**The Advent Year A Service Orders**

*(Illuminating Liturgy 2019)*

**Outline of the Resource**

1. The Orders for Advent
   1. The four orders for the Sundays in Advent are based on the same template. Thus, for example, each week the service opens with the ‘first’ (Old Testament) reading and the advent wreath.
   2. In congregations where there is a weekly Eucharist, it is recommended that the same communion order also be used, especially the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving – again for the purposes of growing familiarity with the story that prayer tells, with the others.
2. The Prayers
   1. The prayers in the order of service are, for the most, either traditional prayers or composed for use in these services.
   2. A number of the prayers and responses are the same each week. An advantage of this is that both the worship leader and the congregation can ‘grow into’ the order over the four weeks.
   3. Prayers are provided for most parts of the service except for part of the prayer of confession (something which would likely be linked to the sermon for the day) and the prayers of the people. Some further resources for RCL-linked prayers are suggested at the end of this introduction
3. Explanation of the Eucharist section
   1. The order of service for each Sunday includes the Eucharist (Holy Communion); this is in part for convenience – delete it from those Sundays on which is it is not required.
   2. Alternatively, weekly communion in the principal Sunday worship service is the norm in most Christian denominations and celebrating the Eucharist for a short season like Advent is one way in which congregations which have monthly communion can experience weekly communion – assuming that an authorised celebrant is available for the services.
4. Readings
   1. The readings of the Revised Common Lectionary are included in the orders of service for convenience, as this is widely used in many denominations. The selections can be trimmed or varied as the preacher requires.
5. Hymns
   1. A number suggestions are made of hymns appropriate to the season and the main themes of the readings. The default in hymn proposals has been towards ones likely to be well known in a large number of churches. Choice must depending on local familiarity, although planning ahead would allow for some new hymns to be learned in preparation for the season.
   2. Hymn numbers in the orders of service are to *Together in Song* (‘TIS’, HarperCollins*Religious* 1999) and to the 2018 Supplement to TIS – but the hymns can be found in many other sources.
6. Using the Template
   1. The template is the liturgist’s/preacher’s version of the order of service.
      1. Suggested prayers are given in *grey italicised sans-serif* font; these would not appear in a printed or projected order or service, if you use either of these. Of course, these can be used as-is or replaced with other material.
      2. Where there is a choice for the liturgist to make (for example, the hymns suggestions, or the creeds) the text is in blue; delete one and change the other to black font.
      3. Red text indicates ‘instructions’ to the liturgist/ preacher in preparing the order of service, or notes about options where they are offered. Again, these would not be reproduced in pew sheets or projections.
      4. Text already in black would normally be printed or projected to guide worshippers through service.
   2. Formatting
      1. The templates are formatted on A4 pages for printing as A5 booklets (this is usually achieved via your printer’s print dialogue box);
      2. If your printer does allow this kind of printing, the text fonts can be reduced manually: ‘Select All’ and then reducing/enlarging the text with ‘Ctrl [’ or ‘Ctrl ]’ is an efficient way to do this.
7. Other Resources
   1. Printed and online seasonal resources for leading worship are legion. The following two from among the many good ones are commended for their link to the RCL and the variety of prayers and options they propose:

*South Yarra Community Baptist Church’s* [*‘Laughing Bird’ resources*](http://laughingbird.net/LaughingBird/Welcome.html)

[Advent 1A](http://laughingbird.net/NextSundayIndexes/A01.html)

[Advent 2A](http://laughingbird.net/NextSundayIndexes/A02.html)

[Advent 3A](http://laughingbird.net/NextSundayIndexes/A03.html)

[Advent 4A](http://laughingbird.net/NextSundayIndexes/A04.html)

*The* [*Sunday-by-Sunday resources*](https://www.lca.org.au/departments/commissions/commission-worship/sunday-by-sunday/) *of the Lutheran Church of Australia:*

[Advent 1A](https://lca.box.net/shared/static/0051se3h8hla3ahhnjlg.rtf)

[Advent 2A](https://lca.box.net/shared/static/egc9b3tuzs2uz5zpxpg9.rtf)

[Advent 3A](https://lca.box.net/shared/static/e16vm0dizcxtsc0x66ai.rtf)

[Advent 4A](https://lca.box.net/shared/static/djammjcvno13qxi3os5r.rtf)

* 1. In addition to those in the Lutheran’s Sunday-by-Sunday Resources further hymn suggestions can be found at *Jeff Shrowder’s* [*worship resource page*](http://thebillabong.info/)*:*

[Advent 1A](http://thebillabong.info/lectionary-2/year-a-matthew/01a-advent-1a/)

[Advent 2A](http://thebillabong.info/lectionary-2/year-a-matthew/02a-advent-2a/)

[Advent 3A](http://thebillabong.info/lectionary-2/year-a-matthew/03a-advent-3a/)

[Advent 4A](http://thebillabong.info/lectionary-2/year-a-matthew/04a-advent-4a/)