

I CALL
HIM
LORD

REHEARSAL GUIDE

by Ken Barker

Lifeway™

“Angels, from the Realms of Glory (And He Shall Reign)”

This arrangement of the familiar Christmas hymn is very straightforward. However, in the section beginning with, “Come and worship” (page 5, ms. 14-22), note values are twice as long as normally sung. This draws special attention to the text, inviting worshippers to “worship Christ, the newborn King!” Given the rhythm and energy of the brand-new chorus, make certain your choir is ready for the contrast each time, clearly announcing the message that our God will reign forever! If your congregation learns quickly, or you perform this arrangement for your church before the musical performance, you may be able to involve the congregation!

“O Worship the King (All Joy)”

John, Cliff, and Blake have penned some masterful new Christmas lyrics to this classic hymn melody. Because the treatment is straight-ahead, encourage your choir to shape the dynamics of each phrase, thus accentuating the message of the text. The new chorus is easy to learn/sing and will bring new vibrancy to a timeless favorite. Be sure and invite the entire congregation to join in singing from the very beginning until the choral tag (page 31, m. 117)!

“Reign Forevermore”

An essential key to maximizing your performance of this heartfelt new song is to shape each musical phrase. The dotted eighth/sixteenth figure is prevalent throughout, so be sure and focus on singing the figure accurately and with unity, especially in places like measures 25 and 26 (page 36). The sudden modulation at measure 29 provides a lift and impetus to sing the text with conviction. Meanwhile, it is important to note that there are still two more modulations yet to come, so be sure to save the strongest dynamic level for the last key change at measure 53 (page 41)!

“Worthy of Your Name” with “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

The congregation can join with the choir in several places, including measures 37-64 for the verse and double chorus of “O Come, All Ye Faithful,” and then, again, at measure 84 through the end beginning with the pickups into the key change chorus. If this is a new song to you and your choir, be assured that it is easy to learn. The bridge will need the most rehearsal time. Once the choir is singing the figure beginning at measure 66 with precision, it should come together quickly. Note: There is a long dynamic build, starting quietly, but still with intensity at 66, and peaking at measure 84 as it spills into the key change. Allow ample rehearsal time to make this dynamic build as smooth and effective as it can be.

“Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne (Forever Yours)”

At this point the musical begins to take a more personal turn. Beginning with the intimacy of the opening solo, this arrangement needs to be sung with a prayerful heart that God will be stirring in the hearts of the congregation, drawing them to Himself. The chorus, beginning at measure 43, is augmented to emphasize our invitation for the Lord Jesus to live in our hearts. The new song portion, beginning with the pickups into measure 51, is sung as prime unison. It is recommended only the Tenors sing this section with the ladies, unless some of the baritones can sing in this upper tessitura with a lighter, blending tone. In an effort to make your performance as impactful as possible, we encourage you to consider the wonderful option of inviting your congregation to join in singing from the pickups to measure 85 through the end.

“I Call Him Lord”

Solo vocalist or unison choir will work well for the first verse. On the chorus, beginning at measure 29, it would be easy for the choir to sing these long notes without much expression or feeling. Maximize musicality and phrasing in this section, thus drawing passion from your choir in these easy-to-sing spots, especially when they are singing the name, “Jesus.” Spend some extra time with the triplet figure on beat three of measure 54, making sure it does not catch them by surprise each time and is, thus, sung effortlessly. Emphasize the closing climactic phrase, “I call Him Lord!” (ms. 87) that leads powerfully to the Finale.

“Finale: O Worship the King (All Joy)”

Invite the congregation to join in singing throughout, until the choral tag beginning with the pickups to measure 58.

