Noel (D.C.M.)

Adapted from a traditional tune.

1 It came upon the midnight clear,
   That glorious song of old,
   From angels bending near the earth
   To touch their harps of gold:
   “Peace on the earth, good-will to men,”
   From heaven’s all-gracious King!
   The world in solemn stillness lay
   To hear the angels sing.

2 Still through the cloven skies they come
   With peaceful wings unfurled;
   And still their heavenly music floats
   O’er all the weary world;
   Above its sad and lowly plains
   They bend on hovering wing,
   And ever o’er its Babel sounds
   The blessed angels sing.

3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife
   The world has waited long;
   Beneath the angel strain have rolled
   Two thousand years of wrong;
   And man, at war with man, hears not
   The words of peace they bring;
   Oh! listen now, ye men of strife,
   And hear the angels sing.

4 O Prince of Peace, Thou knowest well
   This weary world below;
   Thou seest how men climb the way
   With painful steps and slow.
   Oh! still the jarring sounds of earth
   That round the pathway ring,
   And bid the toilers rest awhile
   To hear the angels sing! Amen.

Edmund Hamilton Sears, 1810 - 76.