The Christmas Story

A short cantata in popular style for voices and narrator(s)

Words and Music

by

Andrew D. Boden

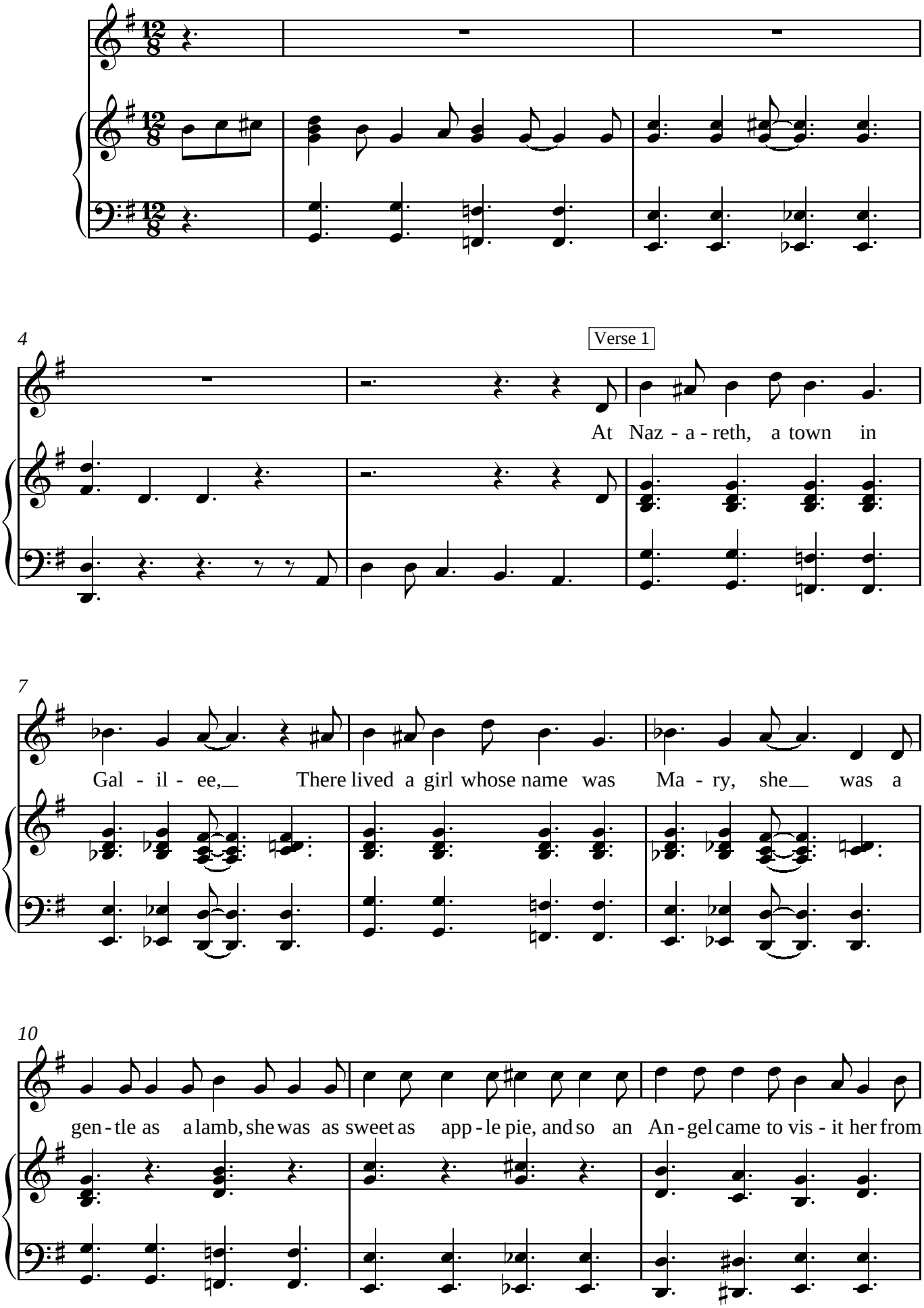
1981

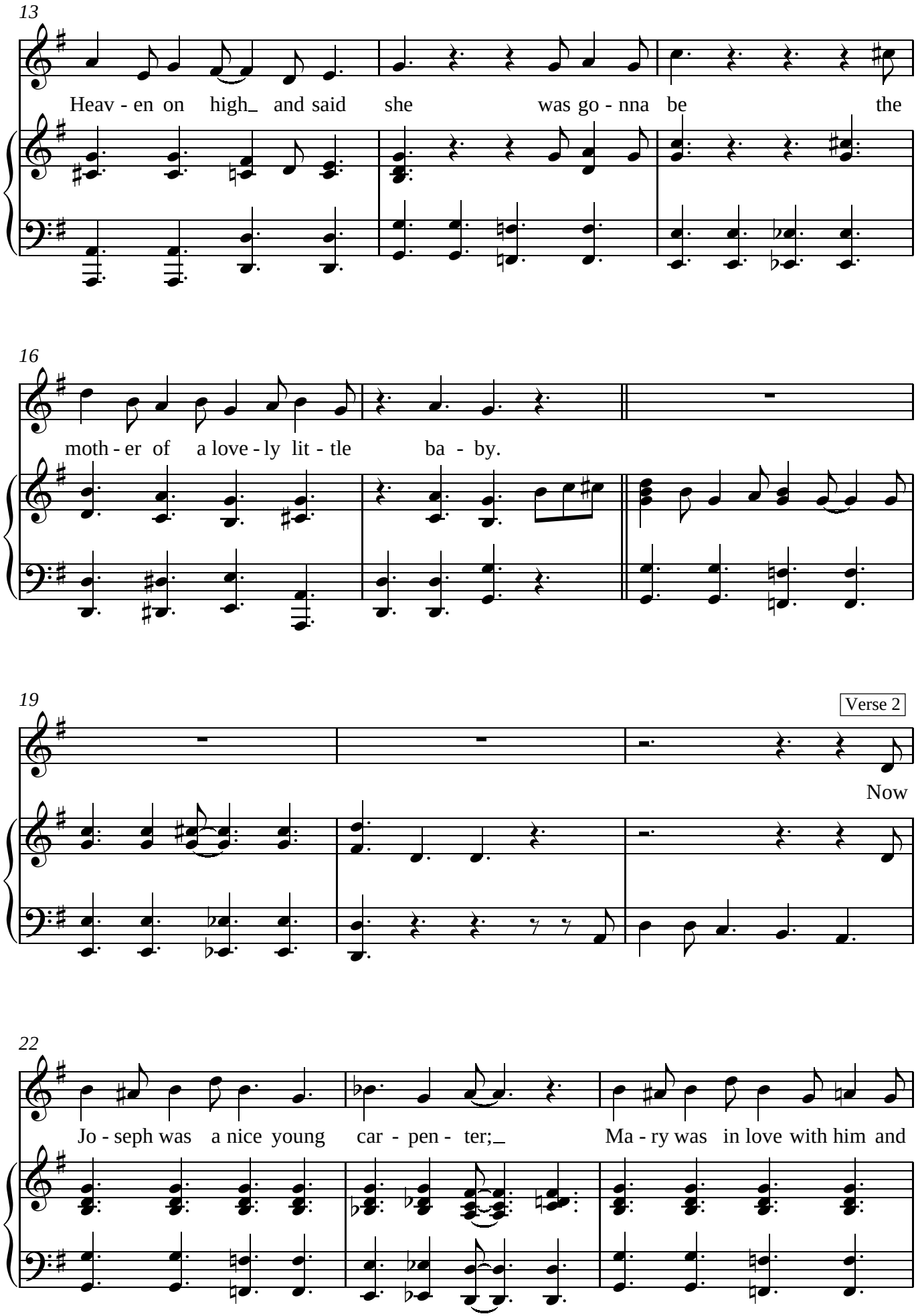
The Christmas Story

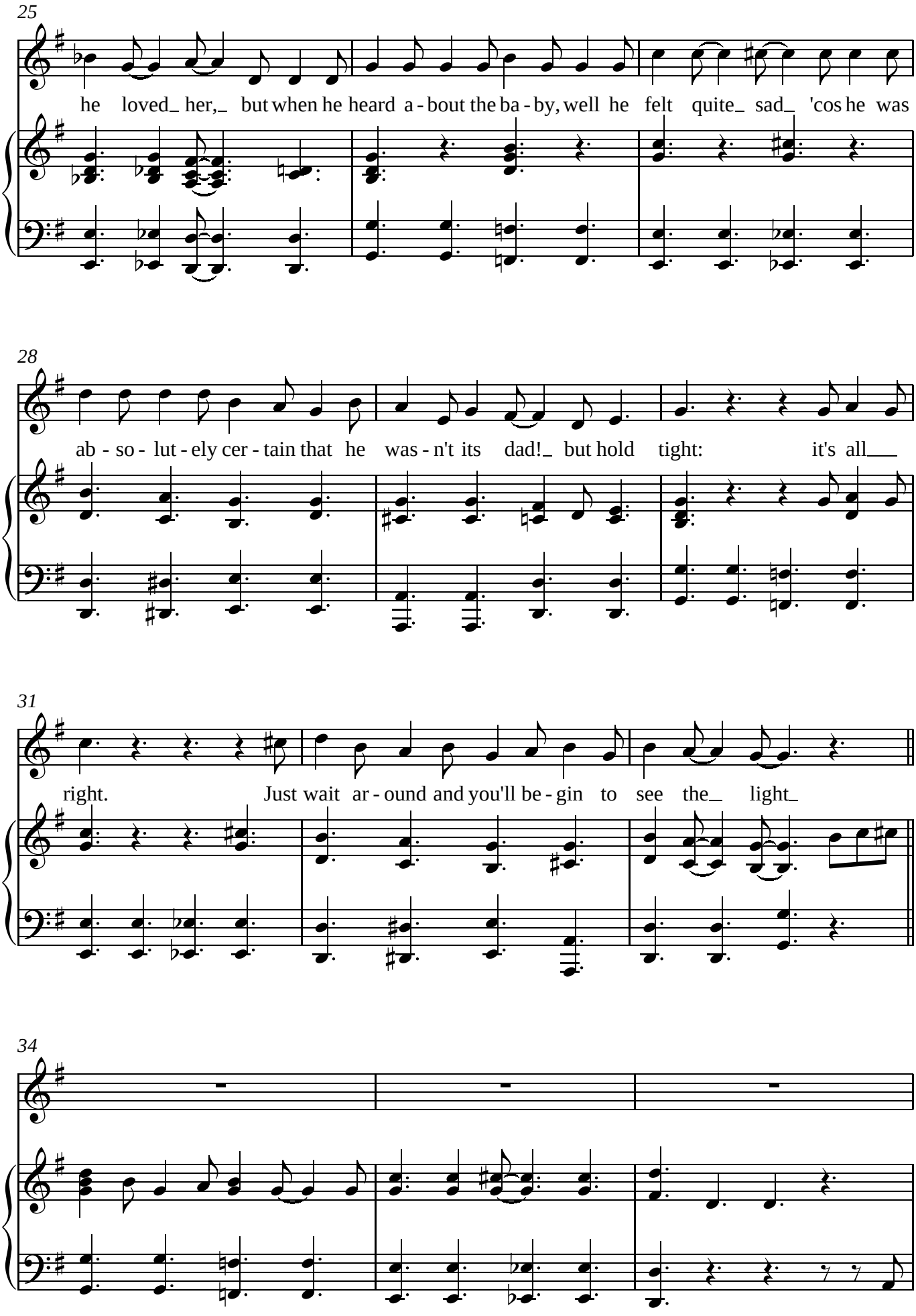
1. The Annunciation

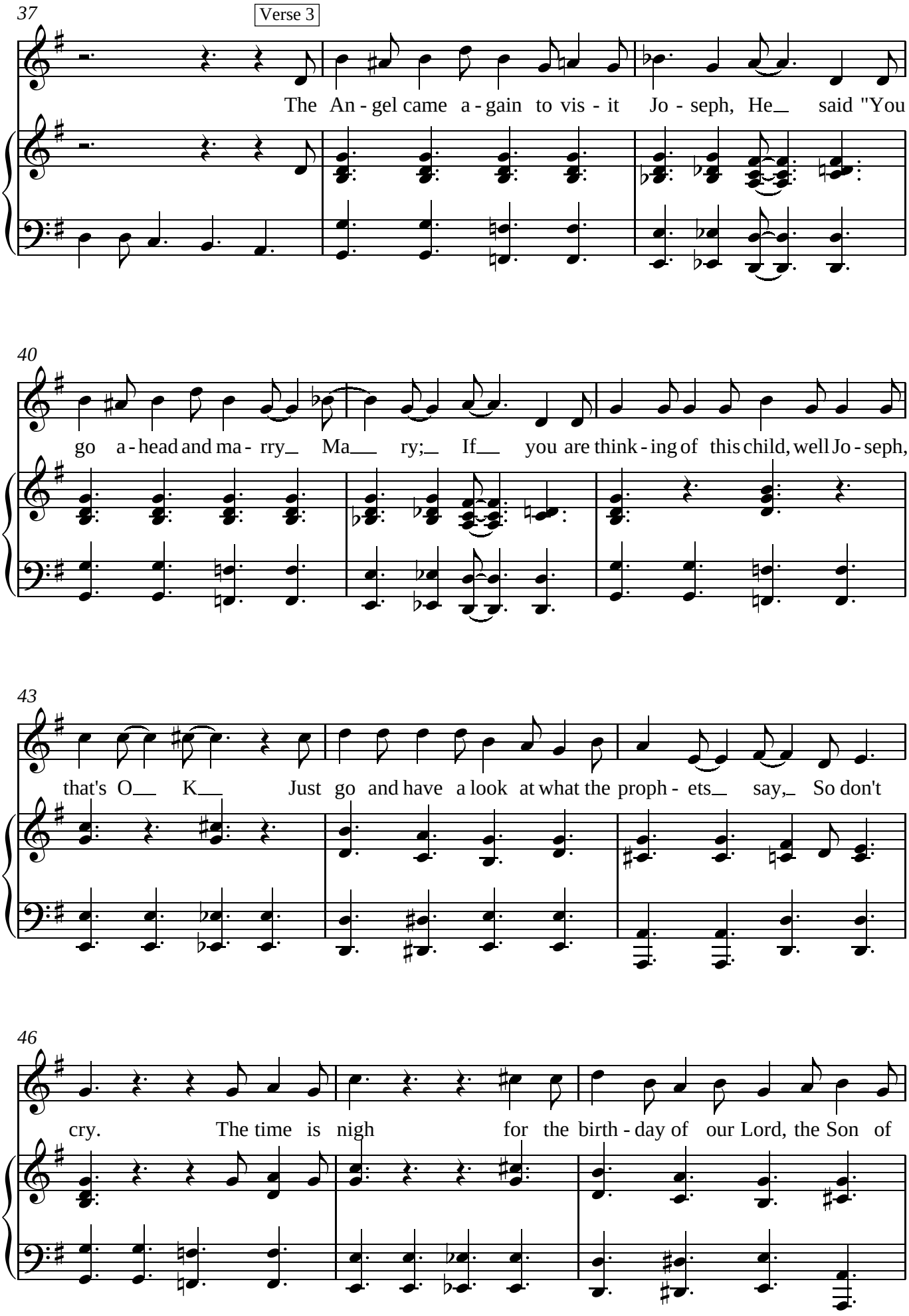
Andrew D. Boden

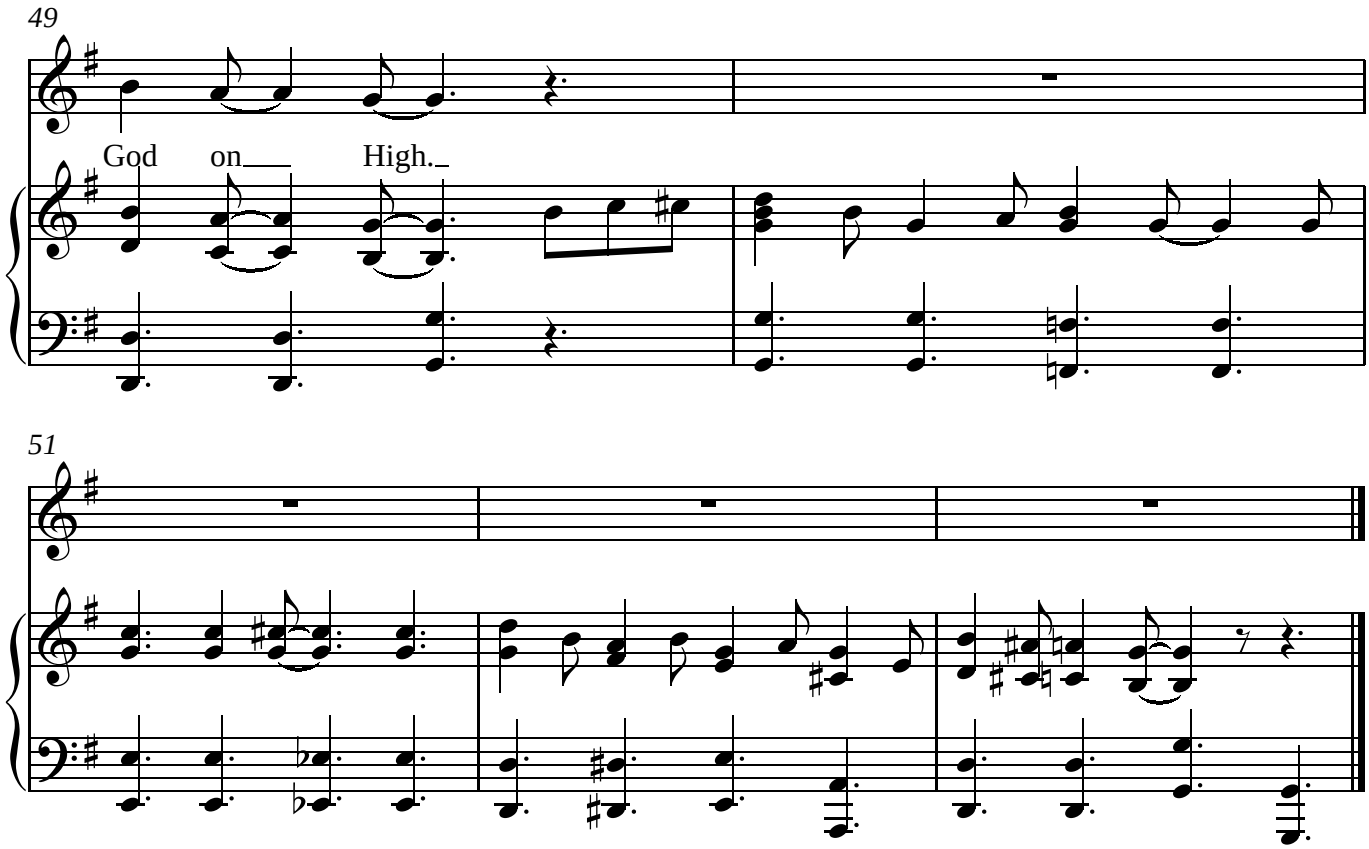
♩. = 115




13
Heav - en on high_ and said she was go - nna be the
16
moth - er of a love - ly lit - tle ba - by.
19
Verse 2
Now
22
Jo - seph was a nice young car - pen - ter;_ Ma - ry was in love with him and


25
he loved_ her,_ but when he heard a - bout the ba - by, well he felt quite_ sad_ 'cos he was
28
ab - so - lut - ely cer - tain that he was - n't its dad!_ but hold tight: it's all___
31
right. Just wait ar - ound and you'll be - gin to see the_ light_
34


37
Verse 3
The An - gel came a - gain to vis - it Jo - seph, He_ said "You
40
go a - head and ma - rry_ Ma_ ry;_ If_ you are think - ing of this child, well Jo - seph,
43
that's O_ K_ Just go and have a look at what the proph - ets_ say,_ So don't
46
cry. The time is nigh for the birth - day of our Lord, the Son of


49
God on High.

51

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A short cantata in popular style for voices & narrator(s).

