Christmas Lites

Early Intermediate Piano Solos

Anne Britt

Christmas Lites

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"During this Christmas season and always, may we give to Him by loving as He loves.

May we remember the humble dignity of His birth, gifts, and life.

And may we, through simple acts of kindness, charity, and compassion, fill the world with the light of His love and healing power."

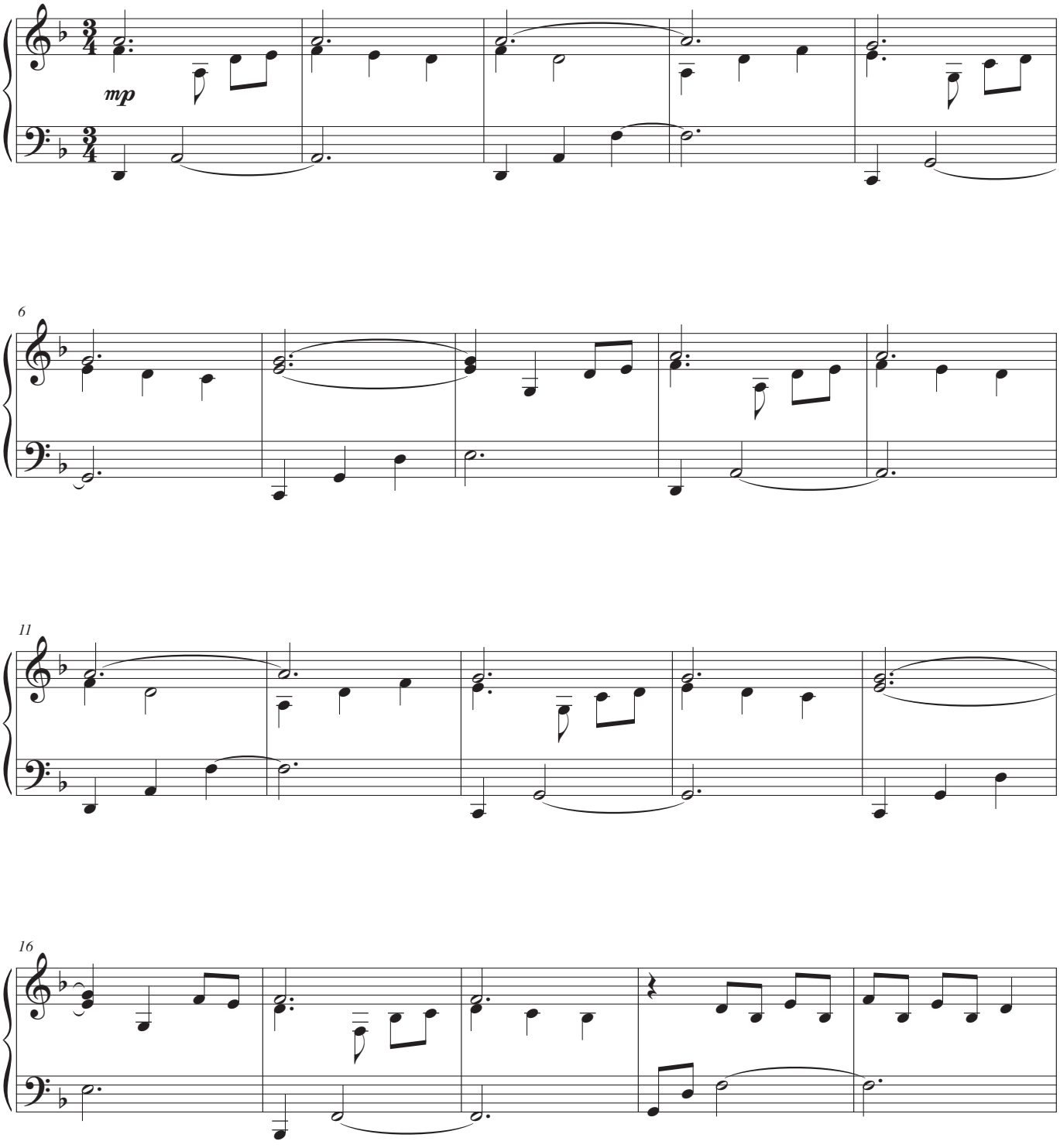
~ Dieter F. Uchtdorf

Carol Medley

This medley combines two carols with a medieval feel. "Coventry Carol," which is from England, uses a minor mode as the setting for three mothers lamenting over Herod's order to kill all male infants. "Wexford Carol," from Ireland, tells the Nativity story in a haunting mixolydian mode, which has a minor seventh in an otherwise major scale.

