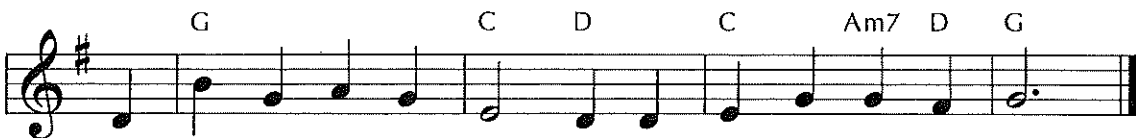# 109 Blest Be the God of Israel
Song of Zechariah

1 Blest be the God of Is - rael, who comes to set us free;
2 God from the house of Da - vid a child of grace has given;
3 On those who sit in dark - ness the sun be - gins to rise,

who vis - its and re - deems us, who grants us lib - er - ty.
a Sav - ior comes a - mong us to raise us up to heaven.
the dawn-ing of for - give - ness up - on the sin-ner's eyes.

The proph - ets spoke of mer - cy, of free - dom and re - lease;
Be - fore him goes the her - ald, fore - run - ner in the way,
God guides the feet of pil - grims a - long the paths of peace.

God shall ful - fill that prom - ise and bring the peo - ple peace.
the proph - et of sal - va - tion, the har - bin - ger of day.
O bless our God and Sav - ior with songs that nev - er cease!

This 20th-century British paraphrase of the Song of Zechariah (Luke 1:68–79) broadens the implications of what John the Baptist's father says in order to affirm that God's work is ongoing. The tune is named for the composer's oldest sister, who was his first piano teacher.

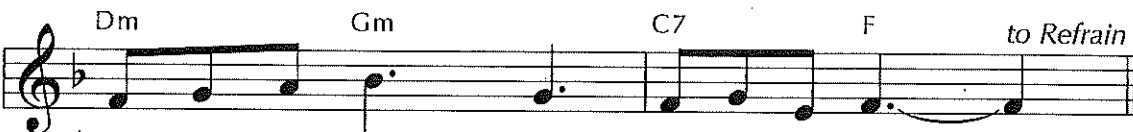# 139 That Boy-Child of Mary

Refrain

That boy-child of Mar - y was born in a sta - ble, a
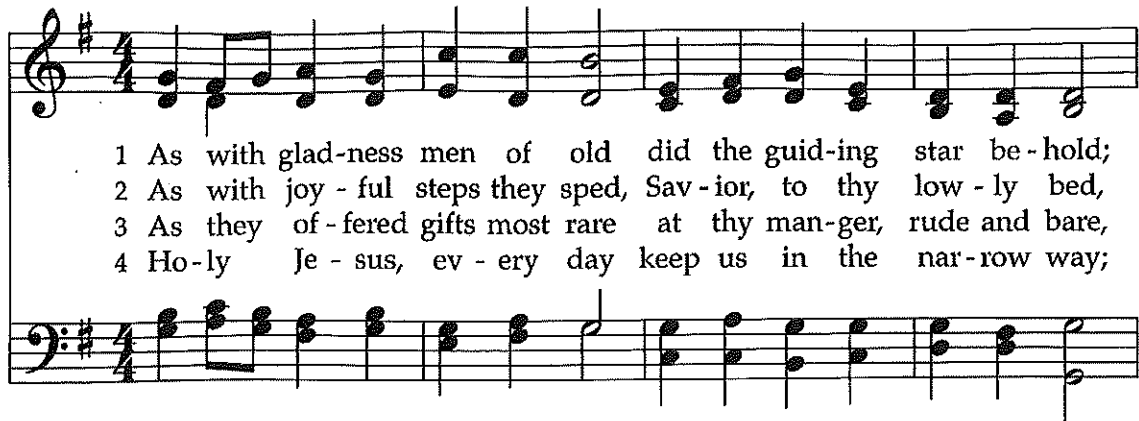
man - ger his cra - dle in Beth - le - hem.

