proclaims His birth
As the dawn of peace on earth
Hearts are gladdened by His call
The Light of Life brings hope for all.

Chorus x2

God rest you merry, gentlemen

1. God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born upon this day,
To save us all from Satan's power
When we were gone astray:
*O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy,
O tidings of comfort and joy.*

2. From God our heavenly Father
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name:
O tidings ...

3. The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding
In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway,
This blessed Babe to find: *O tidings ...*

4. But when to Bethlehem they came,
Whereat this Infant lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling,
Unto the Lord did pray:
O tidings ...

5. Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All other doth deface:^[14]
O tidings ...

Boar's Head Carol

The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedeck'd with bays and rosemary.
And I pray you, my masters, be merry
Quot estis in convivio (As many as are in the feast)

CHORUS

Caput apri defero (The boar's head I bear)
Reddens laudes Domino (Giving praises to the Lord)

The boar's head, as I understand,
Is the rarest dish in all this land,
Which thus bedeck'd with a gay garland
Let us *servire cantico*. (Let us serve with a song)

CHORUS

Our steward hath provided this
In honour of the King of Bliss;
Which on this day to be servèd is
In Reginensi atrio. (In the hall of Queen's [College, Oxford])

Continues

Gaudete

Latin	English
<i>Gaudete, gaudete!</i> <i>Christus est natus</i> <i>Ex Maria virgine,</i> <i>gaudete!</i>	Rejoice, rejoice! Christ is born Of the Virgin Mary – Rejoice!
<i>Tempus adest gratiæ</i> <i>Hoc quod optabamus,</i> <i>Carmina lætitiæ</i> <i>Devote reddamus.</i>	The time of grace has come— What we have wished for; Songs of joy Let us give back faithfully.
<i>Deus homo factus est</i> <i>Natura mirante,</i> <i>Mundus renovatus est</i> <i>A Christo regnante.</i>	God has become man, With nature marvelling, The world has been renewed By the reigning Christ.
<i>Ezechielis porta</i> <i>Clausa pertransitur,</i> <i>Unde lux est orta</i> <i>Salus invenitur.</i>	The closed gate of Ezekiel Is passed through, Whence the light is risen; Salvation has been found.
<i>Ergo nostra contio</i> <i>Psallat iam in lustro;</i> <i>Benedicat Domino:</i> <i>Salus Regi nostro.</i>	Therefore, let our assembly Now sing in brightness Let it bless the Lord: Salvation to our King.