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Song 1 - The Annunciation

At Nazareth, a town in Galilee,
There lived a girl whose name was Mary, she
Was as gentle as a lamb, she was as sweet as apple pie,
And so an angel came to visit her from Heaven on high
And said she ..... Was gonna be .....
The mother of a lovely little ..... Baby.

Now Joseph was a nice young carpenter;
Mary was in love with him, and he loved her:
But when he heard about the baby, well he felt quite sad,
For he was absolutely certain that he wasn't its Dad!
But hold tight ..... It's all right .....
Just wait around and you'll begin to see the light.

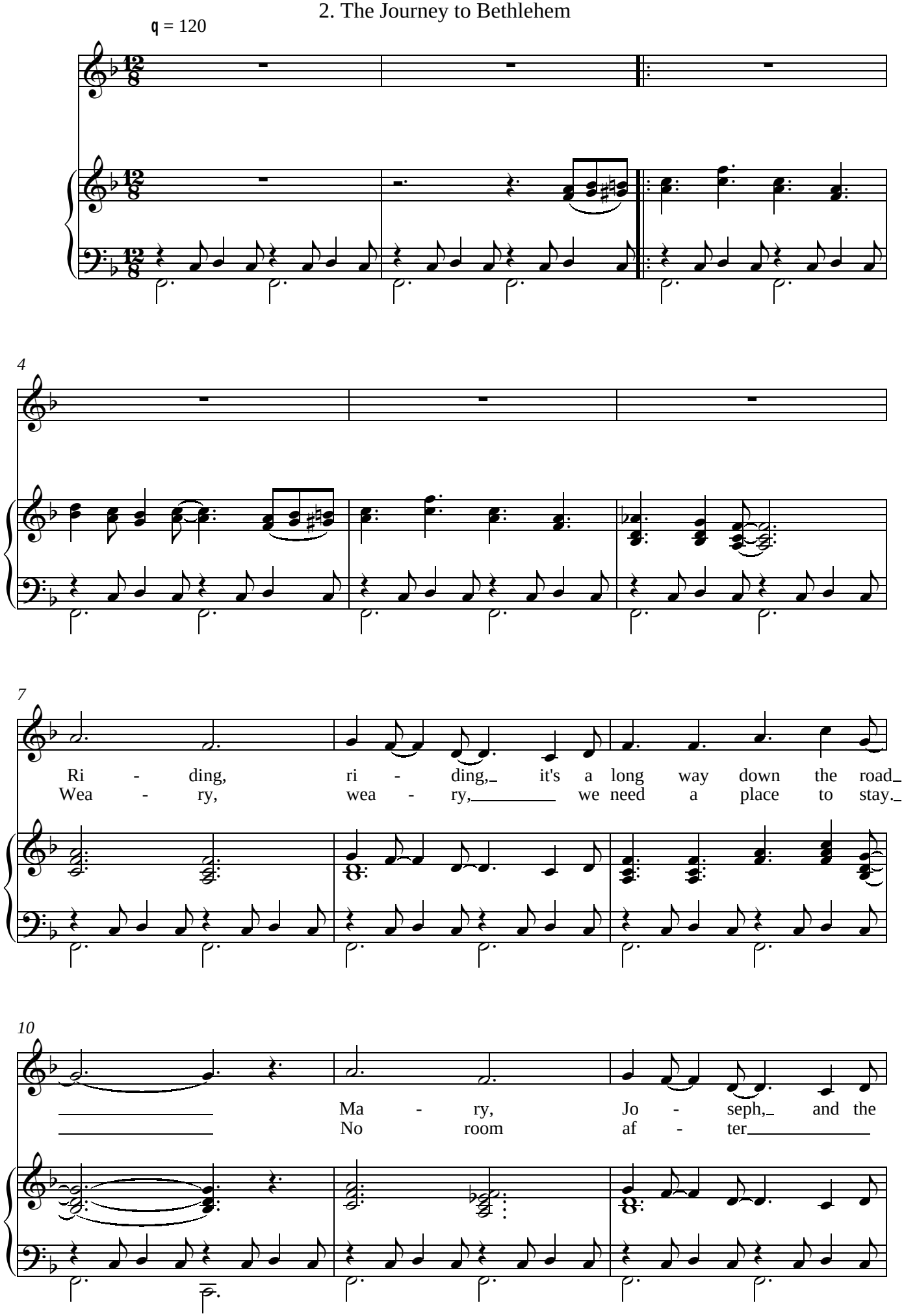
The angel came again to visit Joseph, He said
"You go ahead and marry Mary. If you are
Thinking of this child, well Joseph, that's OK -
Just go and have a look at what the prophets say;
So don't cry ..... The time is nigh .....
For the birthday of the Lord, the Son of God on high".

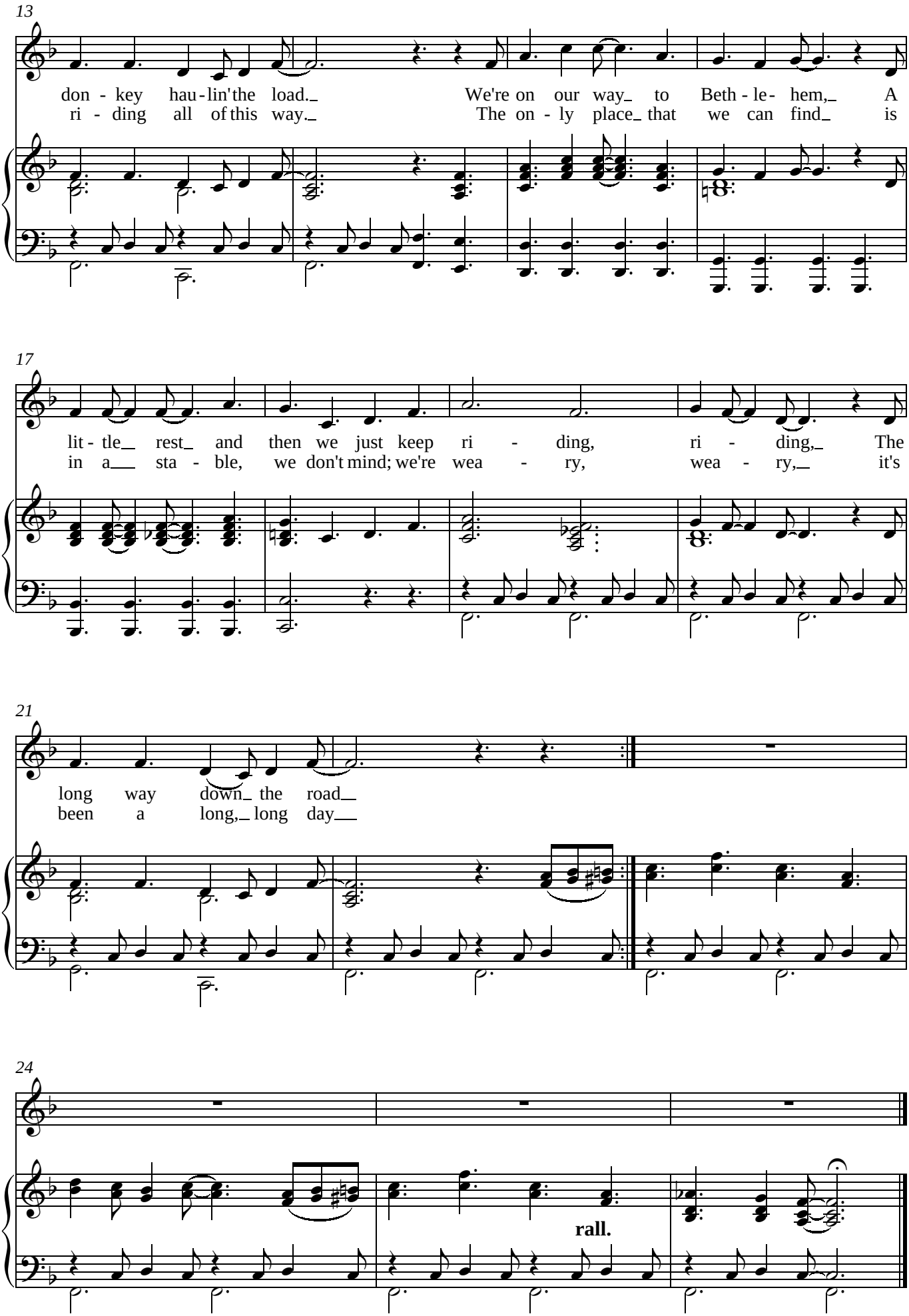
Narrator A

So Joseph did as the angel told him, and took Mary as his wife. Now there went out an order from Caesar Augustus that a great census should be taken. For this, every man had to return to his town of origin to be registered; and so Joseph set off with his bride to the town of Bethlehem in Judea. It was a long, slow journey.

The Christmas Story

2. The Journey to Bethlehem




13
don - key hau - lin' the load. We're on our way to Beth - le - hem, A
ri - ding all of this way. The on - ly place that we can find is
17
lit - tle rest and then we just keep ri - ding, ri - ding, The
in a sta - ble, we don't mind; we're wea - ry, wea - ry, it's
21
long way down the road
been a long, long day
24
rall.