1 What shall we call him, child of the man - ger?
2 His name is Je - sus, God ev - er with . us,
3 How can he save us; how can he help us,
4 Gift of the Fa - ther, to hu - man moth - er,
5 One with the Fa - ther, he is our Sav - ior,
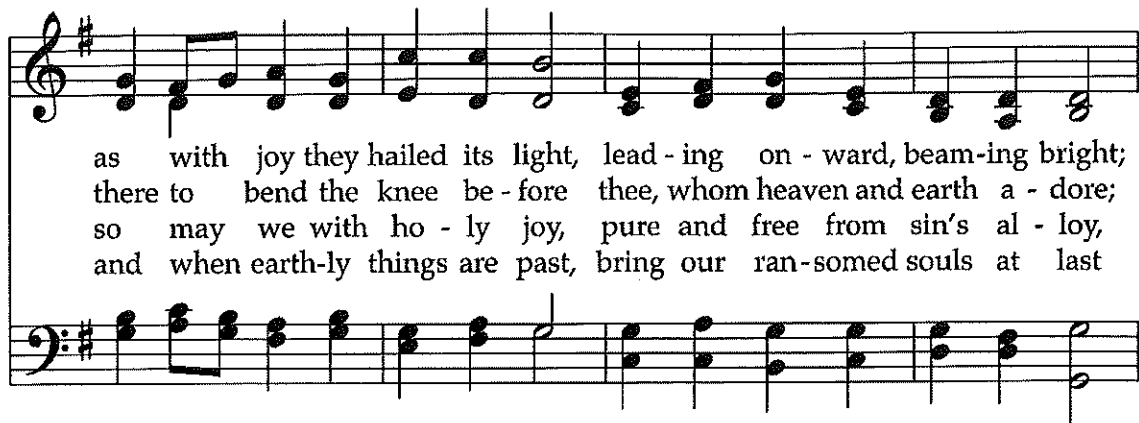6 Glad - ly we praise him, love and a - dore him,

What name is giv - en in Beth - le - hem?
God giv - en for us in Beth - le - hem.
born here a - mong us in Beth - le - hem?
makes him our broth - er of Beth - le - hem.
heav - en - sent help - er of Beth - le - hem.
give our - selves to him of Beth - le - hem.

Written by a Scottish missionary for use at St. Michael's Cathedral in Blantyre, Malawi, this hymn on the meaning of Christ's birth and name reflects an aspect of that African culture, where naming often expresses the conditions of a child's birth or hopes for his or her life.
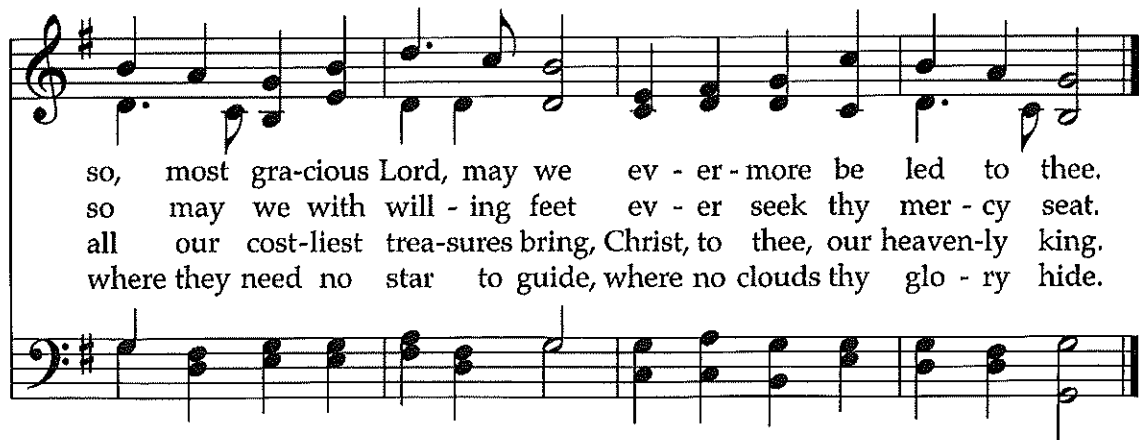
As with Gladness Men of Old 150