Moderately

Traditional carols
arr. Anne Britt



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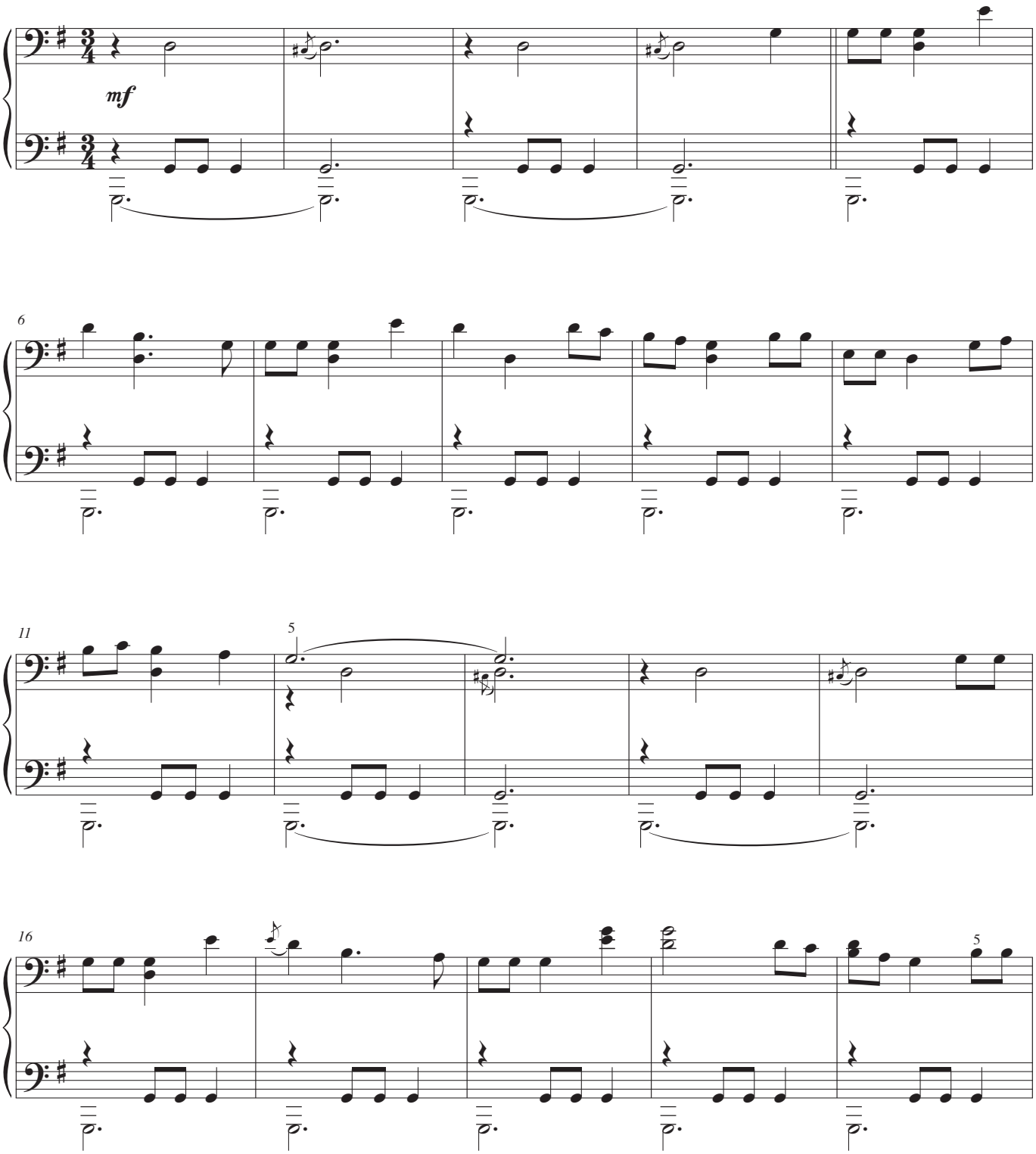
The Holly and the Ivy

Holly and ivy have been commonly used by the British in Advent and Christmas decorations for centuries. In the popular Christmas carol, the holly represents Jesus and the ivy represents His mother, Mary. This Celtic setting adds some original music as an interlude between verses.

English carol
arr. Anne Britt

Moderately



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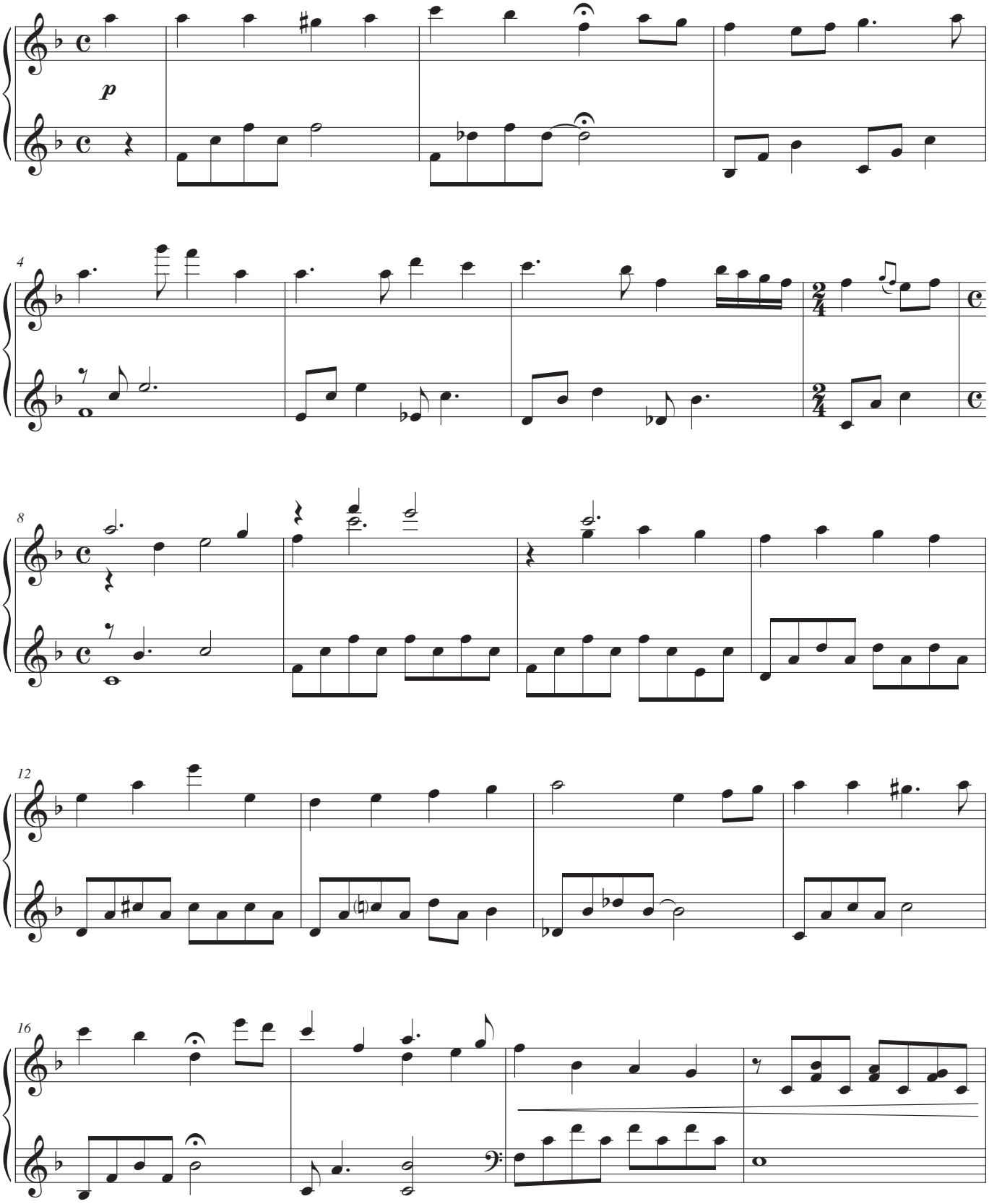
O Little Town of Bethlehem

