

Thee We Adore

Christopher J. Hoh

# Thee We Adore

ORGAN SETTINGS OF CHANT-BASED HYMNS

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## Foreword

These eight organ pieces are based on hymn tunes with roots in Gregorian chant, the ancient song of the Christian church. Each composition sets an established melody sung today, often to words derived from the original chant. These selections span the church year and could serve as offertories or postludes as well as preludes depending on the worship service. Church organists may excerpt them for hymn introductions or interludes, and all could figure in a recital.

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## Notes

Although *Adoro te devote* is often called a chant tune, it evidently originated in 17<sup>th</sup>-century France. Sounding like chant, however, it is often paired with a medieval text (translated). This setting begins as a quiet meditation with a tenor melody before moving higher and taking on livelier rhythms. Then it sounds as a cantus firmus in the pedal underneath resolute music, a kind of marching toward the vision of glory prayed for in the hymn.

*Christ ist erstanden* arose in the 1500s from the 11<sup>th</sup>-century Easter sequence “Victimæ Paschali laudes” (to the Pascal Victim praise). Tonally ambiguous, the tune begins in A Minor (Aeolian) and modulates to D Minor (Dorian and Aeolian). This setting begins in quiet mystery, with high organ notes like dawn breaking. Next comes a low countermelody against the slow cantus firmus above. At the “Alleluia” chorus, the music turns quick and joyful, like the women running to share the good news. Throughout, syncopation and harmony allude to the melody’s medieval origins.

*Conditor alme siderum*, for Christmas, endures with its beautiful tune virtually unchanged through the centuries. In G Phrygian, its key signature has three flats. First the organ presents

the melody simply. Then shimmering keyboard figures appear to accompany it. Next the pedal takes it up slower, with a harmonic overlay in triple meter and echoes of arpeggios heard earlier. The result is three contemplative verses with a sense of divine mystery.

*Hamburg*, the straightforward melody by American music reformer Lowell Mason, was based on Gregorian Psalm Tone I. Mason found it in an English Benedictus for *Tenebræ*, but he did not pair his tune with the Lenten words “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” until decades later. Here the melody unfolds first with calm chords. The middle section reimagines its notes in a freer, chantlike rhythm. Then the hymn tune returns amid moving figures and gentle interludes before a quiet close.

*Erhalt uns Herr* is a strong German 16th-century tune, but it derives from the Ambrosian chant “Veni redemptor gentium,” which Martin Luther adapted for several hymns. In this piece, the organ states the chorale at the outset. Next comes music of flowing tones, essentially the original chant. The regular tune then returns in the tenor octave while a mellifluous descant hearkens back to the middle section. Finally, an echo of the chant leads to a confident ending.

The *Veni Creator Spiritus* hymn tune arose from the Pentecost sequence, which borrowed the melody from an Ambrosian Easter chant. It is in F Mixolydian (two flats). Evidently in continuous use for at least 1,500 years, the tune appears in today’s hymnals with notes and words close to the venerable Pentecost chant. Reflecting the drama of the occasion, this composition sets the melody in a toccata of fiery descending figures. Between the first and third verses, a quiet section offers a reverent take. The final section grows higher and more brilliant. Then vigorous “amen” music leads to an ecstatic close.

The *Veni Emmanuel* tune is a 19<sup>th</sup>-century English adaptation of a 15<sup>th</sup>-century French melody. It has become associated with words from the Advent “O Antiphons,” i.e., O Emmanuel, O Wisdom, O Root of Jesse, etc. Here the music juxtaposes the antiphon chant against the familiar tune. The piece opens with big chords, “rejoice,” strong but not loud. Then we hear a high flute on chant lines before the hymn tune sounds on a lower reed. The next section starts with phrases low and slow followed by rapid high passages that descend—humankind’s plea for the Messiah answered by heaven above. The organ opens up at “rejoice” again and moves to a majestic, expectant end.

*Pange Lingua* descends from a plainsong melody of likely Gallican origin. Its key is E Phrygian, no sharps or flats. The text “Sing, My Tongue” celebrates the body, blood, and passion of Christ, based on verses by Aquinas (*Corpus Christi*) and/or Fortunatus (adorations of the Cross). The organ in this setting sings three verses, each a canon (round) between the hands at various intervals. Underneath, the pedal intones the melody in long notes.

Registrations are indicated, but these are suggestions. They should be considered and then adapted based on the instrument’s disposition and the performer’s good taste.