1 As with glad-ness men of old did the guid-ing star be-hold;
2 As with joy-ful steps they sped, Sav-ior, to thy low-ly bed,
3 As they of-fered gifts most rare at thy man-ger, rude and bare,
4 Ho-ly Je-sus, ev-ery day keep us in the nar-row way;
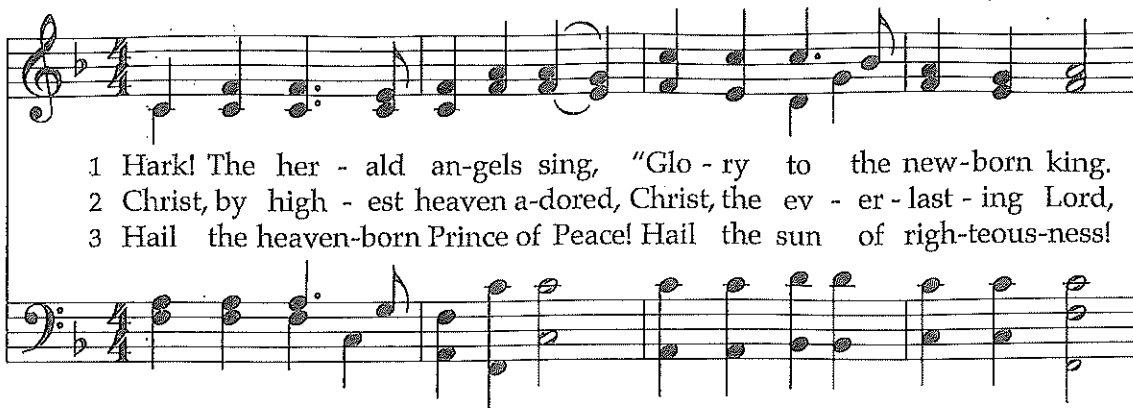
as with joy they hailed its light, lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;
there to bend the knee be-fore thee, whom heaven and earth a-dore;
so may we with ho-ly joy, pure and free from sin's al-loy,
and when earth-ly things are past, bring our ran-somed souls at last

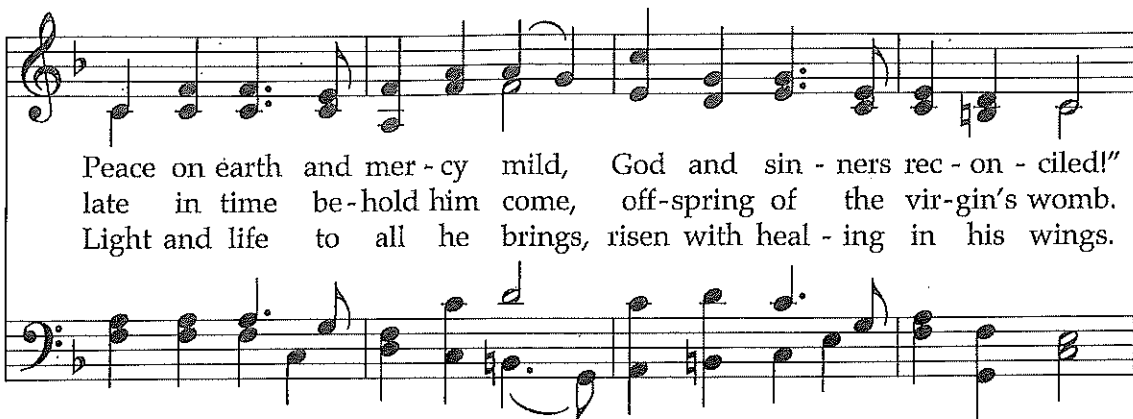so, most gra-cious Lord, may we ev-er-more be led to thee.
so may we with will-ing feet ev-er seek thy mer-cy seat.
all our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heaven-ly king.
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo-ry hide.