Song 2 - The Journey to Bethlehem

Riding ..... Riding,
It's a long way down the road;
Mary ..... Joseph
And the donkey haulin' the load.
We're on our way to Bethlehem;
A little rest, and then we just keep
Riding ..... Riding,
The long way down the road.

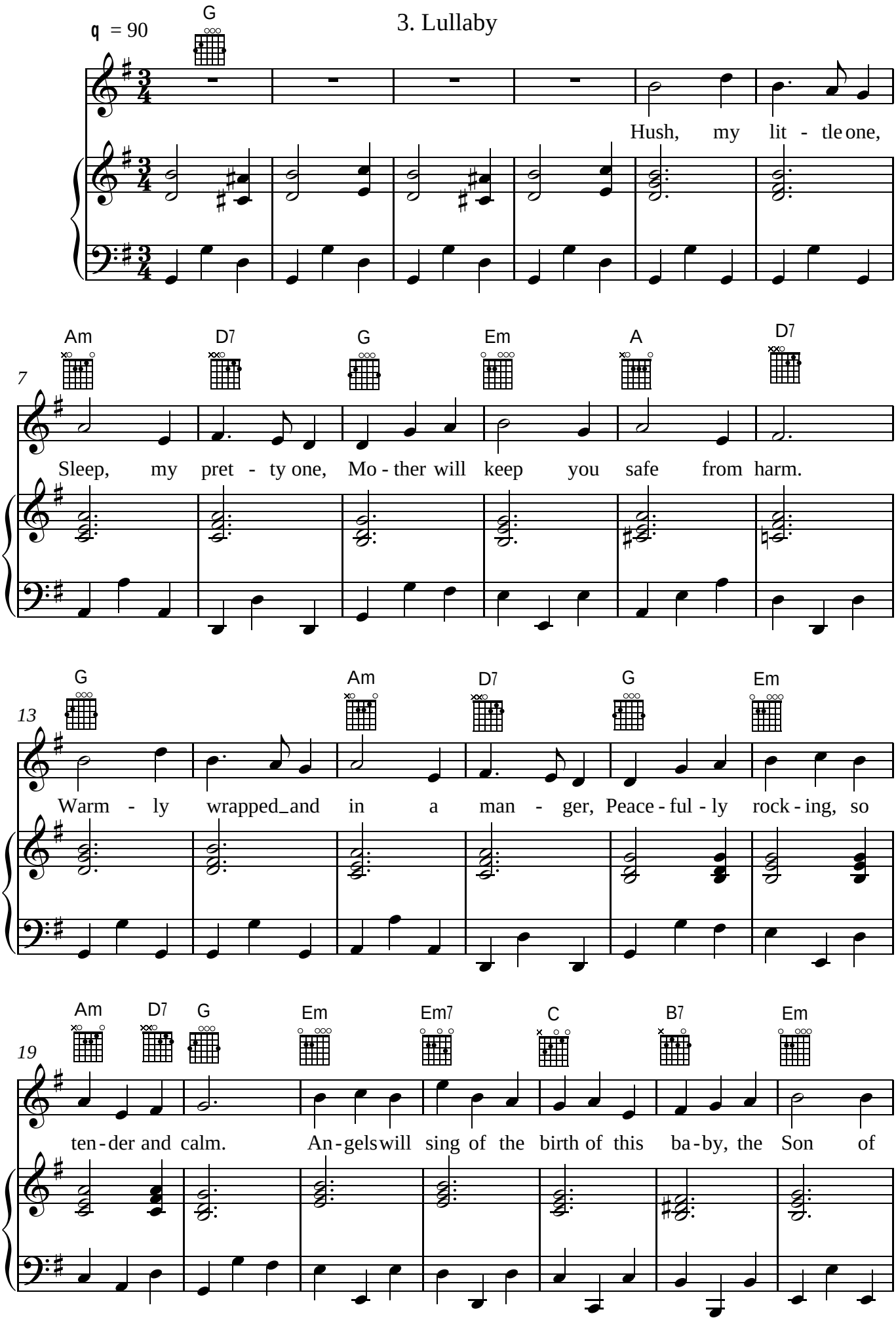
Weary ..... Weary,
We need a place to stay.
No room .....after
Riding all this way.
The only place that we can find
Is in a stable ..... We don't mind;
We're weary ..... Weary,
It's been a long, long day.

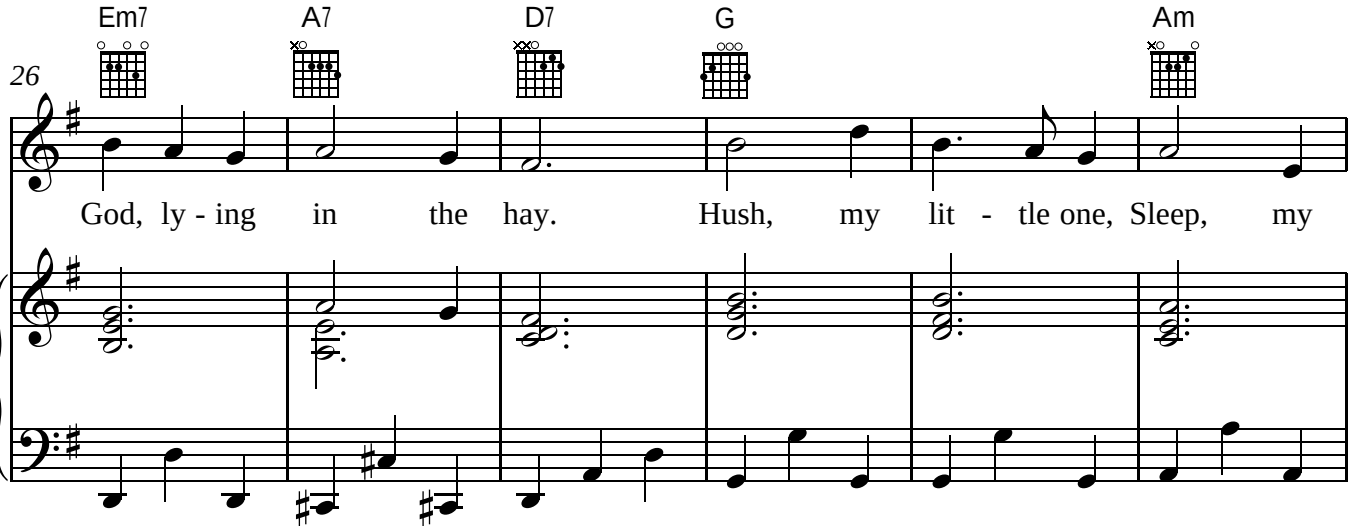
Narrator B

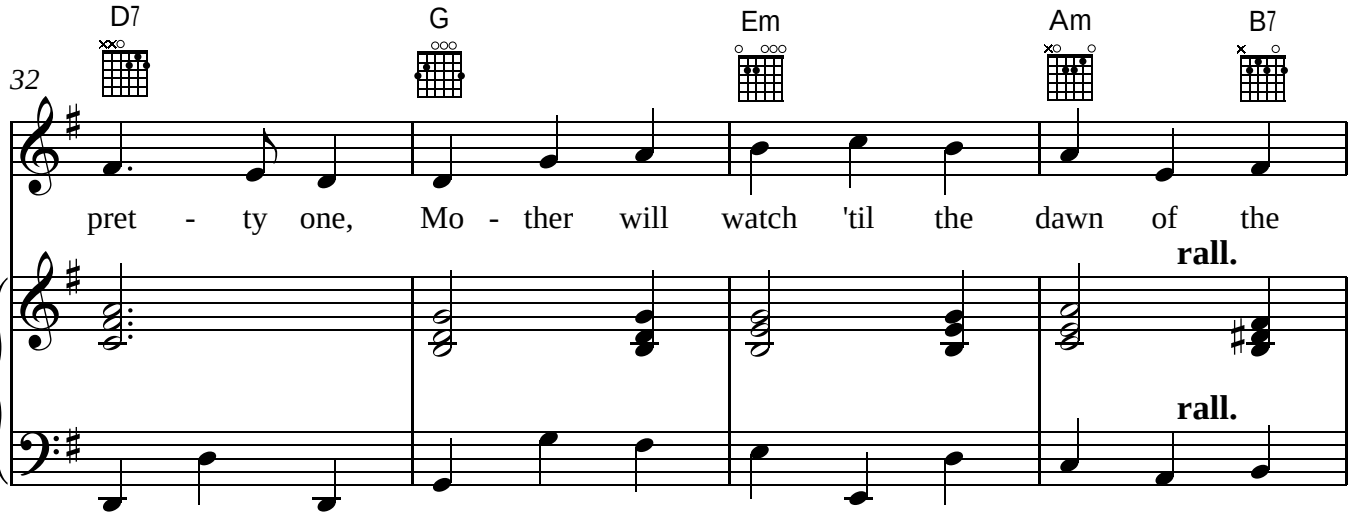
Because of the overcrowding Mary and Joseph could find no proper place to stay, and so they spent the night in a stable, where at least it was warm and dry. Here Mary's baby was born. She wrapped him in blankets and laid him to sleep in a manger.

