

(Chorus)

Responsive Reading # 621 "Why Not a Star?" by Margaret Gooding

They told me that when Jesus was born a star appeared in the heavens above the place where the young child lay.

When I was very young I had no trouble believing wondrous things, I believed in the star.
It was a wonderful miracle, part of a long ago story, foretelling an uncommon life.

They told me a super nova appeared in the heavens in its dying burst of fire.
When I was older and believed in science and reason I believed the story of the star explained.
But I found I was unwilling to give up the star, fitting symbol for the birth of the one whose uncommon life has been long remembered.

The star explained became the star understood, for Jesus, for Buddha, for Zarathustra.

Why not a star? Some bright star shines somewhere in the heavens each time a child is born.

Who knows what it may foretell?

Who knows what uncommon life may yet again unfold, if we but give it a chance?

Carol # 240

I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

HERONGATE

I heard the bells on Christmas Day their old familiar carols play,
and wild and sweet the words repeat of peace on earth, to all good will.

I thought how, as the day had come, the belfries of all Christendom
had rolled along the unbroken song of peace on earth, to all good will.

And in despair I bowed my head: "There is no peace on earth," I said,
"for hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, to all good will.

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: "God is not dead, nor doth God sleep;
the wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, to all good will."

Till, ringing, singing on its way, the world revolved from day to day,
a voice, a chime, a chant sublime of peace on earth, to all good will.

Musical Meditation Ich folge dir gleichfalls

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Ich folge dir gleichfalls mit freudigen Schritten
Und lasse dich nicht, Mein Leben, mein Licht.
Befördre den Lauf, Und höre nicht auf,
Selbst an mir zu ziehen, zu schieben, zu bitten.

I follow You likewise with happy steps
and do not leave You, my Life, my Light.
Pursue your journey, and don't stop,
continue to draw me on, to push me, to urge me.

Carol # 231 Angels We Have Heard on High

GLORIA

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.

(Chorus)
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why these songs of happy cheer?
What great brightness did you see? What glad tidings did you hear?

(Chorus)

See him in a manger laid whom the angels praise above;
Mary, Joseph, lend your aid, while we raise our hearts in love.

(Chorus)

Carol # 245 Joy to the World

COMFORT

Joy to the world! The Word is come:
let earth with praises ring.
Let every heart prepare a room,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! Now gladness reigns:
let hearts their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains
repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground.
Let righteousness its glories show
as far as love is found, as far as love is found,
as far, as far, as love is found.