This arrangement features two different melodies used in various parts of the world. The first tune, by Lewis Redner, is popular in the United States, and the second, a hymn tune called "Forest Green," is commonly used in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Canada (adapted to a 3/4 time signature for this arrangement).

Music by Lewis H. Redner
arr. Anne Britt

Freely



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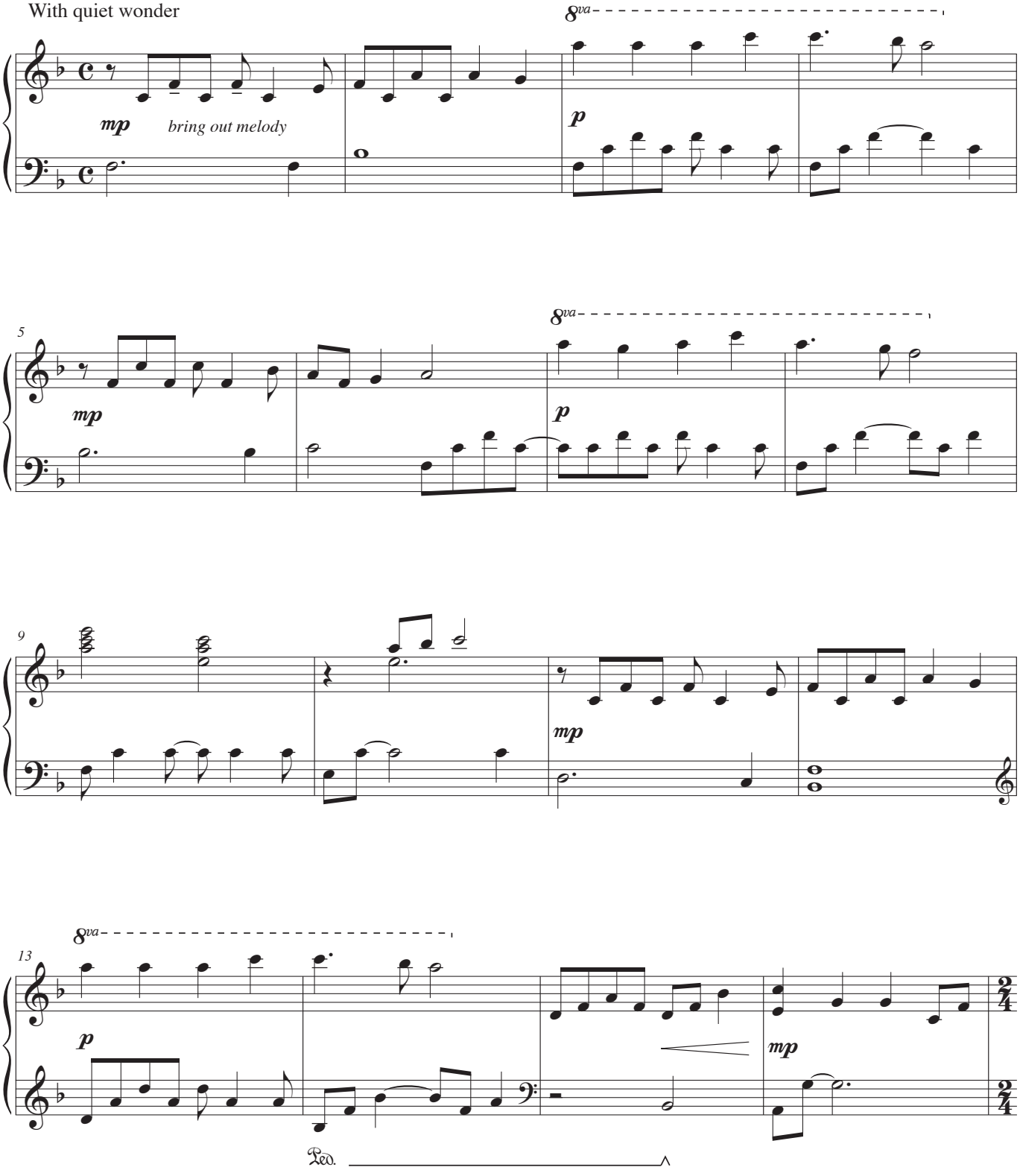
Angels Medley

This arrangement is actually more of a mash-up than a medley, where songs are connected together in a linear fashion. Here you'll notice right away how it alternates between phrases of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" and "Angels We Have Heard on High." See if you can identify all the places where it changes from one song to the other.

