

In the Bleak Midwinter 144

1 In the bleak mid-win - ter, frost - y wind made moan;
 2 Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor earth sus - tain;
 3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there;
 4 What can I give him, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign:
 cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim thronged the air;
 If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
 in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed
 but his moth - er on - ly, in her maid - en bliss,
 if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

‡ in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 the Lord God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.
 ‡ wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.
 yet what I can I give him: give my heart.

Though this text describes winter weather in England rather than in Palestine, the poet is using familiar surroundings as a means of making the Nativity more immediate and personal. The tune name honors a Gloucestershire village near the composer's birthplace in Cheltenham.