The Christmas Story

3. Lullaby




Em7
A7
D7
G
Am
26
God, ly - ing in the hay. Hush, my lit - tle one, Sleep, my


D7
G
Em
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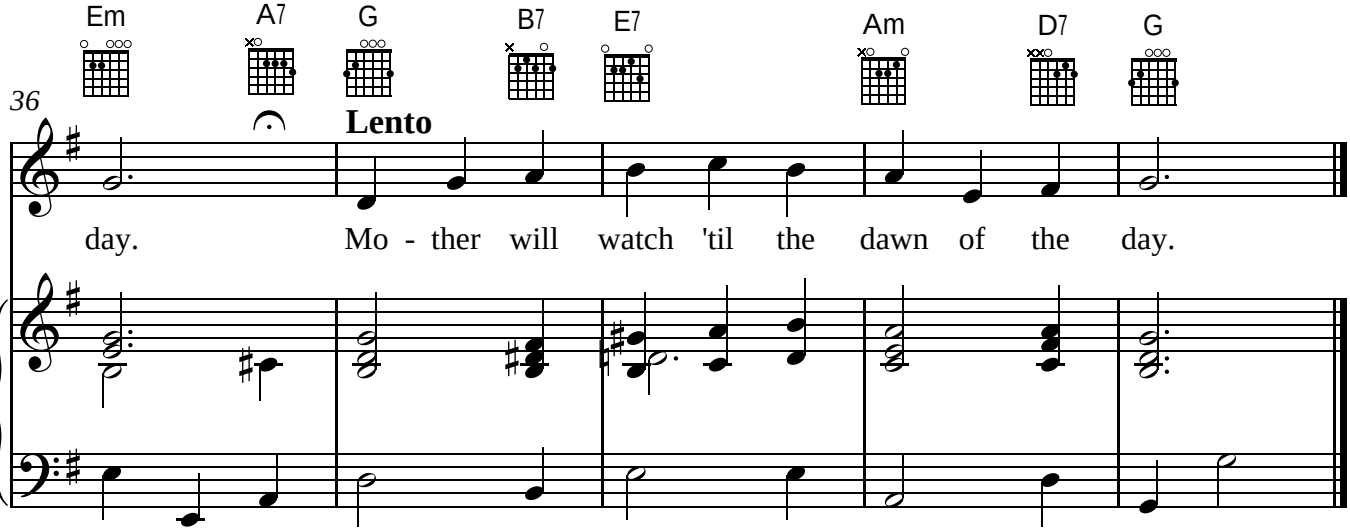
B7
32
pret - ty one, Mo - ther will watch 'til the dawn of the
rall.
rall.


Em
A7
G
B7
E7
Am
D7
G
36
Lento
day. Mo - ther will watch 'til the dawn of the day.

Song 3 - Lullaby

Hush, my little one, sleep my pretty one,
Mother will keep you safe from harm;
Warmly wrapped and in a manger,
Peacefully rocking, so tender and calm.

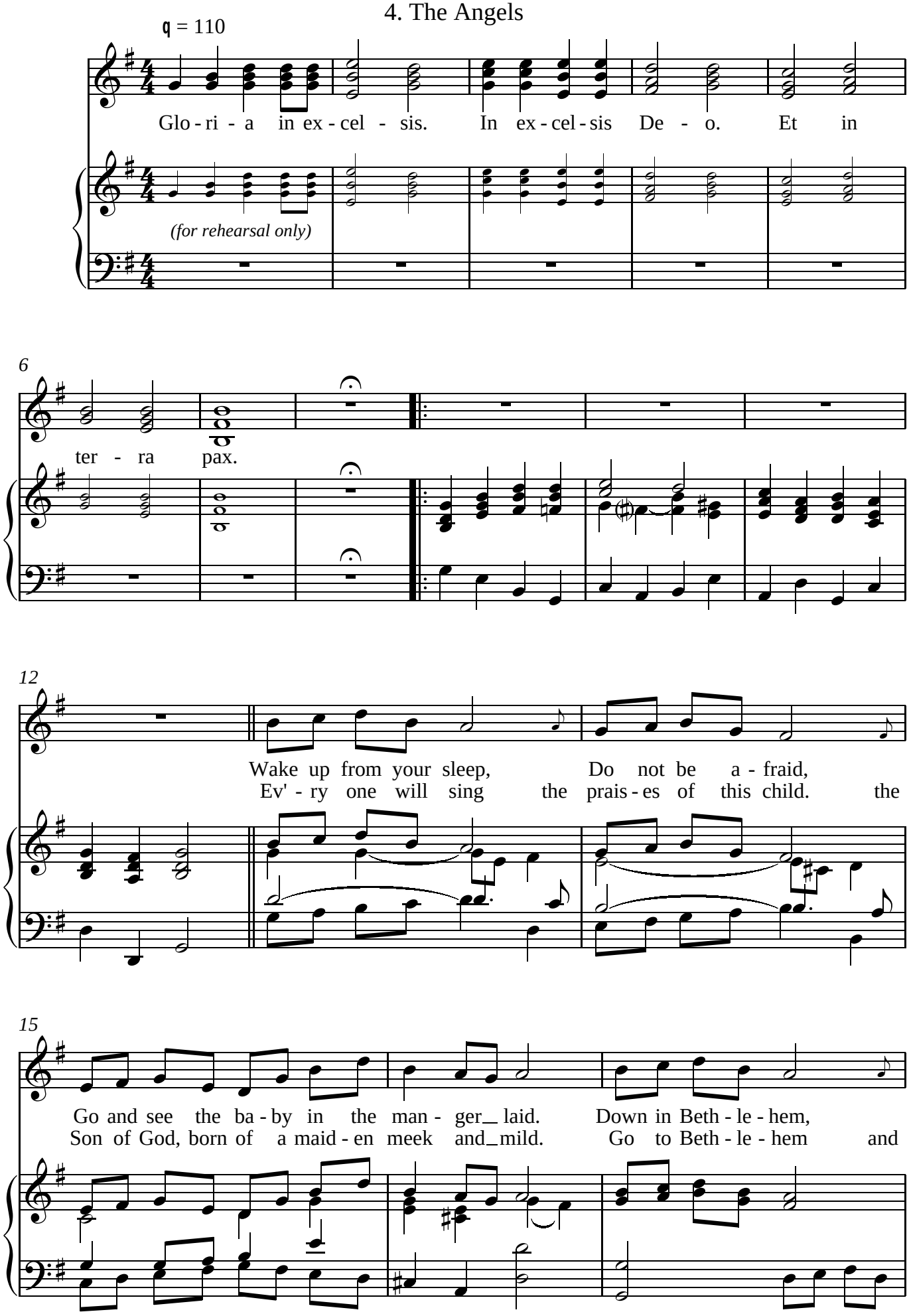
Angels will sing of the birth of this baby,
The Son of God, lying in the hay.
Hush, my little one, sleep my pretty one,
Mother will watch 'til the dawn of the day.
Mother will watch 'til the dawn of the day.

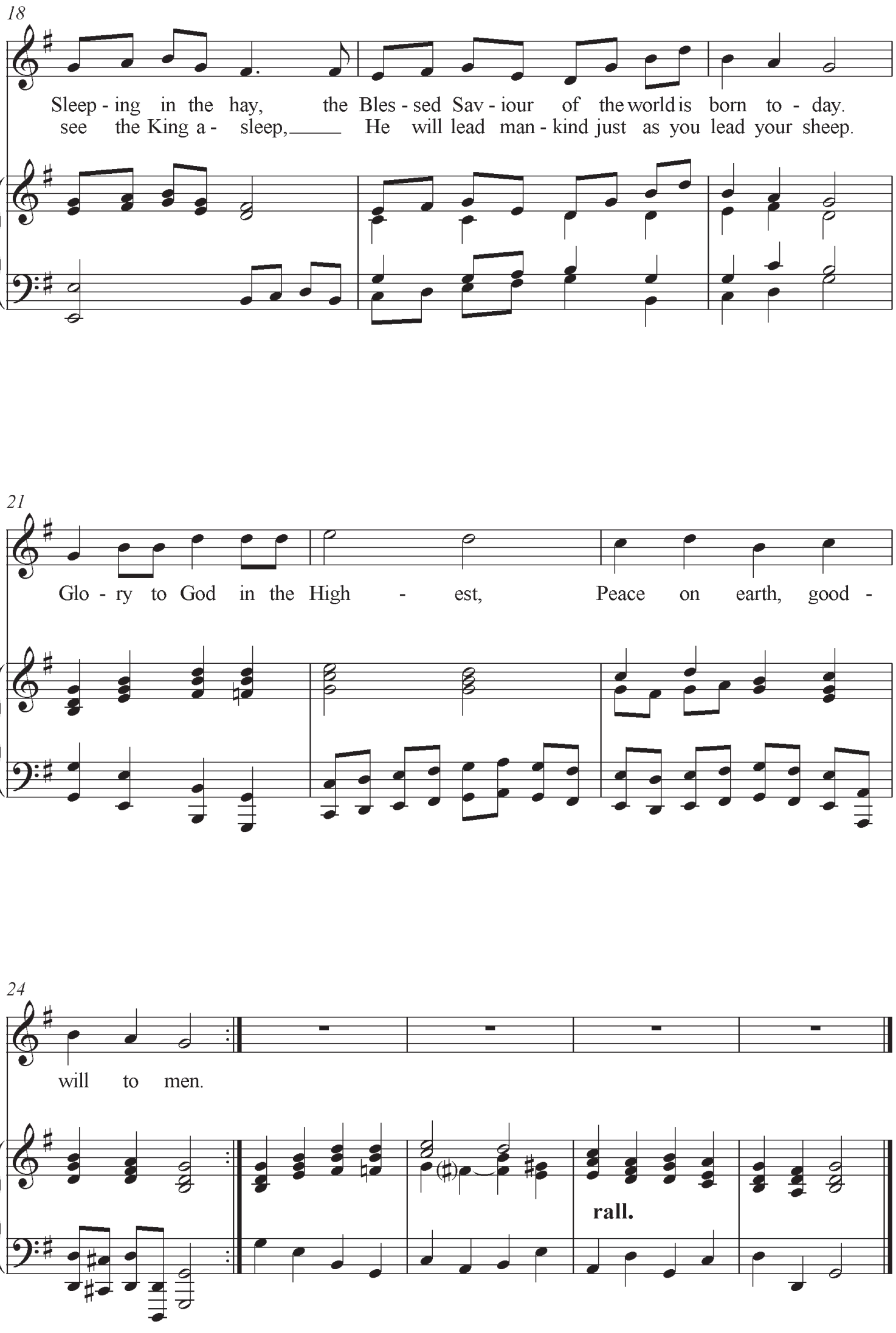
Narrator A

On the hillside above the town some shepherds were guarding a flock of sheep. It was a cold, dark night; but suddenly the sky lit up and the shepherds heard angelic voices .....

