

## Kievan Chant

The origins of Kievan Chant date to the period when the western and southwestern parts of the Russian metropolitanate were under the rule of Lithuanian and Polish kings (late 16<sup>th</sup>—early 17<sup>th</sup> centuries). Although Slavic musicologists treat its early development as a local variant of the Znamenny Chant, its evolution out of the ancient Znamenny Chant did not occur “without a certain influence from Western European music.”<sup>1</sup> It became more than a regional chant when it was brought to Moscow by church singers from Kiev during the time of Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich and Patriarch Nikon (mid-seventeenth century).<sup>2</sup> Kievan Chant is a complete chant that contains melodies for all hymnographical groups: *stichera*, *troparia*, *prokeimena*, *kanons*, etc. In its melodic content, it is not nearly as rich or varied as the Znamenny Chant, as its melodic lines are often filled with simple recitative with very limited cadential phrases.

In present-day use Kievan Chant can be divided into five different classifications of melodies that comprise each “Tone”. Within a given Tone these melodies, with few exceptions, do not have any relationship to each other. These five classifications represent repertoires of melodies for the singing of:

- 1) Stichera
- 2) Stichera refrains
- 3) Troparia
- 4) Prokeimena
- 5) Heirmoi (Kanons)

### Part I

#### Kievan Chant for the Singing of Stichera

Stichera (sticheron, *sing.*) are poetic verses of varying content and length, having anywhere from as few as two lines to as many as twelve. Stichera are commonly inserted between the verses of a psalm in such a way that the psalm verse precedes the

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<sup>1</sup> Johann von Gardner, *Russian Church Singing, Volume 1, Orthodox Worship and Hymnography* (Crestwood, NY, SVS Press, 1980) 105.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

sticheron, i.e., at Vespers following “Lord, I Call” (Psalms 140, 141, 129, 116), at Matins following the Gospel reading and Psalm 50 (Post-Gospel Sticheron), and at the Praises (Psalm 150) when Matins includes the Polyeleion and the Great Doxology. Less often, the psalm verses follow the sticheron: Aposticha at Vespers and Aposticha at Matins when Matins does not include the Polyeleion and the Great Doxology. Stichera are sung without any Psalm verses during the Litia, which occurs during feast-day Vespers.

In the Kievan chant, the Tone is defined not only by the short melodic patterns (popevki) that are used in each tone, but also by the sequence of the melodic phrases. For example, Tone 1 consists of four distinct melodic phrases (A, B, C, and D,) with each line comprising a reciting tone (usually preceded by an introduction) and a short cadence. A fifth distinct melodic line (final cadence) is used for the final textual line of the hymn.

The **introduction** or **intonation** of a phrase is a note or several notes that precede the reciting tone. At times the intonation will simply be a held note (half note), either on the same pitch as the reciting tone, or one tone above or below the reciting tone. A phrase may begin immediately on the reciting tone, in which case there is no introduction.

The **reciting tone** is a single pitch on which many syllables of text can be sung. In the unison examples showing chant melody only, the reciting tone is indicated with a filled-in (blackened) whole note. In the harmonized printed examples, groups of words that are sung on the reciting tone begin with a notehead over the first syllable and a notehead over the last syllable. All the syllables between this first and last notehead are sung on the same pitch (chord). Frequently the reciting tone will conclude with a **preparation** for the cadence. This preparation (indicated as **prep** in the tutorial) can consist of a single note sung on a different pitch or a series of notes sung on different pitches.

The **cadence** forms the conclusion of the phrase. It usually begins with an accented syllable sung on a “held” or half note, introducing a brief melodic pattern. In each cadence, one or more accented notes determine the “curve” of the cadence.