The first three stanzas here use an as/so structure to draw parallels between the coming of the Magi and the spiritual lives of the singers, summed up in the prayer of the fourth stanza. Even though this adapted German tune was named for him, the author did not care for it.
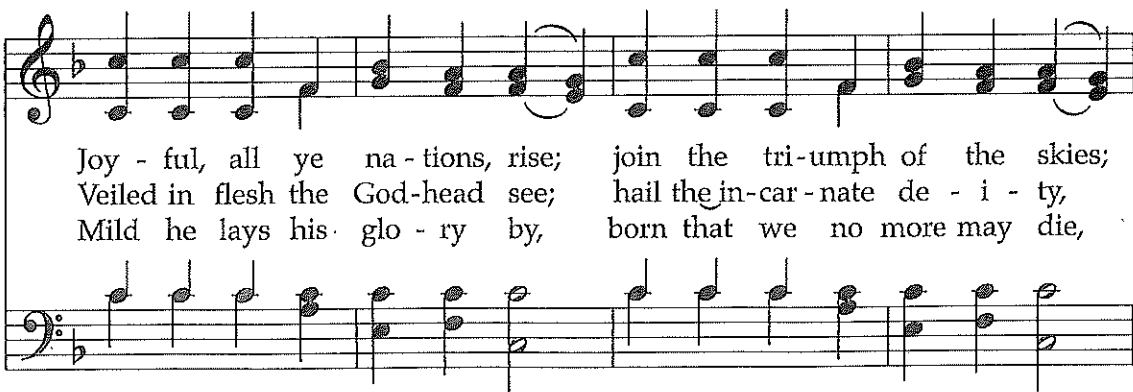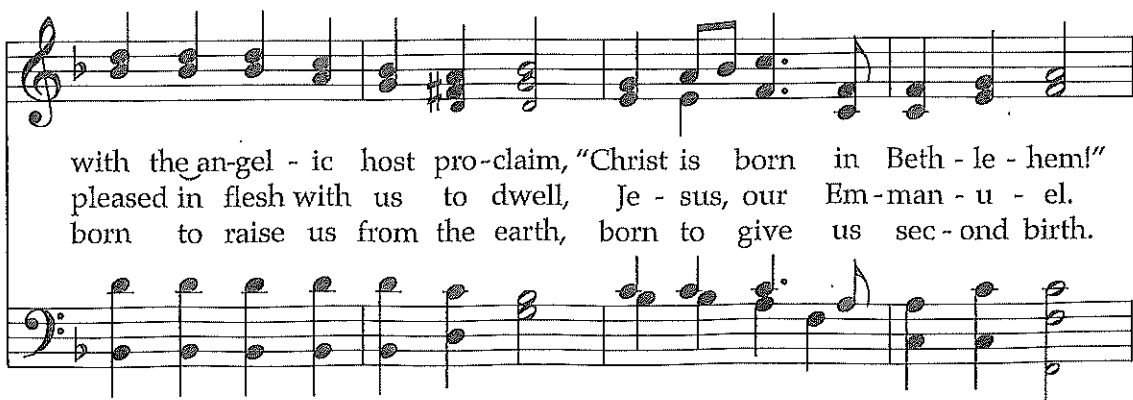
119 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

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.
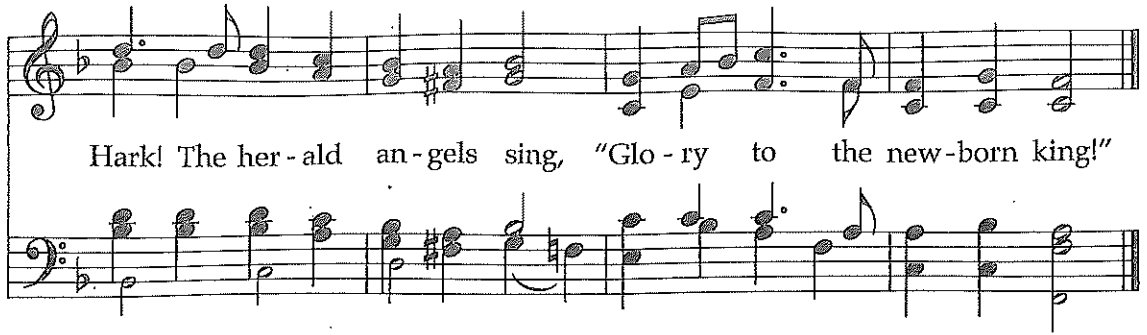Light and life to all he brings, risen with heal - ing in his wings.

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.

Hark! The her-ald an-gels sing, "Glo-ry to the new-born king!"