

Module Eight - The Liturgical Year & Repertoire 2

Advent - Preparing for Christmas

This module challenges the early appearance of Christmas and explores the music available for the season of Advent.

Three CD's that are referred to in this module.

(Some links may enable you to listen, some may give information about where to buy).

[Fountain of Life](#) – Margaret Rizza

[Coming to our Senses](#) – St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow

[Christ be our Light](#) – Bernadette Farrell

Twice a year, in Lent and Advent, we get the opportunity and the liturgical framework to look at our spiritual lives and to look at our relationship with God. In Advent we are challenged by the scriptures and hear the message that we should repent, prepare and be vigilant. We do need this liturgical structure and the discipline that comes with it. As Calvin said:

‘...we do not condemn words or singing, but rather greatly commend them...for in this way the thought of God is kept alive in our minds which, from their fickle and versatile nature, soon relax, and are distracted by various objects, unless various means are used to support them’.

The things we are asked to think about during these times are not easy and it is tempting to move on towards the crib and the shepherds and the wise men.

In a time when we are supposed to be watching and waiting, it's a bit difficult to be still and listen when the sounds and sights of Christmas are everywhere. Our times of worship need to bring us back to this place of preparation and our choice of music can help us focus on the preparation for events ahead.

At points in this module, suggestions for listening are given. These are examples of contemporary music that have refreshed and inspired many in their worship.



[Come Lord](#) - Margaret Rizza, Fountain of Life

(This music evokes stillness, waiting, looking ahead, expectancy).

Advent – the season of watching and waiting... some facts.

- Advent is a season of Western origin.
- in the 4th century, a three-week period of fasting was established for the older festival of Epiphany
- in the 5th and 6th centuries, this fasting was lengthened to 40 days before Christmas
- Bede records St Cuthbert and St Egbert fasting for 40 days ‘ante natale Dei’

- Gregory fixed the length at four weeks.
- until the 12th century, Advent was regarded as a festal season with the use of white robes and the *Gloria in excelsis* sung.
- there was a gradual move to a more Lenten feel of penitence when the Second Coming theme was adopted.
- the [Dies Irae](#) text was written in the 13th century for the Sunday before Advent,
- Christmas/Epiphany associated with a time of baptism: Advent with period of preparation

‘Advent is a rich and complex time, with huge potential to lead people into a deeper understanding of the Christian mysteries through its liturgy and music.’

Michael Perham



[Advent Lullaby](#) – John Bell [GIA Publications G-5427](#)

Lullaby, lullaby, wait till tomorrow, your time will come.

Lullaby, lullaby, God comes tomorrow, your God is here.

(Suggestive of what Mary might have sung to Jesus while he was still in the womb).

Holding back the flood gates!

How is it possible to counteract the massive media and commercial promotion of Christmas? What does it say to people if Christians are trying to hold back the tide of celebration until Christmas actually arrives? Are we party-poopers?

A significant number of schools celebrate Christmas before the end of term. Carol services, nativity plays, parties. When teachers and pupils eventually break-up, they feel that they have ‘done’ Christmas.

Some schools use a [Jesse Tree](#) which is decorated each week, usually by the children, with ornaments or objects that represent Old Testament events from Creation to the Birth of Jesus. The ornaments are traditionally handmade, and are added one on each day of Advent with explanations of the symbols and a brief verse of Scripture from the story represented. For further information see the website -

In our churches and church schools, we do have a choice in the selection of music we sing and in the forms of worship we take part in. Surely here we can prepare for the coming of Christ in the stable and also refer to the [eschatological](#) ‘four last things’ - death, judgement, hell and heaven? It would take some imaginative thinking to present these themes to schoolchildren!

If you are involved in education, you might like to share your thoughts and experiences on the bulletin board on the website?

'Liturgy is a discipline sufficiently subtle that its texts can hold these two themes together very satisfactorily and even creatively'.

Michael Perham

Hymns that include second coming material

Try and recognise which well-known hymns these words are from!

To thee, O Holy One, we pray,
Our judge in that tremendous day,
Ward off, while yet we dwell below,
The weapons of our crafty foe.

Latin tr. J.M. Neale
HAMNS 23 *Creator of the starry height*

that when next he comes with glory.
and the world is wrapped in fear,
with his mercy he may shield us,
and with words of love draw near.

Latin tr. E. Caswell
HAMNS 24 *Hark a thrilling voice*

As Judge, on clouds of light,
he soon will come again,
and his true members all unite
with him in heaven to reign.

C. Coffin tr. J.Chandler
HAMNS 25 *The advent of our King*


In Advent, we need to be careful not to fall into the trap of playing a game of 'let's pretend'. On Good Friday we recall Christ's death but we don't pretend that Jesus is not risen. Affirmation of Christ's presence and redemption needs to remain part of our worship throughout Advent or we can get carried away and can be on shaky theological ground.