Felix Mendelssohn/
French carol
arr. Anne Britt

With quiet wonder



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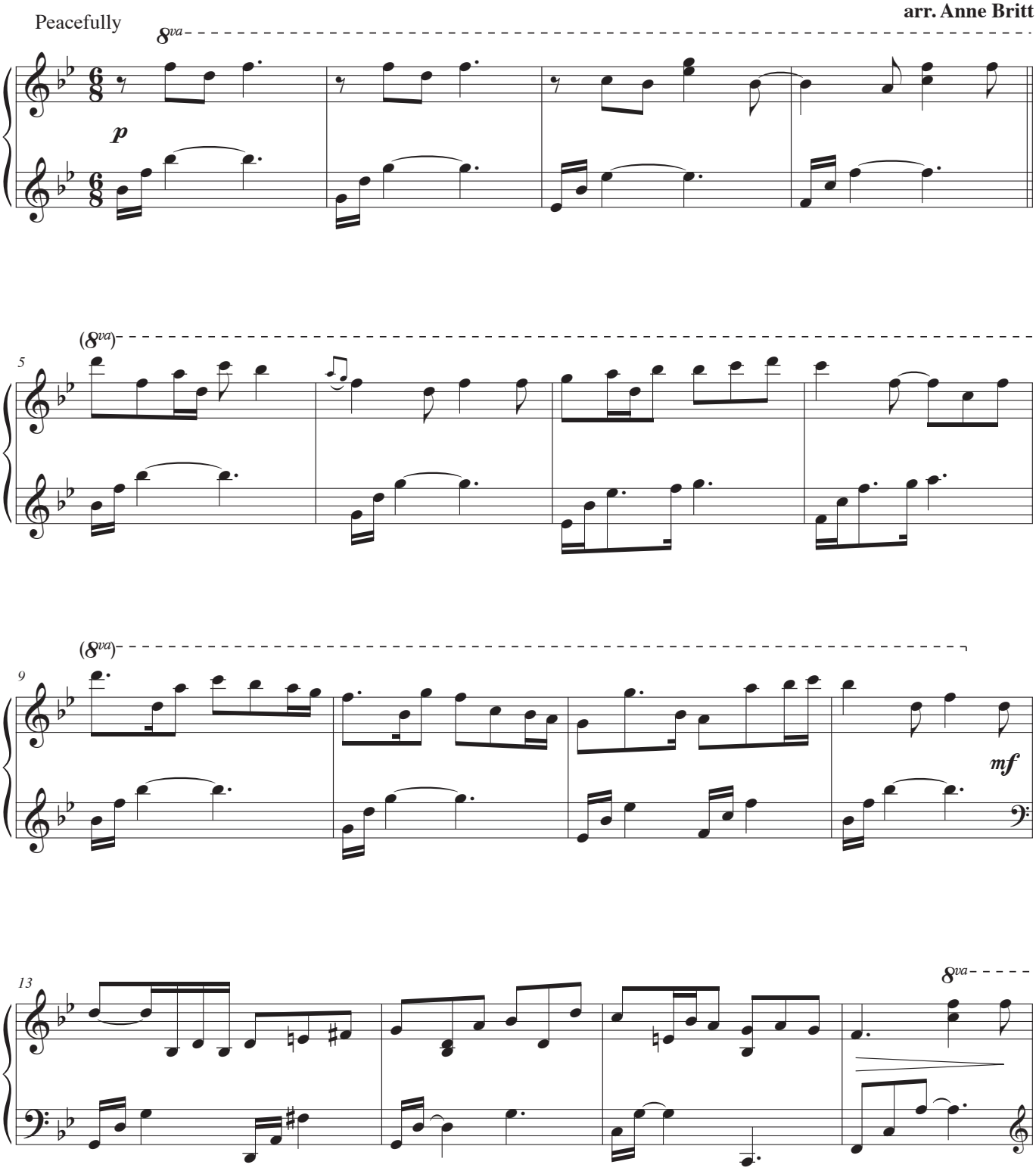
It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

This arrangement features two different melodies used around the world. The first tune, by Richard Storrs Willis, is the one most widely used in the United States, and the second, Arthur Sullivan's adaptation of an English melody, is used in Commonwealth countries such as Canada and Australia (adapted to a 6/8 time signature for this arrangement).

Music by Richard Storrs Willis
and Arthur Sullivan
arr. Anne Britt



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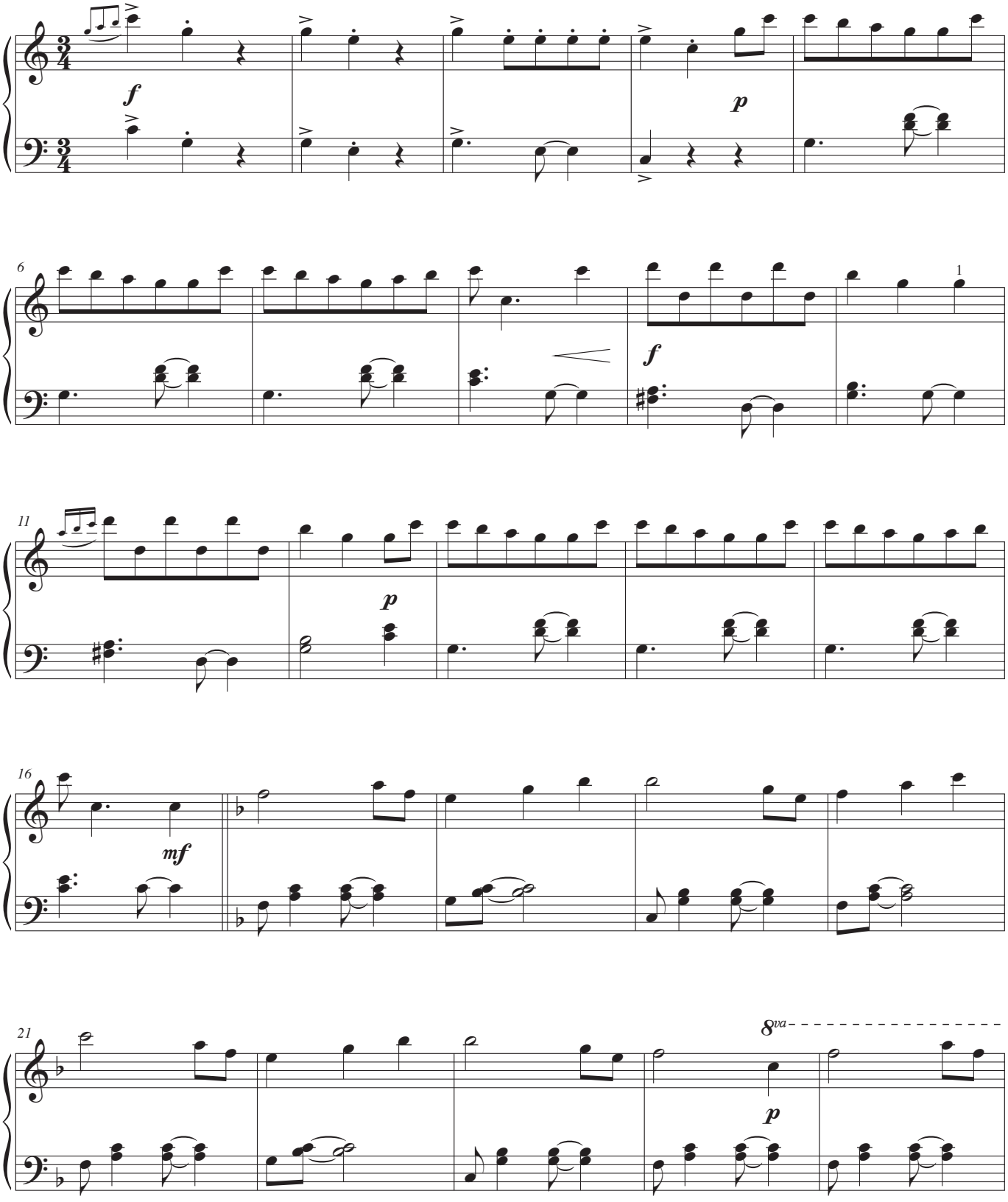
Mozart's Sleigh Ride