As traditional liturgical chants are based on the rhythm of the texts, there is no time signature, either in the *Obikhod notnago peniia* or in the tutorial.<sup>3</sup> The half note is the predominant pulse, which in the chant is equivalent to a single beat. The recitative (reciting tone) section of phrases consists of quarter notes that should be grouped in two's or three's, depending upon the location of the accents. All recitation syllables are sung on the same reciting tone using normal speech rhythms (with the basic, indivisible rhythmic unit being that of a quarter note, i.e., one-half of the full beat). Thus, a two-syllable word with an accent on the first syllable will receive a full beat, while a three-syllable word with the accent on the first syllable will receive a full beat and a half.<sup>4</sup> The groups of two's can be counted in this way: 1-and, 2-and, 3-and, etc. Groups of three's are not equal to a triplet but to three more or less identical quarter notes and can be counted in this way: 1-and-a-, 2-and-a-, 3-and-a-, etc. The conductor must be able to indicate by an extension of the beat a grouping of three, so that the singer is able to sing all three quarter notes, not as a triplet but as distinct quarter notes within the beat pattern, before moving on to the next beat.

In the notation for the reciting tone, four or more syllables sung on the same pitch will be indicated with a quarter note on the first syllable and a quarter note on the last syllable, with all syllables between the first and last notehead sung as quarter notes on the same pitch. In the conducting of chant with asymmetric rhythm it is often necessary to indicate the stressed syllables in order to maintain the established tempo.

### Moveable do

The tutorial uses the “moveable do” system which is ideally suited for learning the church tones. In this system, each solfege syllable, do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, and ti,

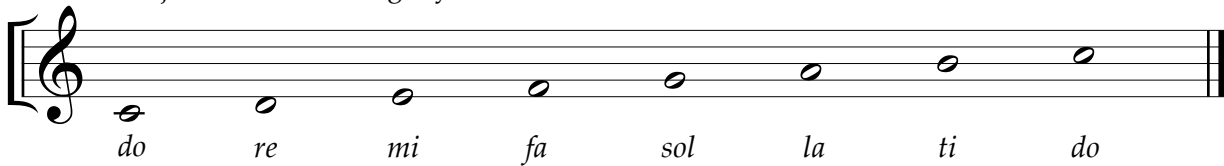
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<sup>3</sup> *Obikhod notnago peniia* [Common Chants in Staff Notation], is one of the liturgical chant books of the Russian Orthodox Church and contains the common hymns (Ordinary) for Vespers, Matins, and the Divine Liturgy as well as selected hymns of the Propers from the Octoechos, Heirmologion, and the Festal Menaion. Musically, it is a collection of various chants from several different repertoires: Znamenny, Kievan, Abbreviated Kievan, Greek, Bulgarian, etc. The first printed edition of the *Obikhod* in staff (square) notation was issued in 1772 by order of the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church. Many editions followed and, although they were not uniform in content, there were no significant changes to the melodies of the chants. This tutorial is based on the 1909 edition of the *Obikhod* that was printed in St Petersburg and was reprinted in 1966 by the Benedictines of Chevetogne, Belgium and Cureglia, Switzerland.

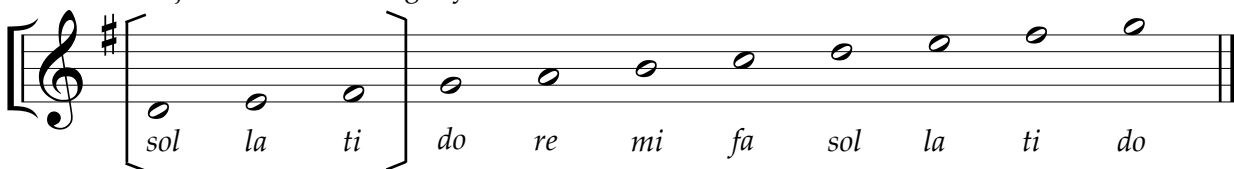
<sup>4</sup> For a fuller discussion concerning problems related to syllabic and recitative chant, cf. Vladimir Morosan, *Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia* (UMI Research Press, 1986) pp. 290-295, also 260-267.

corresponds not to an absolute pitch, but rather to a scale degree. The first degree of a major scale is always sung as do, the second as re, etc. Using the “moveable do,” a given melody would always use the same solfege syllables, regardless of the key in which it is written. Thus, in the key of C major, C is do, whereas in the key of F major, F is do.

