

Our God Is Born

CHRISTMAS SERVICE GUIDE

The *Our God Is Born* Christmas Service Guide contains *everything* you need (underscores, readings, tracks and Christmas carols) for your Christmas Eve worship or Christmas Sunday worship. This versatile service can be led with as little as a capable pianist and worship leader, or with a praise team, praise band and/or a full SATB or SAB choir (plus orchestral instruments with the instrumental edition.) If you don't have any musicians, lead the service with the stereo tracks, or even mix tracks with live performances.

This Service Guide follows more of a Sunday morning praise set format: three upbeat songs in a row to open a Christmas service, a Scripture reading, another song, an offertory song, your Pastor's sermon and an upbeat arrangement of "O Come All Ye Faithful" to close your service.

My hope is that this service guide will help busy worship leaders make a December Sunday morning a little extra special for their congregations.

Don Chapman
HymnCharts.com

Ideas for using the *Our God Is Born* Service Guide:

>What you'll need to provide for your service:

1. Up to 3 narrators. One person can do all the narration or pick a different person for each narration. Burn a CD or email your narrators the MP3 vocal demo and MP3 track so they can practice their timing. *The key to the service guide is the uninterrupted music flow!*

2. Sermon. There's a slot for the pastor's sermon.

3. Alternate Scripture. The KJV version is provided here for the Scripture readings, but you may have a favorite translation you'd rather use. Try "The Message" version for a contemporary reading.

4. Praise set format. The *Our God Is Born* Service Guide follows a typical praise set format, with 3 upbeat opening songs, a mid-tempo song, an offertory ballad, sermon and closing song.

Since *Our God Is Born* and *Go Tell It* are very similar in tempo, the Combined Vocal Demos demonstrate how I like to dovetail songs when possible. Try flowing from one song to the other without stopping when similar tempos permit.

>Tips for using the *Our God Is Born* Service Guide:

1. Scarce musicians. It can be difficult for smaller churches to find musicians on Christmas Eve. Burn a CD of the underscores and vocal demos and play it in lieu of using musicians.

2. Keyboard player. The entire service can be conducted with a single, capable pianist. Have a keyboard player accompany the narration by playing the underscores under the narration. You will want to have a short rehearsal with the pianist and narrators to make sure their timing is perfect.

3. Change keys. Finale files are provided which will allow you to change the key if you own Finale software. However, *I do not recommend changing the keys as the underscores are designed to transition you from song to song in the keys I've selected.*

4. Logo. A Photoshop file and TIFF file is included of the logo so you can reproduce it in your bulletin.

5. PowerPoint files. Standard definition PowerPoint files are provided for the songs. Widescreen blank slides are included if you want to build your own slides in that format.

>Using Tracks:

If you plan on using tracks for your service, here's how it works. Instead of building your service and burning a CD with the individual tracks in order (which is fine if you want to do it that way,) use the "Combined" tracks. The "Combined" track folders are MP3s with songs and underscores that flow seamlessly one to the other. This way your worship will flow with minimal starting/stopping.

The "Stereo Tracks" and "Vocal Demos" folders contain all the songs and underscores as separate MP3s. Use these if you want more control over your service. Perhaps you want to perform the underscores live with narrators and a pianist, then sing with tracks, or vice-versa.

Powerpoint and some worship projection software will automatically play MP3s. Or try playing the tracks from an iPod or other MP3 player. Whether you go digital or use a burned CDRom to play the tracks, **please make sure you test your setup with a full run-through!**

>How to use this service guide:

Each part of the Service Guide is on one page. Print out all the pages for all your narrators so they can follow along and mark their parts.

The final page is a one page, at-a-glance overview so those involved can see the entire program.

If you're using the MP3 underscores, make sure the narrators have a chance to practice with them. Feel free to burn a CD or email the MP3s to them so they can make sure their narrations fit the music. The keyboard underscores are composed with repeats making them more flexible.

Dead space kills a worship service! Both the keyboard underscores and MP3 underscores are designed to help you flow directly into the next song. If you're using the MP3s, wait until you hear the final chord - the chord will ring out for a few seconds giving you time to start playing the introduction to the next song.

Questions or comments? Contact us at h2ghelp@heartstogod.com.