The first Nowell the angel did say Hymnal 1982 no. 109

Melody: The First Nowell Irregular metre

British spelling



The first Nowell the angel did say

was to certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay;

in fields as they lay, keeping their sheep,

on a cold winter’s night that was so deep.

*(Refrain:)* Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell,

born is the King of Israel.

They lookèd up and saw a star

shining in the east beyond them far,

and to the earth it gave great light,

and so it continued both day and night.

*(Refrain)*

And by the light of that same star

three wise men came from country far;

to seek for a king was their intent,

and to follow the star wherever it went.

*(Refrain)*

This star drew nigh to the northwest,

o’er Bethlehem it took its rest,

and there it did both stop and stay

right over the place where Jesus lay.

*(Refrain)*

Then entered in those wise men three

full reverently upon their knee,

and offered there in his presence

their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

*(Refrain)*

Then let us all with one accord

sing praises to our heavenly Lord;

that hath made heaven and earth of naught,

and with his blood our life hath bought.

*(Refrain)*

Words: 18th-century English carol

Music: 17th-century English carol, harmonised by John Stainer (1840-1901)