

O Tidings of Comfort and Joy!



Text: 18th century English carol

Music: Nancy Raabe

1 God rest you, mer - ry pil - grims all, let no - thing you dis - may. For
 2 From God that is our Fa - ther the bles - sed an - gels came un -
 3 Now when they came to Beth - le - hem, where our sweet Sav - ior lay, they
 4 With sud - den joy and glad - ness, the shep - herds were be - guil'd, to
 5 Now to the Lord sing prai - ses, all you with - in this place like

5 Je - sus Christ, our Sav - ior, was born u - pon this day. To - save our souls from
 to some cer - tain shep - herds, with ti - dings of the same: That he was born in
 found him in a man - ger where o - xen feed on hay. The bles - sed Vir - gin
 see the Babe of Is - rael be - fore his moth - er mild. O then with joy and
 we true lov - ing breth - ren each oth - er to em - brace, for the mer - ry time of

10 Sa - tan's power when we would run a - stray. O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!
 Beth - le - hem the Son of God by name. O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!
 kneel - ing down un - to the Lord did pray. O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!
 cheer - ful - ness re - joice each moth - er's child. O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!
 10 Christ - mas is com - ing on a - pace. O tid - ings of com - fort and joy!

This is the earliest known complete text for the carol commonly known as "God Rest You, Merry Gentlemen." Published in 1775 in "The Beauties [fine literary works] of the Magazines," it found its way into that collection when the compiler reproduced it from a song-sheet bought from a caroler on the street. This version is far more beguiling (see st. 4) than the stern text we are accustomed to hearing.