MUSIC RESOURCES

What resources do we have to do Advent with? Hymn books contain very few Advent hymns, many of which are either unfamiliar, plainchant, very long, not contemporary or too specific (On Jordan's Bank). Once we have sung *Lo he comes - O come, O come, Emmanuel - Sleeper's Wake* and *Hark a thrilling voice is sounding*, we can run out of material for the rest of Advent. That's a problem in itself because if we don't know of any other material and can't afford to buy anything new anyway, what do we do? Just like Advent, it's all about preparation. Look at the effort you put into preparing for Christmas and compare it to your preparation for Advent...

We are only talking about four Sundays and we may only have time or resources to include a limited amount of new material anyway. For Communion, a Gathering Song, the Psalm, the Gospel acclamation, hymns and the Communion Song would be areas to look at. For Morning and Evening Prayer, Psalmody, Canticles, Hymnody, an Advent Responsory and anthem may be places for new material.

Two Liturgical Planners are available for help. The RSCM 'Sunday by Sunday' and the SSG's 'Music and Liturgy'. Looking around for material brings up discoveries such as 'Wake your power' which uses the words 'be here among us' and although not intended for Advent, certainly includes much that is appropriate - asking God to come to us, a plea for help and support.

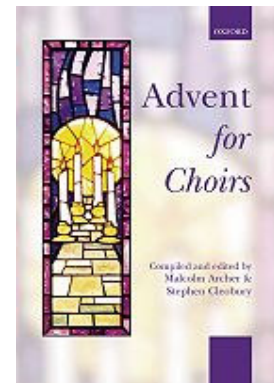
 [Wake your power](#) - Tom Lowenthal/Huub Oosterhuis, OCP. Track 1
This is on the CD - [Coming to our Senses](#) - St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow

The structure of Advent, from darkness to light.

We have four Sundays which have a structure of their own and a gradual countdown to Christmas. We use candles and calendars to count the weeks and days. We move from darkness to light. Measuring of the season with calendars, Advent wreathes and candles gives us a shape that is reflected in scriptural readings. This gives us a musical starting point.

Malcolm Archer has written a set of Advent Wreath Prayers for each week of Advent and Christmas Day. Sung by Cantor and with chanted refrains, the texts are from *Promise of His Glory* (p.136).

Advent Wreath Prayers, [Advent for Choirs](#), OUP, p. 16.



Below you can see a different way of appointing themes for each Sunday of Advent. You can see that the first two weeks in [Promise of His Glory](#) look back to Judaic roots and prophetic writings. The third and fourth Sundays focus on figures associated closely with the Incarnation.

	Lectionary	The Promise of His Glory
Advent 1	Second Coming	The Patriarchs
Advent 2	John the Baptist	The Prophets
Advent 3	John the Baptist	John the Baptist
Advent 4	Annunciation	Mary

This two-part shape to Advent is additionally defined by dividing the month of December in two and beginning the use of scriptural readings from either December 16th (if in

Salisbury) or 17th which begin by using the gospel material in Luke and Matthew that lead to the birth of Jesus.

Below are the Advent Magnificat 'O' antiphons which are used at Evening Prayer with the Sarum addition of the Marian antiphon, 'O Virgo virginum'. These texts provide a good framework for music.

16 th	O Sapientia	O Wisdom
17 th	O Adonai	O Lord of Lords
18 th	O Radix Jesse	O Root of Jesse
19 th	O Clavis David	O Key of David
20 th	O Oriens	O Dayspring
21 st	O Rex gentium	O King of the nations
22 nd	O Emmanuel	O Emmanuel
23 rd	O Virgo virginum	O Virgin of virgins (Sarum Rite)

Read in reverse order, the first letter of the titles (omitting the O's), form the words **ERO CRAS** = 'I shall be here tomorrow'.

(See 'Christ, Circle Round us' by Dan Schutte in Veni Emmanuel).

Opportunities for Music

The following list provides you with headings for parts of services where music can be used. Hard copies may be available at Sarum College library, Salisbury. Otherwise you will need to buy these online or consult your local library. The list refers to the following publications:

Veni Emmanuel	Music for Advent and Christmastide	Decani Music
God Beyond all Names	Bernadette Farrell	OCP
Christ be our Light	Bernadette Farrell	OCP
Advent for Choirs	Forward by Michael Perham	OUP
Fountain of Life	Margaret Rizza	Kevin Mayhew
Music for Common Worship	Book One	RSCM
New English Hymnal	'O' Antiphons, Advent Prose/Sequence	Canterbury Press
Hymns for Prayer and Praise	Plainchant hymns	Canterbury Press
Innkeepers and Light sleepers	John Bell	Iona

Cloth for the Cradle	John Bell	Iona
Psalm Songs	Vol.1, Advent, Christmas and Epiphany <i>difficult to find this online, let me know if you do!</i>	Cassell
Wait for the Lord		Taizé

Use the following list to explore what music resources there are for the different parts of the services.