The Christmas Story

4. The Angels




18
Sleep - ing in the hay, the Bles - sed Sav - iour of the world is born to - day.
see the King a - sleep, He will lead man - kind just as you lead your sheep.
21
Glo - ry to God in the High - est, Peace on earth, good -
24
will to men.
rall.

Song 4 - The Angels

Gloria in excelsis.
In excelsis Deo.
Et in terra pax.

Wake up from your sleep,
Do not be afraid,
Go and see the baby in the manger laid.
Down in Bethlehem,
Sleeping in the hay,
The blessed Saviour of the world is born today.

Glory to God in the highest;
Peace on earth, goodwill to men.

Ev'ryone will sing
The praises of this child,
The Son of God, born of a maiden meek and mild.
Go to Bethlehem
And see the King asleep;
He will lead mankind just as you lead your sheep.

Glory to God in the highest;
Peace on earth, goodwill to men.

Narrator B

When the shepherds heard this they decided to go down into the town to look for the new-born King, and they found Mary, Joseph and the baby in the stable, and they knelt before the child.

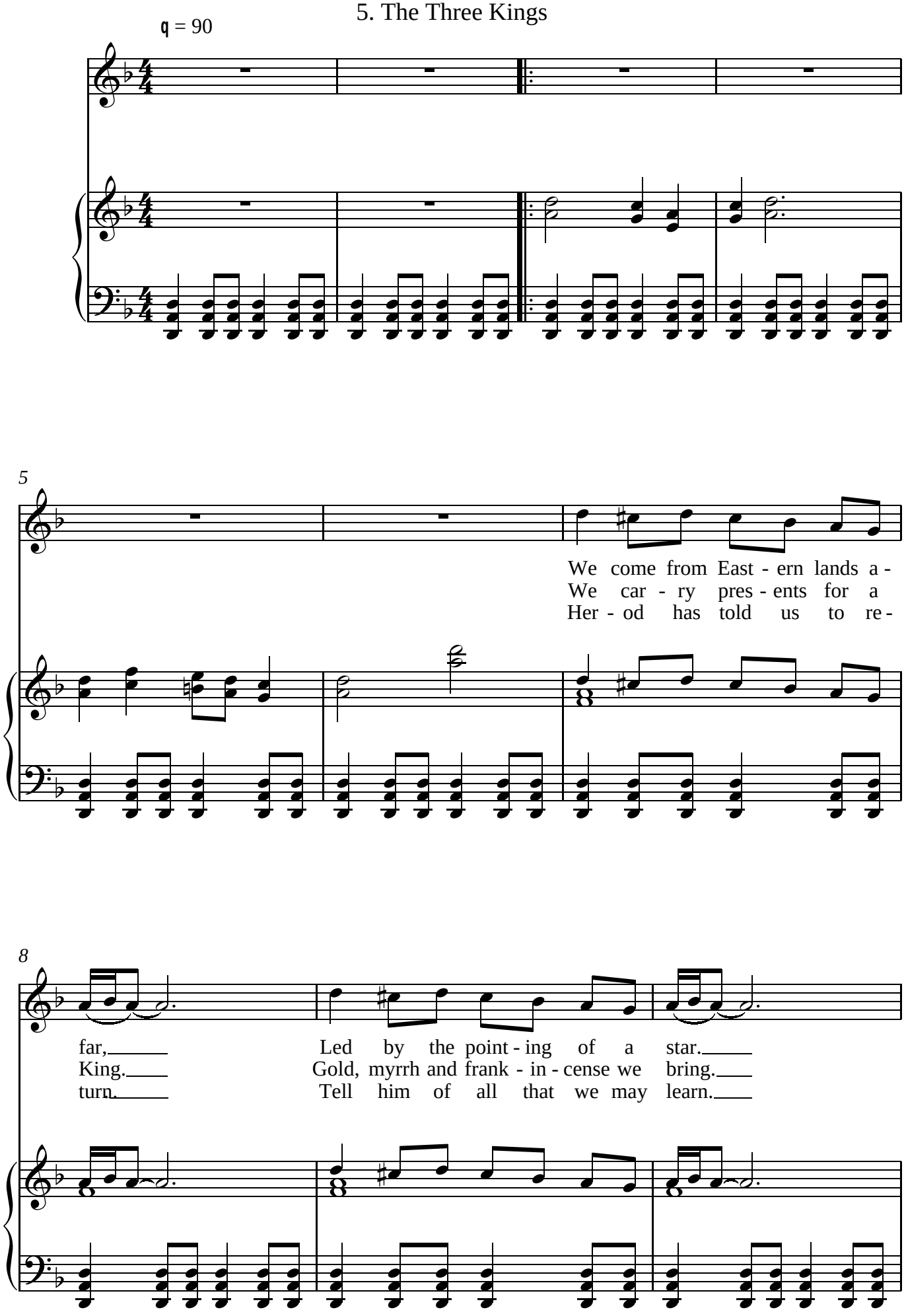
Narrator A

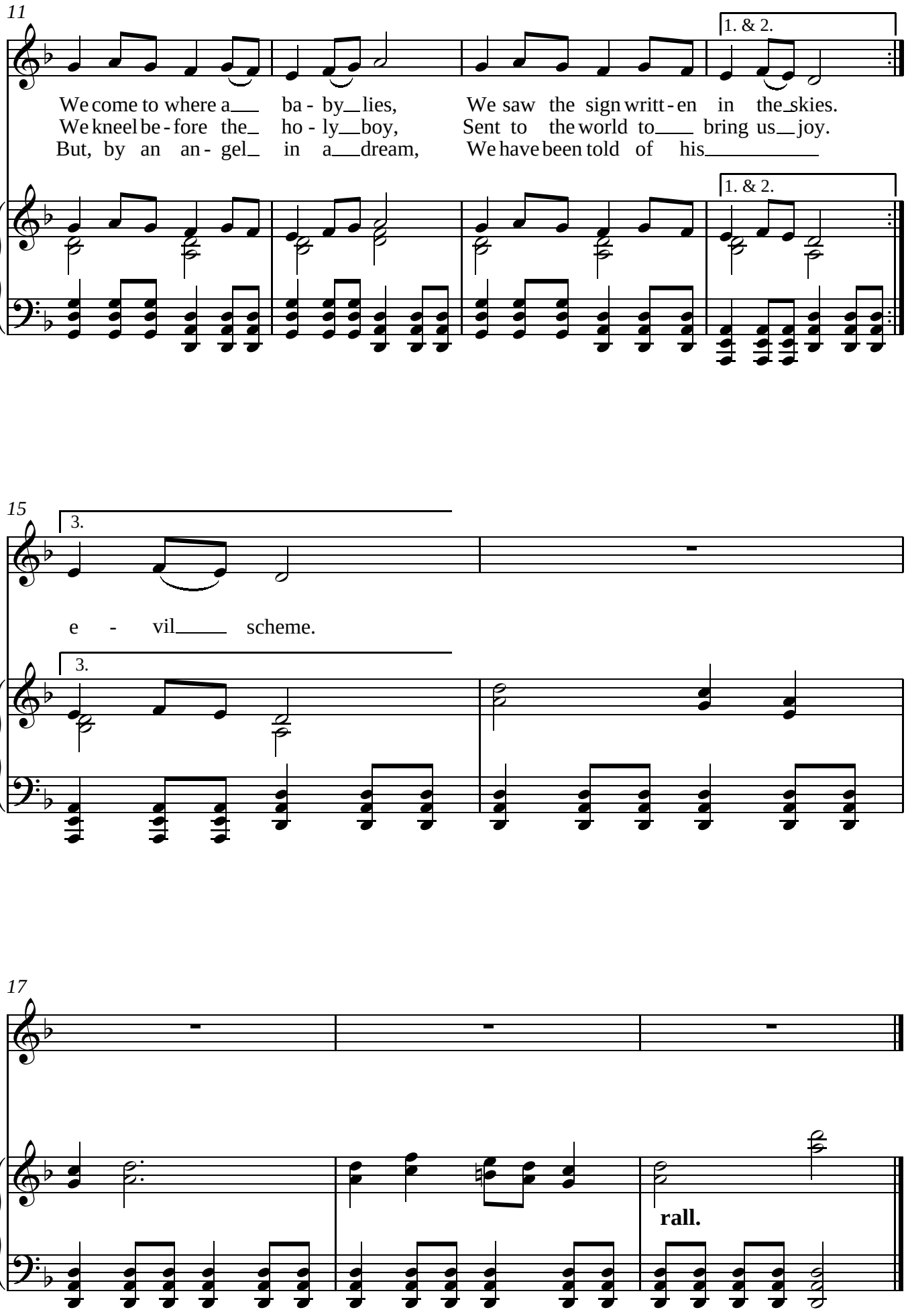
At the moment Jesus was born a strange, bright star appeared in the sky in Eastern lands. Three wise men saw this star and recognised it as the sign of a great event, and so they set out to find where the child was born. As they journeyed the star seemed to go before them, leading and guiding them to Bethlehem.

On the way they stopped at Jerusalem where they told King Herod of their pilgrimage. He asked them to find the new-born King and then return to tell him, so that he could go and pay homage himself.

The Christmas Story

5. The Three Kings




11
1. & 2.
We come to where a ba - by lies, We saw the sign writt - en in the skies.
We kneel be - fore the ho - ly boy, Sent to the world to bring us joy.
But, by an an - gel in a dream, We have been told of his
1. & 2.
15
3.
e - vil scheme.
3.
17
rall.