—Christopher J. Hoh  
Arlington, Virginia

# Adoro te devote

(“Thee We Adore”)

I. medium Diapason (***mf***)  
 II. Flute(s) (***p***)  
 P. 16, 8 (***p***, then ***mf***)

Christopher J. Hoh  
 Plainchant

Muted, yet lyrical  $\text{♩} = 92$

The musical score consists of three staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle in bass clef, and the bottom in bass clef. The key signature is A major (two sharps). The time signature changes frequently between 4/4, 3/4, and 2/4. The first section (measures 1-5) features two voices: 'II:' (Flute(s)) in piano dynamic and 'I:' (medium Diapason) in mezzo-forte dynamic. Large yellow markings are overlaid on the music: a thick diagonal line from the top right across the first section, a large infinity symbol on the second staff, and a large Greek letter alpha (α) on the third staff.

Duration: 3:40

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15

20

25

30

I:

mf

II:

(p)

**Resolute ♩ = 84**

58 I:{*mf*} ♩

62 ♩

66 ♩

70 ♩

The musical score consists of five staves of music for two voices. The top two staves are in treble clef, and the bottom three are in bass clef. The key signature is A major (two sharps). Measure 58 starts with a forte dynamic (*mf*) in common time. Measures 62 and 66 show changes in time signature between common time and 6/8. Measures 70 and 71 conclude the section. The score is annotated with a large yellow infinity symbol drawn over the staff lines.

Note: An alternative for a quiet ending is to omit the Resolute section and repeat the first section. That is, jump from meas. 57 back to meas. 9. Repeat the music through meas. 24 and then play the alternative conclusion.

74

78

82

*ritardando*

Alternative conclusion

25b

*rit.*

# Christ ist erstanden

(“Christ the Lord Is Risen Again”)

I. medium Diapason (***mf***), then add (***f***)  
 II. soft Flute(s) (***mp***)

**Christopher J. Hoh**  
 Chorale derived from the plainchant  
*Victimae paschali laudes*

Calm  $\text{♩} = 88$

II:  
*mp*

I:  
*mf*

6

11

II: { *mp* }

16

21

Duration: 3:00

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LL

39

43

46

*rit.*

*molto rit.*

Joyful ♩. =69

I: { *f*

49

52

*rit.*

Note: Although this piece is scored without pedal, the performer may use pedal for the lowest note(s) of the ending, starting in measure 52 or 54.

# Conditor alme siderum

(“Creator of the Stars of Night”)

I. Strings or light Diapason (***mf***)  
 II. soft Flute(s) (***p***)  
 P. 16, 8 (***mf***, then ***f***)

Christopher J. Hoh  
 Plainchant

Reverent  $\text{♩} = 42$

6

10

Duration: 3:00

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II:

14

*p*

No Ped. (*mf*)

16

II:

*simile* 3

18

II:

20

I:

22

II:

I:

41

45

49

53

ritardando to end

# Hamburg

(“When I Survey the Wondrous Cross”)

I. soft Diapason (***mp***)  
 II. soft Flute(s) (***p*** to ***mp***)  
 P. 16, 8 (***p***, then ***mp***)

**Christopher J. Hoh**  
 Melody adapted by Lowell Mason  
 from the Gregorian Psalm Tone I

Reverent  $\text{♩} = 44$

The musical score consists of three staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef, the middle staff is in bass clef, and the bottom staff is also in bass clef. The time signature is 3/4 throughout. The key signature changes from one flat in the first section to no sharps or flats in the second section. The music is divided into sections labeled "II:" and "I:". The first section starts with a dynamic of ***p***. The second section starts with a dynamic of ***mp***. Large, stylized yellow markings are overlaid on the music. In the first section, there is a large circle with a diagonal slash across it, and a large question mark. In the second section, there is a large infinity symbol and a large ampersand (&). The score ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Duration: 3:00

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LL

41 I: II: III:

47 I: II:

52 I:

57 II: *p* ritardando *mp* *pp* I: II:

The musical score consists of four systems of music. The first system (measures 41-45) features three staves: Treble, Bass, and Alto. The second system (measures 47-51) also has three staves. The third system (measures 52-56) has three staves. The fourth system (measure 57) has three staves. Measure numbers are indicated at the start of each system. Performance instructions include dynamics (*p*, *pp*, *ritardando*, *mp*) and articulations (staccato dots). The parts are labeled I: and II: above the staves.

# Erhalt uns, Herr

(“Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word”)

I. Principals  
 II. solo Flute  
 III. soft Strings (or I)\*  
 P. 16, 8

**Christopher J. Hoh**  
 Chorale derived from the plainchant  
*Veni redemptor genitum*

Moving, steady  $\text{♩} = 46$

6

Slower, freely  $\text{♩} = 84$

10

II:  
III:

\*Registration Note: Although the suggested registration is for a three-manual organ, the piece can easily be played on a two-manual instrument. The important aspects are that the right hand should play the same stop(s) from measure 10 thru 37, while the principals registration from the opening section should return in the last seven bars. The pedal should change to complement the manuals, i.e., less in measures 21 to 37, and stronger as of measure 39. Depending on the organ, the cantus firmus in the left hand measures 20 to 37 could be a solo sound rather than, as implied, the principal registration of the opening section.