As the Imperial Chamber Composer in Vienna, Mozart wrote music for the court dances held at the Imperial Palace. The final piece in his set of three German dances is titled "Die Schlittenfahrt" (The Sleigh Ride). For extra holiday flair, invite a friend to add sleigh bells during the sections in the key of F. Note: Although you'll see syncopated rhythms in the left hand, be sure to play all eighth notes straight, not swing.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
arr. Anne Britt



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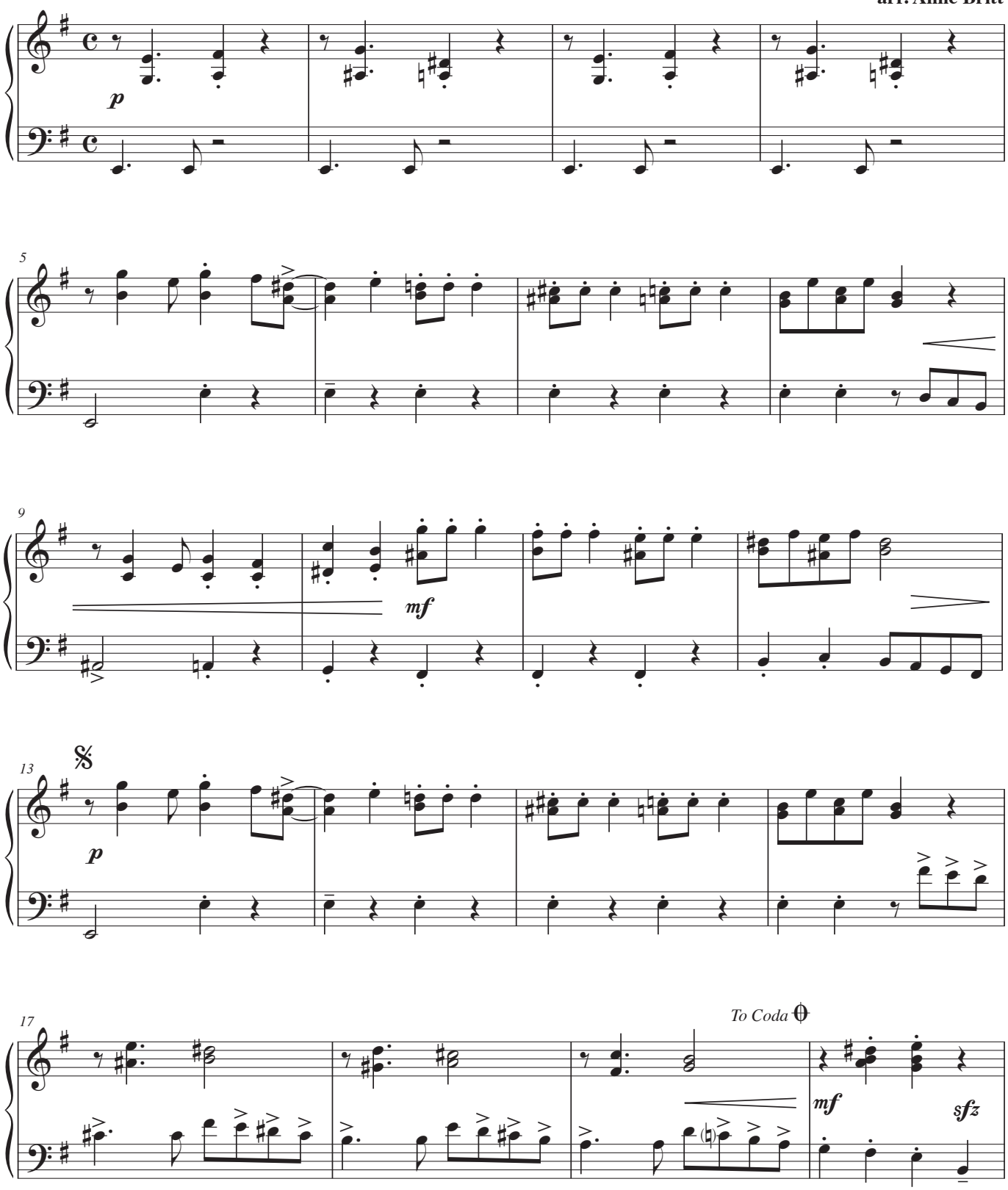
Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy

In "The Nutcracker" ballet, the Sugar Plum Fairy rules over the magical Land of Sweets. Although this catchy adaptation adds some new swing rhythms, it should be played with the light, delicate feel of the original, using the dynamics to add dramatic contrast.