Song 5 - The Wise Men

We come from Eastern lands afar.
Led by the pointing of a star.
We come to where a baby lies;
We saw the sign written in the skies.

We carry presents for a King.
Gold, myrrh and frankincense we bring.
We kneel before the holy boy,
Sent to the world to bring us joy.

Herod has told us to return.
Tell us of all that we may learn.
But, by an angel in a dream,
We have been told of his evil scheme.

Narrator B

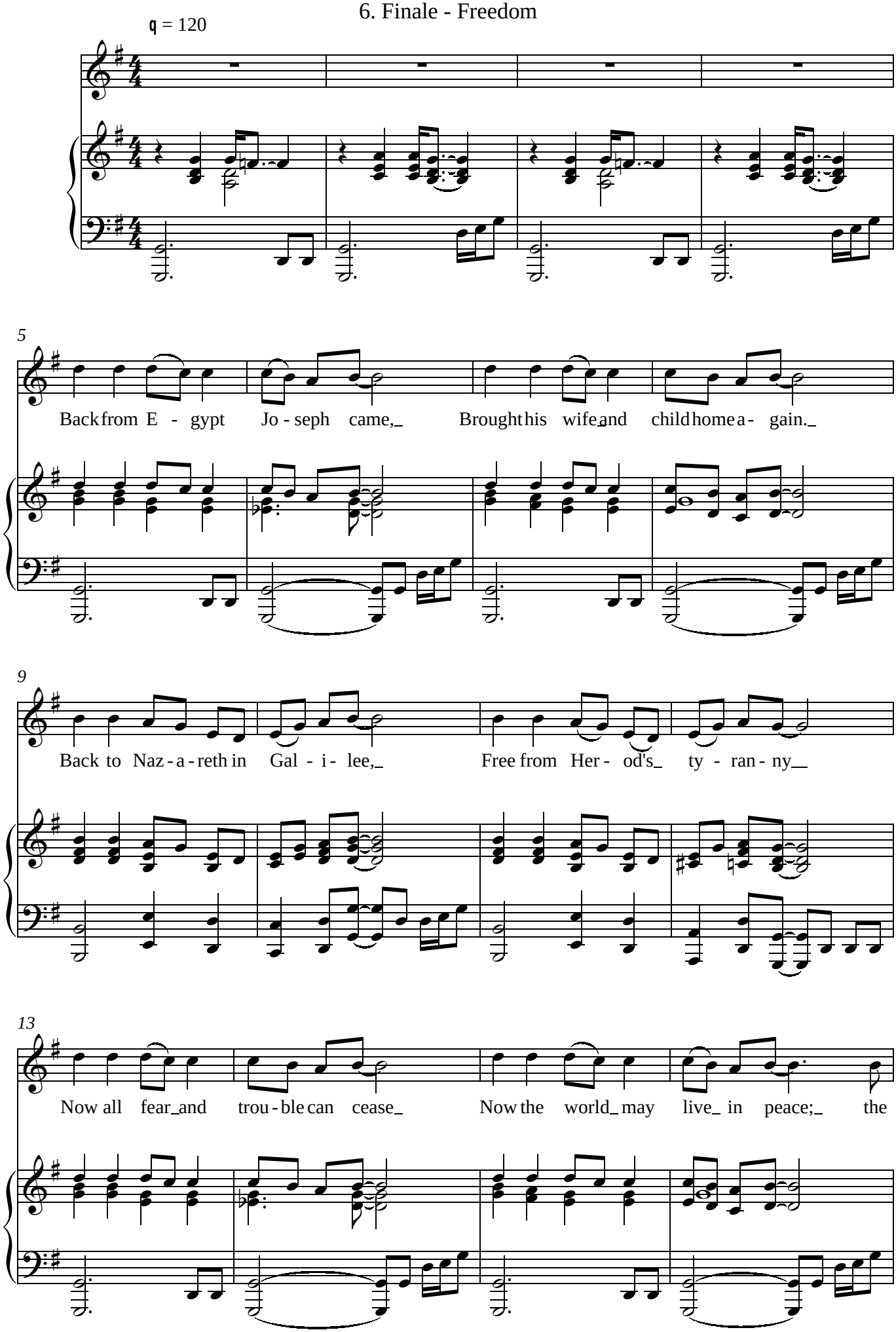
Having been warned in a dream that Herod wanted the baby killed, the three wise men returned home a different way. When Herod found out he sent soldiers to kill every child aged two or less in Bethlehem and its neighbourhood. Fortunately Joseph had been warned of this in a dream and had escaped with his wife and child to Egypt.