C major scale with solfege syllables



G major scale with solfege syllables



The chant melodies in the unison musical examples for each tone throughout the text of this tutorial are based on the unison Kievan chants as notated in the 1909 *Obikhod notnago peniia* [Common Chants in Staff Notation.] The 1909 *Obikhod notnago peniia* uses the five-line staff and the square notation of the neumes, as did the books of chant that were published by the Synodal Publishing House in 1772. The shape of the noteheads, instead of being round as in modern notation, is either square (hence, square notation) or diamond-shaped. These neumes are placed on the five-line staff with relative “do” always found on the middle (or third) line. Many composers, such as Alexei L’vov (1798-1870), Reverend Dmitri Allemanov (1867-c. 1918), Alexander Kastal’sky (1856-1926), Alexander Arkhangel’sky (1846-1924), Pavel Chesnokov (1877-1944) and others, have harmonized these chants or used them as the basis for their own compositions. The harmonized versions of the tones in this tutorial are taken from the *Obikhod notnago peniia*, (1959) by Boris Ledkovsky,<sup>5</sup> with the basic chant melody given to the soprano voice.

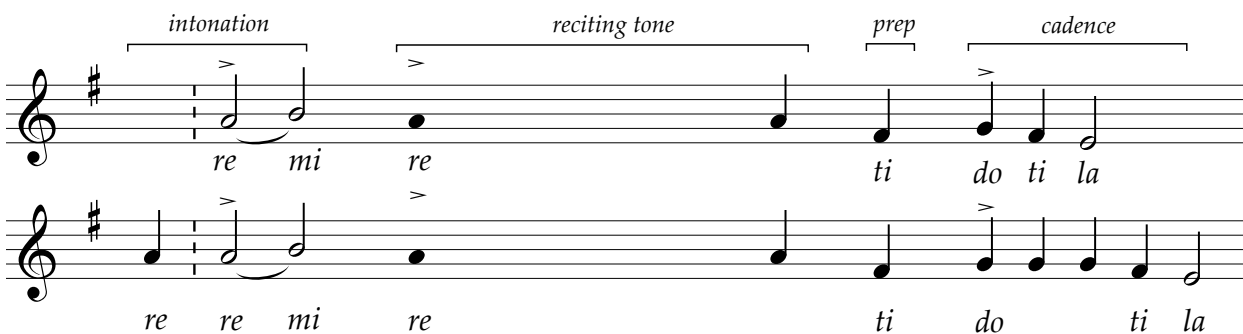
<sup>5</sup> Boris Mikhailovich Ledkovsky (1894-1975), the son of Archpriest Mikhail and Sophia Ledkovsky, studied at the theological school in Novochoerkassk where he was born, at the Royal School in Rostov-on-Don, and at the Moscow Conservatory with Alexander Kastal’sky. He directed choirs at the St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Sofia, Bulgaria, and in Paris and Berlin parishes and cathedrals. He emigrated to the United States in 1951 and from 1952 until his death in 1975 served as choir director at the Cathedral of the Icon of Our Lady of the Sign (ROCOR) in New York City. He was Professor of Liturgical Music at St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary (1953-1965). A prolific arranger and composer of Russian Orthodox Church music, he has left an indelible mark upon Orthodox music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Tone 1

Tone 1 consists of four (4) melodic phrases (A, B, C, D), sung in alternation and repeated in that order, depending upon the number of phrases in the text. The last phrase of the text has its own, unique melodic phrase. If a sticheron is divided into five textual phrases, the musical lines will consist of A, B, C, D, and Final Phrase. If there are eight lines of text, the musical lines will consist of A, B, C, D, A, B, C, and Final Phrase. If there are only three lines of text, then A, B, and Final Phrase, etc.

#### PHRASE A

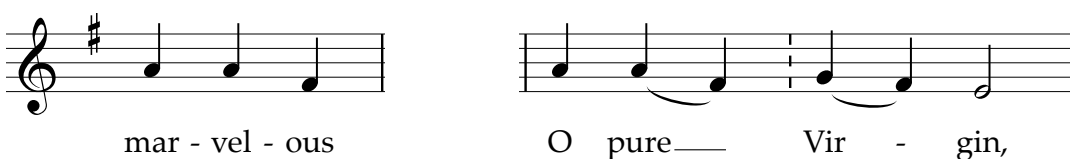
Phrase A consists of an *intonation* (two half notes on the first accented syllable, *re* and *mi*), a *reciting tone* on *re*, concluding with a weak preparatory note on *ti*, which leads to the *cadence* of three notes, *do*, *ti*, and *la*.