Delicate swing ♩♩ = ♩³♪

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
arr. Anne Britt



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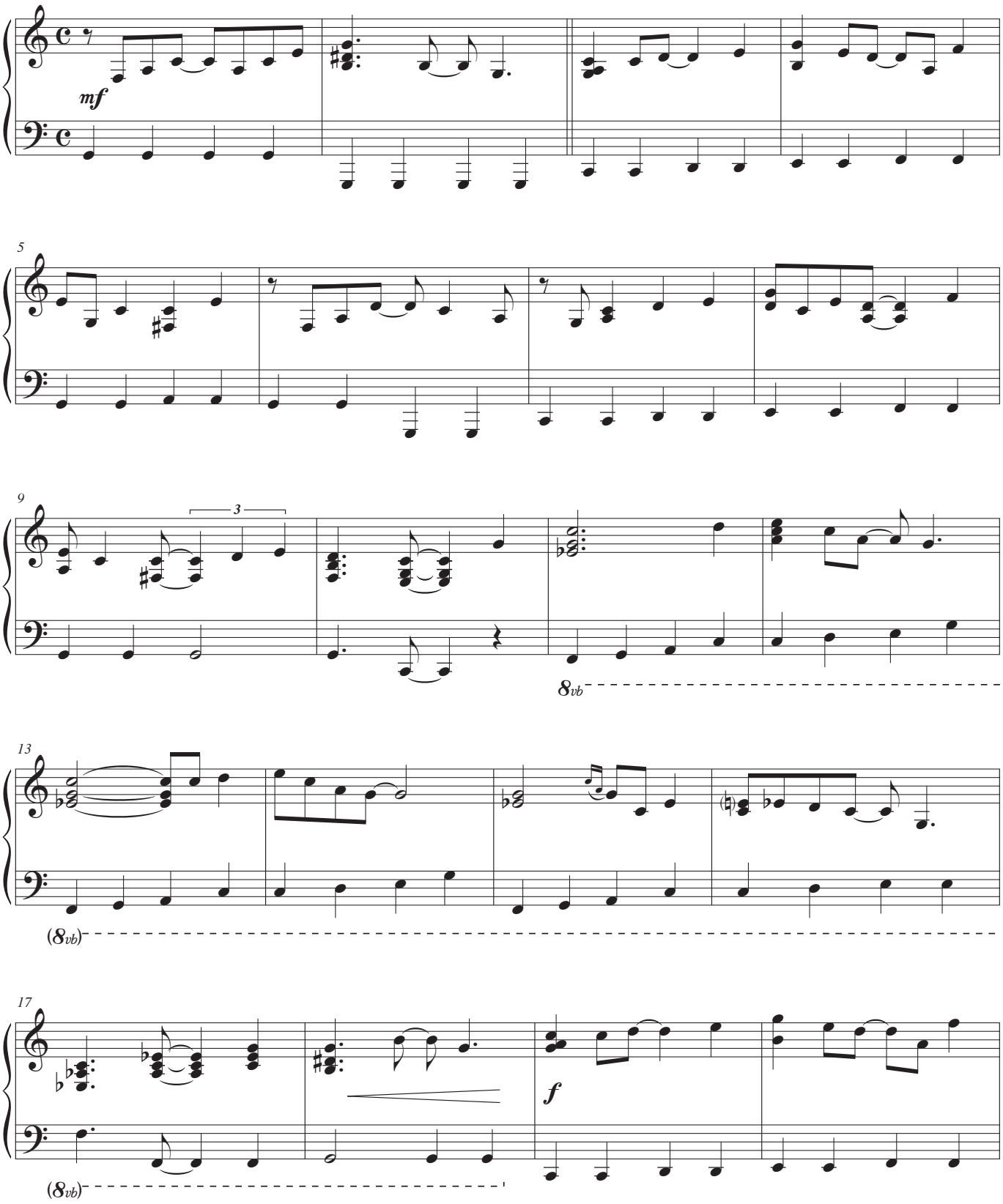
I Saw Three Ships

The lyrics of this carol mention ships sailing into Bethlehem, but since the nearest body of water is about 20 miles away, there are varying interpretations of the symbolism - one being that the ships are actually the Magi's camels ("ships of the desert"). The original 6/8 time signature gets a makeover here with this fun swing arrangement.

