



GATHERING

Music for Gathering

English Carol Medley

settings by Mark Hayes

1. Here We Come A-Caroling
2. The Holly and the Ivy
3. I Saw Three Ships

The Victorian era (1837-1901) was crucial for Christmas carols, popularizing old tunes and introducing new ones.

- ♪ "Here We Come A-Caroling": This ancient "wassailing" song, rooted in door-to-door well-wishing, was embraced and formalized by Victorians who loved communal singing, making it a Christmas staple.
- ♪ "The Holly and the Ivy": An older British folk carol, it resonated with the Victorian appreciation for Christmas symbolism and natural decorations, growing in popularity as homes were adorned with these evergreens.
- ♪ "I Saw Three Ships": Though first printed in the 17th century, its unique, mysterious narrative surged in popularity during the Victorian era as it was widely collected and published in carol books.

Welcome, Introduction, & Prayer

CAROLS

Minister of Music & Worship David Horton will give a brief introduction and background prior to each carol.

🎵 Deck the Halls

Tune: Welsh traditional

Though often associated with Christmas, this carol's melody actually dates back to a 16th-century Welsh New Year's song. The familiar English lyrics were added in the Victorian era by Thomas Oliphant, capturing the festive cheer and decorative spirit of a growing holiday tradition. It's a joyful blend of ancient revelry and Victorian sentiment.

Deck the halls with boughs of holly

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

'Tis the season to be jolly

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Don we now our gay apparel

Fa-la-la, la-la-la, la-la-la

Troll the ancient Yuletide carol

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

See the blazing Yule before us

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Strike the harp and join the chorus

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

Follow me in merry measure

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

While I tell of Yuletide treasure

Fa-la-la-la-la, la-la-la-la

🎵 Once in Royal David's City

ELW 269

Tune: Irby

Written in 1848 by Irish hymnwriter Cecil Frances Alexander, this carol was part of her effort to teach children the Apostles' Creed through song. It gently tells the Nativity story, grounding the miracle of Jesus' birth in humble, relatable imagery. Its spiritual depth and connection to childhood faith reflect the Victorian desire to infuse Christmas with meaning and reverence.

🎵 On Christmas Night

ELW 274

English Traditional

This traditional English folk carol has roots stretching back centuries, long before it was collected and popularized by the Victorians. Its simple melody and joyful lyrics proclaim the good news of Christ's birth. Thanks to collectors like Ralph Vaughan Williams, it found a new life in church hymnals, preserving its rustic charm for generations to come.

🎵 Coventry Carol

Robert Croo (1534)

Haunting and deeply moving, this carol comes from a 16th-century English mystery play and mourns the children lost in Herod's massacre. Sung as a lullaby by mothers in Bethlehem, it reminds us that the Christmas story includes both joy and sorrow. Its continued presence honors the fuller arc of the Nativity narrative.

Refrain

Lully, lulla,

thou little tiny child,

by by, lully lullay.

1 O sisters too,
how may we do
for to preserve this day
this poor youngling,
for whom we do sing
by by, lully lullay?

2 Herod the king,
in his raging,
charged he hath this day
his men of might,
in his own sight,
all young children to slay.

3 That woe is me,
poor child for thee!
and ever morn and day,
for thy parting
neither say nor sing
by by, lully lullay! *Refrain*

🎵 **God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen**

English traditional

One of the oldest English carols, this tune likely predates the Victorian era by centuries. It offers a message of steadfast hope and cheer, urging listeners not to be dismayed. With its strong melody and bold proclamation of Christ's birth, it captures the spirit of joy in the face of hardship.

1 God rest you merry, gentlemen,
let nothing you dismay,
remember Christ our Savior
was born on Christmas Day
to save us all from Satan's pow'r
when we were gone astray. *Refrain*

Refrain

O tidings of comfort and joy,
comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort and joy.

2 From God our heav'nly 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. *Refrain*

3 "Fear not," then said the angel,
"Let nothing you affright;
this day is born a Savior
of a pure virgin bright,
to free all those who trust in Him
from Satan's pow'r and might." *Refrain*

4 The shepherds at those tidings
rejoiced much in mind,
and left their flocks afeeding,
in tempest, storm, and wind,
and went to Bethlehem straightway,
this blessed Babe to find. *Refrain*

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. *Refrain*

🎵 **What Child Is This?**

ELW 296

Tune: Greensleeves

Set to the familiar tune of "Greensleeves," this carol combines an ancient melody with Victorian-era lyrics by William Chatterton Dix. Written during a period of personal illness and reflection, Dix's words invite a deeper contemplation of the miracle of the Nativity. Its quiet awe offers a moment of stillness amid the season's celebration.

🎵 **O Come, All Ye Faithful**

ELW 283

Tune: Adeste Fideles

Originally sung in Latin as "Adeste Fideles," this carol's English version took root in the 19th century, resonating with the Victorian love of grand, communal worship. It's an open invitation to come, witness, and rejoice at Christ's birth. Majestic and timeless, it brings our celebration to a joyful close.

SENDING

Please rise, in body and spirit.

A Christmas in July Benediction

Adapted from a blessing by Wilda English

PRESIDER From winter to summer to winter again,
from the fields of Bethlehem to the sprawling city of Seattle:
May God our creator grant us the light of Christmas, which is faith;
the warmth of Christmas, which is God's "Yes!" for all;
the disrupting reality of a new order, which is divine compassion;
the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice;
the belief in Christmas, which is truth;
and the all of Christmas, which is Christ.

ALL Amen

Music for Sending

Good Christians All, Rejoice

setting by Mary McDonald

The version we commonly sing today was adapted and translated into English by John Mason Neale in 1853. Neale was a prominent figure in the 19th-century Oxford Movement, which aimed to revive ancient hymns and liturgical practices. His translation was published in his collection "Carols for Christmas-tide."

**All are invited to stick around following the sending music
for a festive reception of Christmas treats.**