Duration: 2:15

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LL

29

33

36

I: *mf*

*mf*

*f*

40

# Veni Creator Spiritus

(“Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire”)

- I. Principal(s) (***mf***), then add
- II. Flute(s) (***mp***)
- P. to balance

**Christopher J. Hoh**  
Plainchant

Vigorous  $\text{♩} = 84$

The musical score consists of three staves of music in 3/4 time, key signature of one flat. The top staff is treble clef, the middle staff is bass clef, and the bottom staff is bass clef. The music is divided into measures by vertical bar lines. Various musical markings are present, including dynamic markings like ***mf*** and ***mp***, and performance instructions like **3** (indicating triplets). Large, stylized yellow markings are overlaid on the music: a large circle with a diagonal slash through it covers the first measure of the top staff; a large question mark is placed over the second measure of the middle staff; and a large ampersand (&) is placed over the third measure of the bottom staff.

Duration: 3:35

A musical score page featuring four staves of music. The music is in common time, with a key signature of one flat. The first staff uses a treble clef, the second and third staves use a bass clef, and the fourth staff uses a bass clef. Measure numbers 10, 13, and 16 are visible above the staves. The music consists of various note patterns, some with '3' below them indicating a triplet. Large yellow markings are overlaid on the music: a large circle is positioned over the bass clef staff in measure 19; a large question mark is positioned over the treble clef staff in measure 13; and a large checkmark is positioned over the treble clef staff in measure 10.

As at first  $\text{♩} = 84$

50

I: \*

f

I:

52

(f)

55

57

D. S. al Coda

\* Add to manual I with Reed(s) and/or Mixture(s) before this point.

**Coda**

59

62

64

66

A musical score for two staves (treble and bass) in 2/4 time, featuring a key signature of one flat. The score consists of four systems of music, labeled 68, 70, 72, and 74. The music includes various note heads, stems, and bar lines. Large, thick yellow markings are overlaid on the score. In system 68, a yellow circle highlights a note in the bass staff. In system 70, a large yellow 'X' is drawn across the entire staff. In system 72, a large yellow 'S' is drawn across the staff, with a yellow arrow pointing from the start of the 'S' to a specific note in the treble staff. In system 74, a large yellow 'S' is drawn across the staff, with a yellow arrow pointing from the start of the 'S' to a specific note in the treble staff.

75

77

80

82

rit. to end

# Veni Emmanuel

(“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”)

- I. soft Diapasons or Strings (*mp*),  
then louder, later Full
- II. solo Flute(s) (*mf*),  
then solo Reed\*, later Full
- P. 16, 8 to balance, later Full

**Christopher J. Hoh**  
Melody adapted by **Thomas Helmore**  
from plainchant

The sheet music consists of three systems of musical notation for organ. The top system starts with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. It features two staves: the upper staff has a bassoon-like part labeled 'I: { *mp*' and the lower staff has a bassoon-like part labeled 'II:'. The middle system begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. The bottom system begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a common time signature. Large, stylized yellow markings are overlaid on the music. A thick yellow diagonal line starts from the middle of the first measure of the top system and extends downwards and to the right, crossing several measures. A large yellow circle is positioned around the end of the second measure of the top system. Another large yellow circle is centered on the third measure of the middle system. A third large yellow circle is centered on the eighth measure of the bottom system. The music includes various dynamics like '3' over measures and '(mp)'.

\* Reed solo could be played on third manual, if available.

Duration: 3:05

11

II: solo Reed  
mf

16

21

I:{

Full organ

49

50

51

52

53

54

rit.

# Pange lingua

(“Sing, My Tongue”)

I. Principal(s)  
 II. strong Flutes  
 P. Principals, Reed

**Christopher J. Hoh**  
 Plainchant

Confident ♩ = 92

1:

2:

3:

Duration: 2:30

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A musical score for two staves (treble and bass) across four systems (measures 26, 29, 32, and 35). The score features a treble clef, a bass clef, and a common time signature. Large yellow markings are overlaid on the music:

- Measure 26:** A large yellow 'e' is positioned above the bass staff.
- Measure 29:** A large yellow 'P' is positioned above the bass staff.
- Measure 32:** A large yellow 'G' is positioned above the bass staff.
- Measure 35:** A large yellow 'G' is positioned above the bass staff, and the instruction "ritardando to end" is written below the staff.