Lively swing

English carol
arr. Anne Britt



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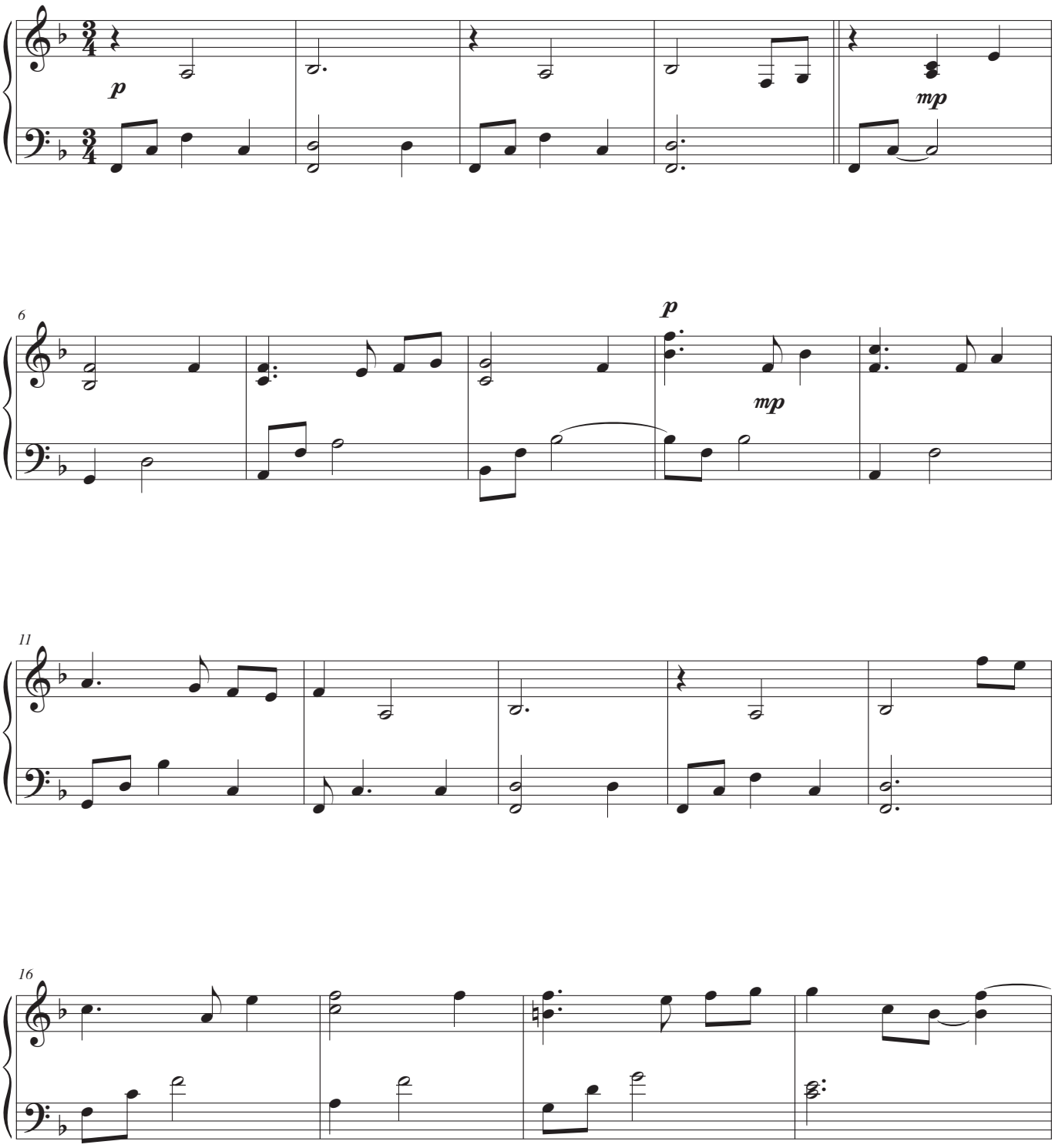
Once in Royal David's City

In 1848, the text for this carol was first published in "Hymns for Little Children," a collection of poems by Cecil Frances Alexander. One year later, the poem was discovered and set to music by the English organist Henry Gauntlett. He wrote more than a thousand hymn tunes, but this one remains his most famous, adapted to a 3/4 time signature for this arrangement to give it a gentle, swaying feel.

Music by Henry J. Gauntlett
arr. Anne Britt

Gently, in one



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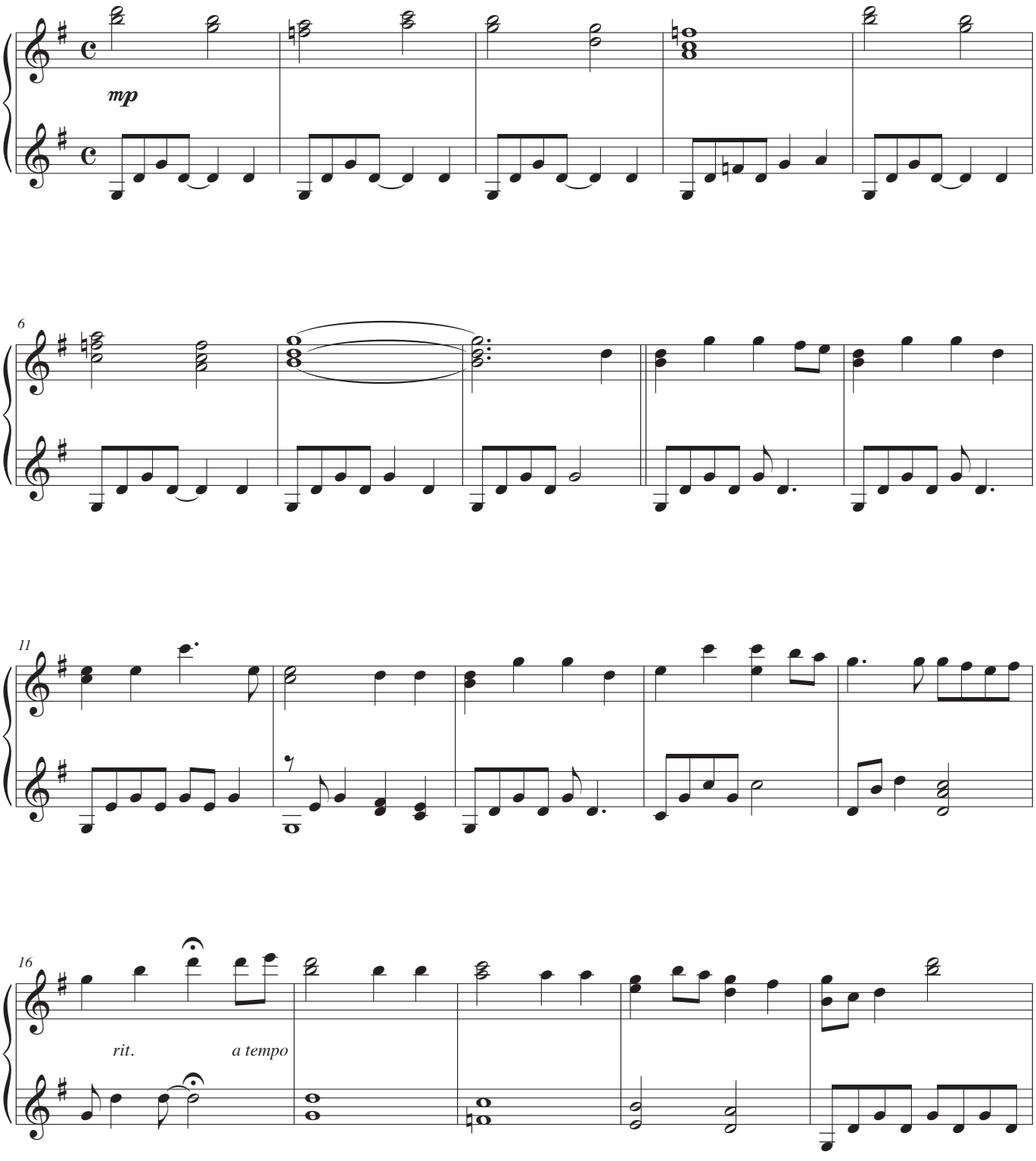
With Wondering Awe