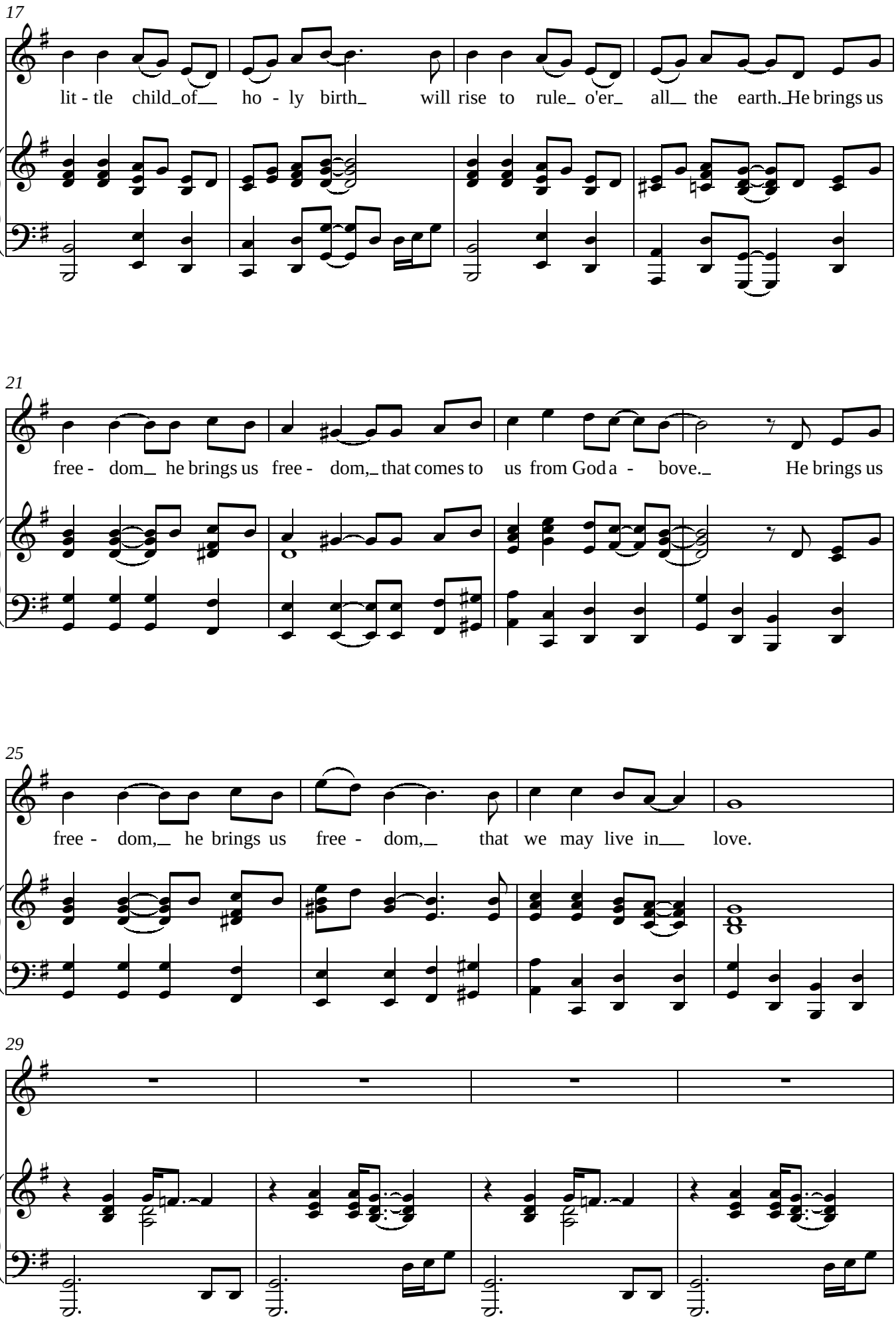
Narrator A

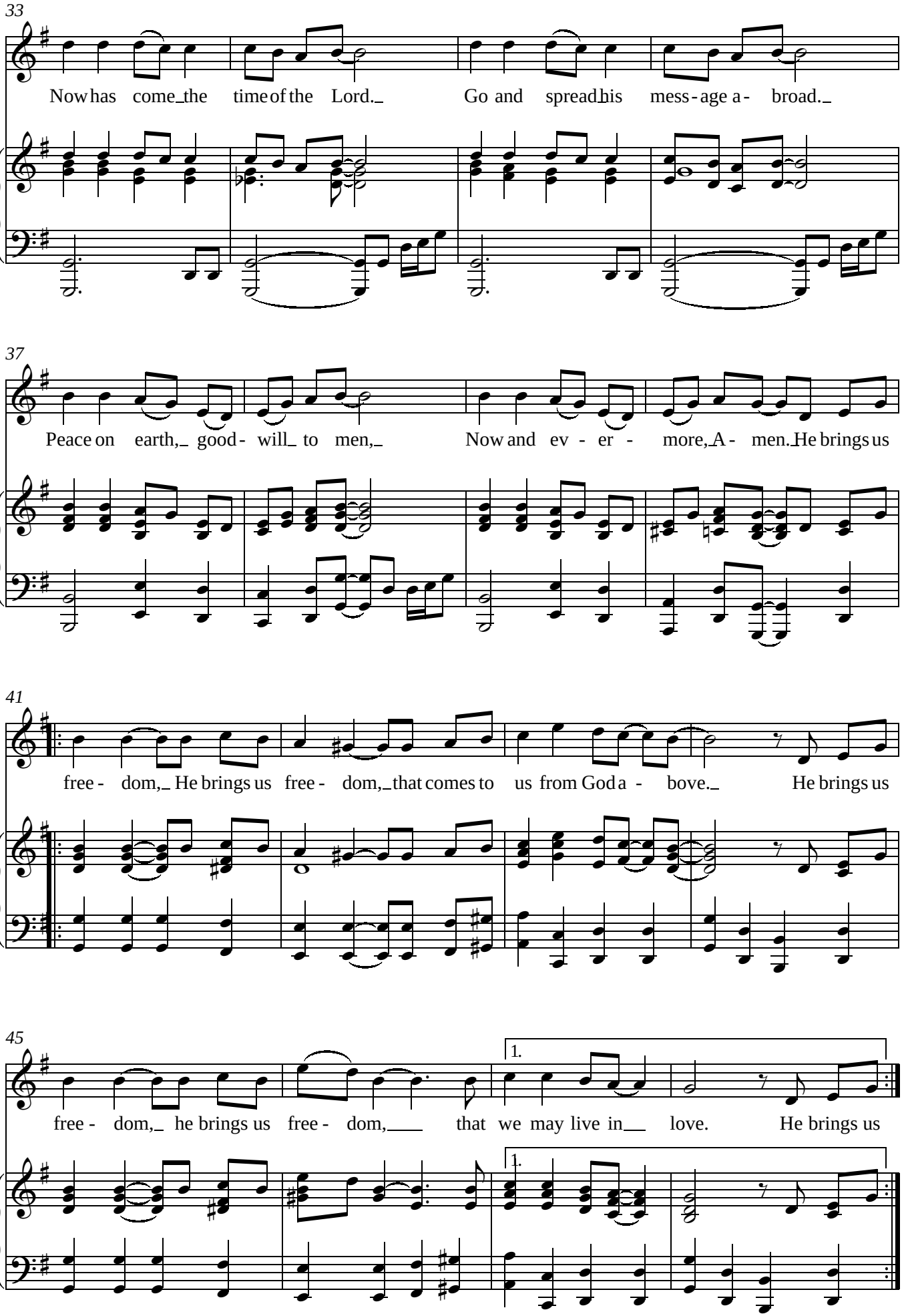
The time came that Herod died; and an angel appeared to Joseph in Egypt and said “rise up, take the child and his mother, and go with them to the land of Israel, for the men who threatened the child’s life are dead”. So Joseph returned to Nazareth with Mary and Jesus, thereby fulfilling all that had been written by the prophets.

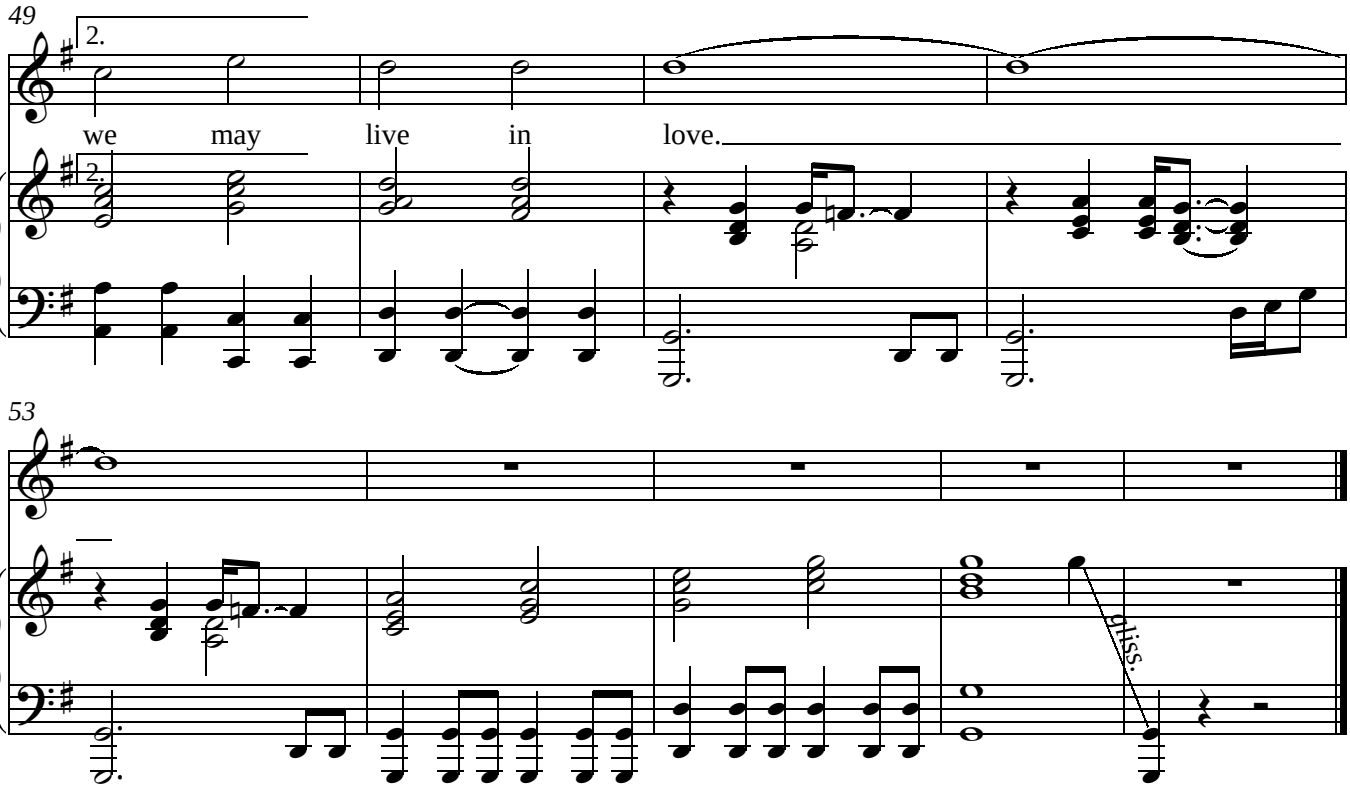
The Christmas Story

6. Finale - Freedom




17
lit - tle child of ho - ly birth will rise to rule o'er all the earth. He brings us
21
free - dom he brings us free - dom, that comes to us from God a - bove. He brings us
25
free - dom, he brings us free - dom, that we may live in love.
29


33
Now has come the time of the Lord. Go and spread his mess - age a - broad.
37
Peace on earth, good - will to men, Now and ev - er - more, A - men. He brings us
41
free - dom, He brings us free - dom, that comes to us from God a - bove. He brings us
45
free - dom, he brings us free - dom, that we may live in love. He brings us
1.
1.


49
2.
we may live in love.
2.

53
gliss.

Song 6 - Freedom

Back from Egypt Joseph came;
Brought his wife and child home again.
Back to Nazareth in Galilee,
Free from Herod's tyranny.

Now all fear and trouble can cease;
Now the world may live in peace.
The little child of holy birth
Will rise to rule o'er all the earth.

CHORUS

He brings us freedom; He brings us freedom
That comes to us from God above.
He brings us freedom; He brings us freedom,
That we may live in love.

Now has come the time of the Lord;
Go and spread his message abroad.
Peace on earth, goodwill to men,
Now and evermore, Amen

CHORUS x two

The Christmas Story

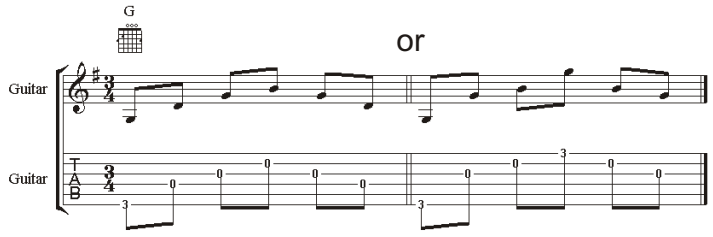
Performance notes & suggestions.

The Christmas Story by Andrew D. Boden was first performed by pupils at Burnwood High School, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire as part of the Christmas Carol Concert - 1981.

A rhythm unit was used to accompany songs 1 & 6. For song 1 it was set to a fast **swing** rhythm and two **Rock** rhythms were used for song 6 - one for the verse and the other for the chorus.

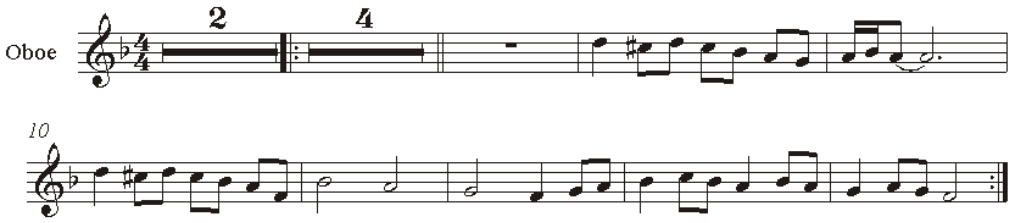
A bass guitar was used to double the bass line for songs 1, 5 & 6.

For song 3 an acoustic guitar played a quaver fingerpick pattern - e.g.



Song 4 had instruments (e.g. recorder, violin, clarinet) doubling the voice parts for the Gloria, and the main tune song and chorus was arranged for wind quartet (with the piano).

For song 5 a glockenspiel doubled the right-hand piano part for the intro., Between verses and at the end. A tambour was used to gently tap out the repeated rhythm (piano left hand) and an oboe played a counter-melody during the verses.



All songs can be sung by full chorus, though it is obvious that certain songs could be solo or small-group items - e.g. Song 3 could be a solo and Song 5 could be a trio.

During the performance the story was displayed (acted out) in tableaux on the stage.

With modern digital technology the accompaniments could easily be arranged and sequenced to provide the backing of a full band.

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