

# O Antiphons

An Advent Gem  
Pastor Laura Olsen

# Overview

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ What is an antiphon and why should we care?
- ▶ What are O Antiphons?

# Introduction

- ▶ Journey to Ordained Ministry

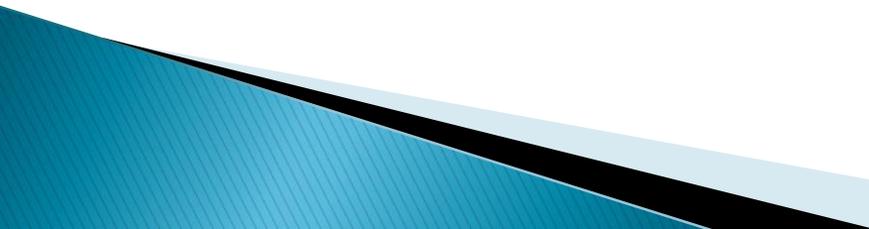
# What is an antiphon and why do we care?

- ▶ Antiphon – (Greek) Something sung alternatively by two choirs
  - ▶ Sentences, usually from scripture, recited before and after the Psalms and Canticles in the Divine Office
  - ▶ Vary with the season
  - ▶ Antiphonal singing may be divided between two choirs, or between a soloist and the choir
  - ▶ The Divine Office, the daily public prayer of the church, dates back to at least the 4<sup>th</sup> cent
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# O Antiphons

- ▶ Possibly originated in the 6<sup>th</sup> century
  - ▶ Sung before and after the *Magnificat*, Mary's Song, at Vespers from December 16–23
  - ▶ Greet the Messiah and finish with hope
  - ▶ Another antiphon was added later
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# The “Great O’s”

- ▶ O Wisdom Dec 16<sup>th</sup>
  - ▶ O Adonai Dec 17<sup>th</sup>
  - ▶ O Stock of Jesse Dec 18<sup>th</sup>
  - ▶ O Key of David Dec 19<sup>th</sup>
  - ▶ O Dawn Dec 20<sup>th</sup>
  - ▶ O King Dec 21<sup>st</sup>
  - ▶ O Emmanuel Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>
  - ▶ O Virgin Dec 23<sup>rd</sup>
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# O Wisdom – O Sapientia

- ▶ “O Wisdom you came forth from the mouth of the Most High and reach from one end of the earth to the other, mightily and sweetly ordering all things. O come and teach us the way of prudence. (Recited twice)
- ▶ Scriptural Basis
  - Proverbs 2:6, 9–11
  - Wisdom 1:7
  - Wisdom 9:1, 9–11

- ▶ 2. O come, O Wisdom from on high
  - ▶ Embracing all things fair and nigh
  - ▶ In strength and beauty come and stay
  - ▶ Teach us your will and guide our way.
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# O Adonai

- ▶ “O Adonai and Leader of the House of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and gave him the law on Sinai. O come and redeem us with an outstretched arm.” (Recited twice)
- ▶ Scriptural Basis
  - Exodus 3:2, 4–6
  - Exodus 20:1–2
  - Isaiah 52:10

- ▶ 3. O come, o come, o lord of might
  - ▶ As to your tribes on Sinai's height,
  - ▶ In ancient times you gave the law,
  - ▶ In cloud and majesty and awe.
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# O Stock of Jesse – O Radix Jesse

- ▶ “O Root of Jesse, you stand as an ensign to the peoples; before you kings will shut their mouths and nations will bow in worship. O come and deliver us and do not tarry.”  
(Recited twice)
- ▶ Scriptural Basis
  - Isaiah 11:1–4a, 10–11a
  - Isaiah 52:13,15

- ▶ 4. O come, O Branch of Jesse free,
  - ▶ Your own from Satan's tyranny,
  - ▶ From depths of Hell, your people save,
  - ▶ And give victory o'er the grave
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# O Key of David – O Clavis David

- ▶ O Key of David and Scepter of the house of Israel, you open and no one can close; you close and no one can open. O come and bring captives out of the prison house, those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.
- ▶ Scriptural Basis
  - Isaiah 42:6–7
  - Psalm 107:13–14
  - Numbers 24:17a
  - Isaiah 22:22

- ▶ 5. O Come, O Key of David, Come
  - ▶ And open wide our heavenly home,
  - ▶ Make safe the way that leads on high,
  - ▶ And close the path to misery.
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# O Dawn – O Oriens

- ▶ “O Rising Dawn, brightness of the Light Eternal and Sun of Righteousness, O come and enlighten those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.”
- ▶ Scriptural Basis
  - Isaiah 9:2
  - Isaiah 60:19–20
  - Wisdom 7:26
  - Malachi 4:2
  - Luke 1:76–79

- ▶ 6. O Come, O day spring come and cheer,
  - ▶ O sun of justice now draw near,
  - ▶ Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
  - ▶ And death's dark shadow put to flight.
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# O King – O Rex gentium

- ▶ “O King of the Nations and Desire of them all, you are the Cornerstone who makes both one. O come and save the creatures whom you fashioned out of clay.”
- ▶ Scriptural Basis
  - Isaiah 28:16
  - Jeremiah 10:7
  - 1 Peter 2:4–6
  - Job 33:1, 6

- ▶ 7. O come, O King of nations come,
  - ▶ O Cornerstone that binds in one
  - ▶ Refresh the hearts that long for you
  - ▶ Restore the broken make us new.
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# O Emmanuel

- ▶ “O Emmanuel, our King and Lawgiver, the Expected of the nations and the Savior of them all, O come and save us, O Lord our God.”
- ▶ Scriptural Basis
  - Isaiah 7:14
  - Isaiah 33:22
  - Matthew 1:20–24
  - James 4:12

- ▶ 8. O come, O come Emmanuel,
  - ▶ And ransom captive Israel,
  - ▶ That mourns in lonely exile here,
  - ▶ Until the son of God appear
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# O Virgin – O Virgo virginum

- ▶ “O Virgin of virgins, tell us how shall this be? For neither before you was any like you nor shall there be after. Daughters of Jerusalem, why do you marvel at me? The thing which you behold is a divine mystery.”
- ▶ Scriptural Basis
  - Luke 1:30–36
  - Luke 1:40–42
  - Luke 1:46–50

- ▶ Material for this presentation came from:
    - *Evangelical Lutheran Worship – Augsburg Fortress*
    - *Hasten the Kingdom, Praying the O Antiphons of Advent – Mary Winifred*
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