This delightful lesser-known Christmas carol tells of the wise men travelling from afar to worship the baby Jesus, with each verse repeating a refrain of the angels singing "Hosanna to His name!" It was first published in the December 1877 issue of the popular children's magazine "St. Nicholas."

Anonymous
arr. Anne Britt

Brightly



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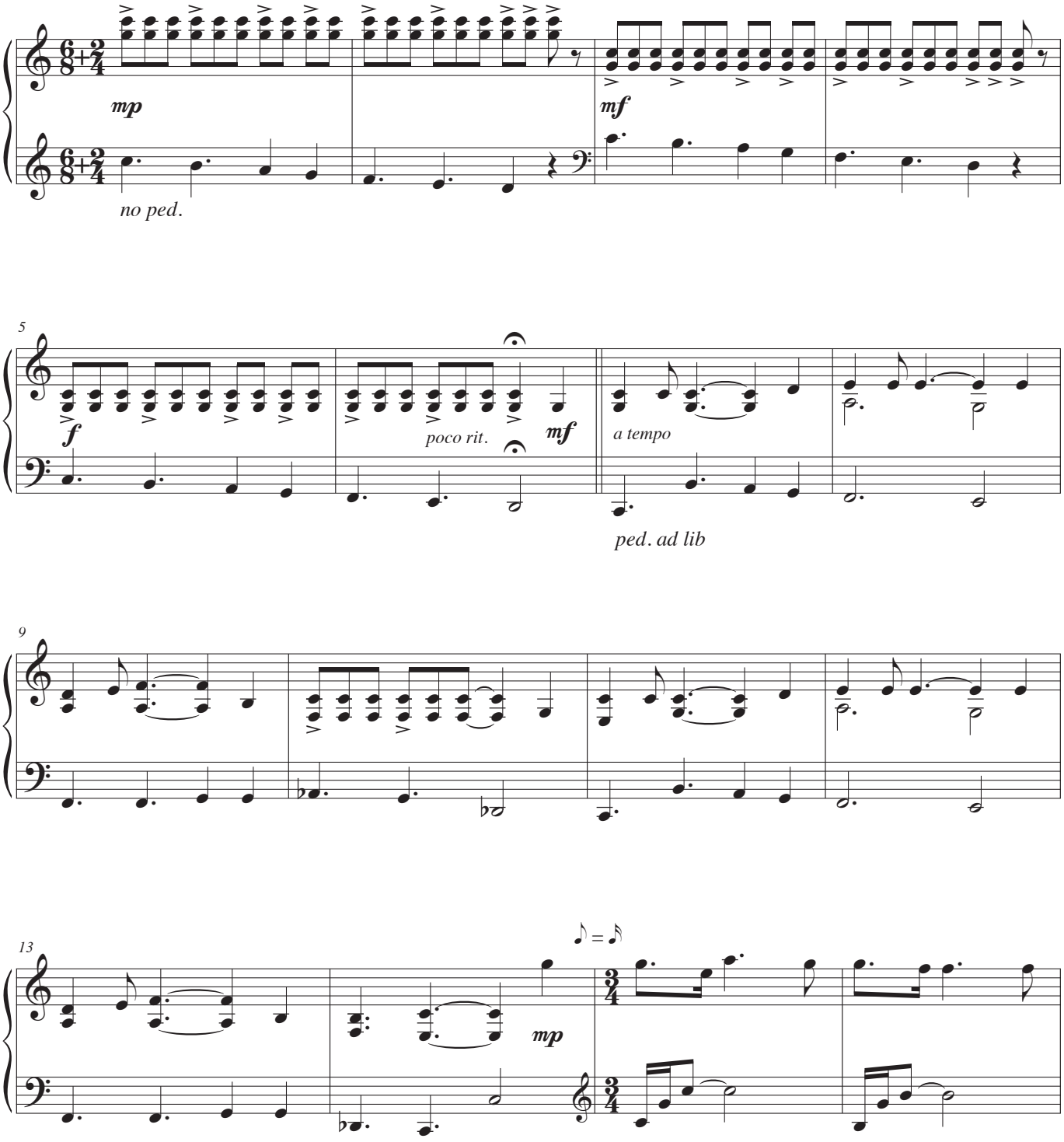
O Christmas Tree

The German lyrics of this carol ("O Tannenbaum") refer not to Christmas, but to the fir tree's evergreen quality as a symbol of faithfulness and constancy. The composite time signature used in this arrangement may remind you of the "Mission: Impossible" theme song. Helpful tip: Use the constancy of the eighth notes to guide you as you get the hang of the rhythm.

Music by Melchior Franck
arr. Anne Britt

With joyful energy



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