Communion

Gathering Song

- Veni Emmanuel – 1 to 6
- Litany of the Word (Advent Litany) in God beyond all names (Farrell)
- Wait for the Lord - Taizé

Psalm

- Psalm Songs Volume 1
- Veni Emmanuel pp.22-69
- Music for Common Worship Vol.1 – RSCM
- I Rejoiced (Ps. 122) in Christ be our Light (Farrell)

Gospel acclamation

- Gospel Greeting in Christ be our Light (Farrell)
- Advent Gospel Acclamations – Christopher Walker, in Veni Emmanuel p.112
- Advent Gospel Acclamations – Alan Smith, in Veni Emmanuel p.114

Hymnody

See Liturgy planners below.

Communion Song

- Come Lord – Fountain of Life, Margaret Rizza
- Veni Emmanuel pp.134-175

In Promise of His Glory, there is a ‘rich provision of eucharistic propers, sets of readings, collects, canticles and responsaries for use throughout the season’. There is also a useful order for Holy Communion in Advent in New Patterns for Worship, p.373 (CHP).

Special Services

- A Service of Hope and Expectation – The Promise of His Glory p.112 (The Great ‘O’s)
- Advent Carol Services (Darkness to Light template!) help given in Promise p.95
- Penitential Rites – use of Advent Prose and Advent Sequence (NEH 501-2)
- See Michael Perham’s Introduction in Advent for Choirs, OUP, p.xv,xvi.

Morning and Evening Prayer

Psalm As above

Canticles

Benedictus settings

Magnificat settings with 'O' antiphons
(Same music is provided for both Benedictus and Magnificat by Farrell.)
Music for Common Worship Vol.1 – RSCM pp. 302-5

Hymnody

See Liturgy planners
New English Hymnal - 'O' Antiphons
Hymns for Prayer and Praise - Plainchant 'office' hymns

Responsory

Advent Responsory, Robert Fielding, see below.

'Anthem'

Multiple choices in Advent for Choirs, OUP
Come Lord – Fountain of Life, Margaret Rizza
Veni Emmanuel pp.134-175 (see There is one among us, John Bell)

You will have explored lots of music as you have read through this module. As an exercise, plan the services for Advent at your church incorporating the themes of penitence and expectancy and making clear the shape of advent.

Suggested Reading List

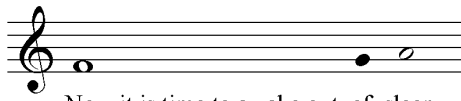
The Promise of His Glory	Liturgical Commission	Church House Publishing
Preparing for Christmas	J.D.Crichton,	Columba Press
The Advent Adventure	David Rhodes	SPCK
Advent to Christmas	Vincent Ryan	Veritas
A Coming Christ in Advent	Raymond Brown	The Liturgical Press

Worship Planners

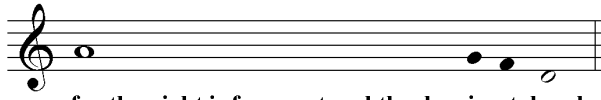
Sunday by Sunday	Liturgy Planner	RSCM
Music and Liturgy	Liturgy Planner	SSG

Robert Fielding
2003
Revised 2006, 2010

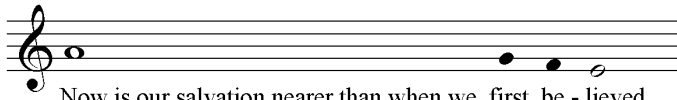
A setting of a Responsory suitable for Advent:

Cantor 

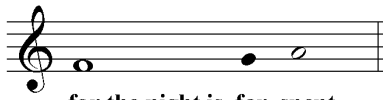
Now it is time to awake out of sleep,

ALL 

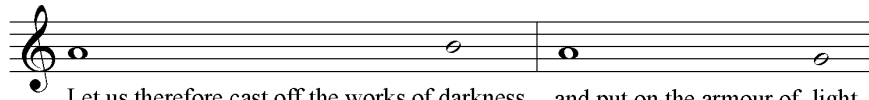
for the night is far spent and the day is at hand.

Cantor 

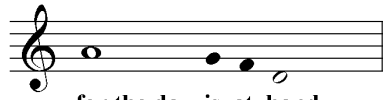
Now is our salvation nearer than when we first be - lieved,

ALL 

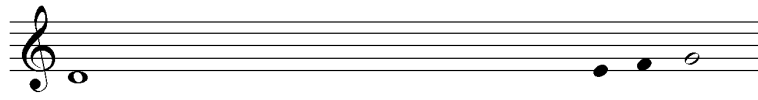
for the night is far spent.

Cantor 

Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light,

ALL 

for the day is at hand.

Cantor 

Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh,

ALL 

for the night is far spent, and the day is at hand.

Robert Fielding