*Four New Christmas Songs for testing times*

**Send now your angels** *tune: Let there be love shared among us*

Send, now, your angels to Gaza,

protesting loudly for peace,

circle the pain with your presence,

work to renew and release.

As, once, for shepherds near Bethl’em

light up this dark night of wrong,

‘til we are all won for kindness,

joining your song.

Israel’s God, so invested

in all these lands filled with pain,

work in the hearts of the people

‘til a just peace comes to reign.

Let all the children of Abram

value each other anew,

may now your heartfelt compassion

guide all we do.

Though loving kindness is costly,

true justice far beyond price,

may now this grewsome confusion

break into just compromise.

As Mary nurtured her baby

‘til he grew strong for us all,

help us to work for renewal,

your peace install. *John Miller Campbell, 6/12/23 available without restriction*

**When vi’lence leads to vi’lence** *tune: The holly & the ivy*

When vi’lence leads to vi’lence

and pain just births more pain,

when savagery keeps cycling

and hoped for peace seems vain:

*Then come to us, Peacemaker!*

*With kindness intervene!*

*With costly love overthrow our world,*

*let peace and justice reign!*

When lies abound to trick us

and truth seems hard to find,

when autocrats are shameless

and freedom’s left behind:

*Then come to us, our Saviour!*

*With truth now intervene!*

*With costly love overthrow our world,*

*let peace and justice reign!*

When billionaires grow richer

whilst poverty is rife,

and systems breed injustice,

squeeze out all chance of life.

*Then come to us, Redeemer!*

*With justice intervene!*

*With costly love overthrow our world,*

*let peace and justice reign!*

When gas and oil are burning

our hope of future life,

when profit-driven denying

traps all in deadly strife.

*Then come to us, Christ Jesus!*

*Let good sense intervene!*

*With costly love overthrow our world,*

*let peace and justice reign! John Miller Campbell, 6/12/23 available without restriction*

**Poor refugee** *tune: The Coventry Carol (Lully, lullay…)*

***Poor refugee,***

***though still a tiny child,***

***God be with you today.***

Once fear and greed

drove evil deed,

brought vi’lence into play.

Herod the king,

in his raging

sought the Christ child to slay.

In that dark hour

his mindless pow’r

lashed out most cruelly;

with killing wild

child after child

was slaughtered in the fray.

One family,

amazingly,

through Gaza slipped away;

now by this child

we’re reconciled

to God in ev’ry way.

Yet tragic’ly,

as now we see,

still children die each day;

vile vi’lence breeds

more vi’lent deeds;

for Gaza’s children, pray!

*John Miller Campbell, 7/12/23 a reworking the Coventry Carol for these times, available without restriction*

**Bleak may be our winter**

*a carol for these times…. tune: Cranham (In the bleak midwinter)*

Bleak may be our winter,

cold and harsh and dark,

many may be struggling

just to play their part,

yet, this age-old story,

fraught with mother’s pain,

promises renewal,

hope can live again.

In that ancient kingdom,

crushed by despot’s pow’r,

these poor, displaced parents

reached their birthing hour,

here, within this story,

through this mother’s pain,

God is come among us,

love can live again.

God as slave-descendant,

God as exiles’ child,

forced asylum seeker,

in a world run wild.

God become our sibling,

God, our fragile friend,

God who understands us,

with us to the end.

Here is hope to help us,

here is love to save,

light to end our darkness,

life to make us brave,

God in weakness stronger

that each unjust pow’r,

God to conquer bleakness,

bring fresh joy to flower. *John Miller Campbell, 2/12/22, available without restriction*