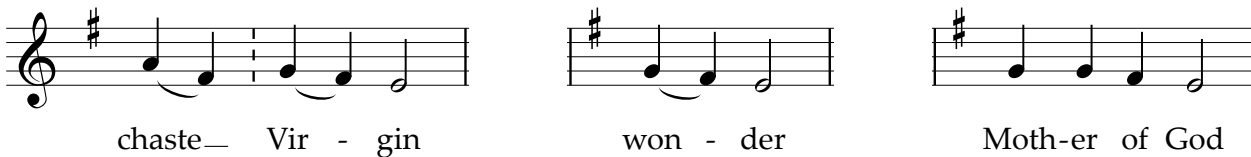
The *intonation* can consist of one or more syllables or words, but the first stressed accent of the text falls on two half notes, *re* and *mi*. Any and all preceding unaccented syllables are sung on the same pitch as the first accented syllable, i.e., *re*; their rhythmic value, however, is a half beat or quarter note.



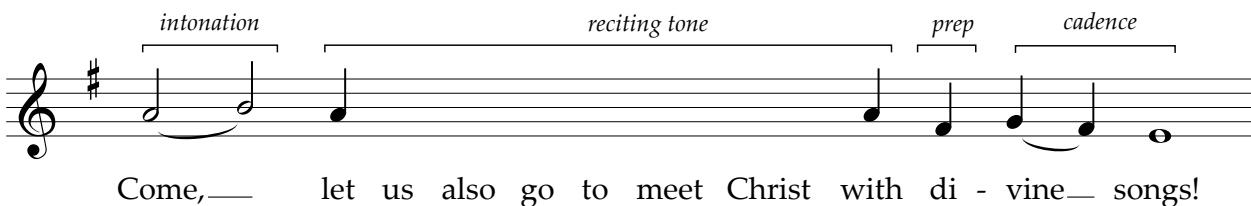
The *reciting tone* (*re*) is used to sing the words that constitute the body of the textual phrase. The last syllable of the *reciting tone* descends to *ti*, and serves as a *preparatory note* leading to the *cadence*. If the last syllable of the *reciting tone* is accented (as in the second example below), then this accented syllable is given two quarter notes, one on the *reciting tone* *re* and a second that is slurred together with the *preparatory note* *ti*.



The *cadence*, consisting of three pitches, *do*, *ti*, and *la*, is used to sing the final word or phrase of the text and begins on an accented syllable, which can either be the last word of the phrase, if the word has one or more unaccented syllables following the accent, e.g. “virtue” or “Trinity”, or several words, beginning on the last “internal” accent (e.g., “Móther of God”).

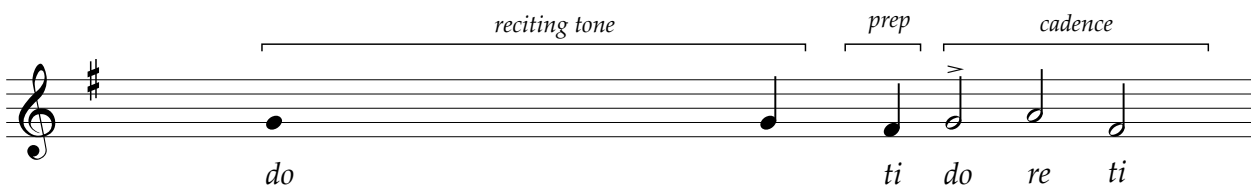


Example of *Phrase A* (from the feast of the Meeting of our Lord, third sticheron at “Lord, I Call.”)



### PHRASE B

*Phrase B* consists of the *reciting tone* (*do*) and the *cadence*. The last syllable of the *reciting tone* descends to *ti* and serves as a *preparatory note* leading to the *cadence*, which consists of a half note on *do*, followed by a second half note on *re* (if two or more syllables then each syllable is a half pulse, that is, a quarter note), and concludes with half note a third below, i.e., on *ti* of the scale. If the last word of the text is of only lone syllable, then, as in *Phrase A*, the *cadence* begins on the last internal accented syllable.



If unaccented syllables precede the first accented syllable at the beginning of the second line of text, *Phrase B* may have an intonation. These unaccented syllables may begin on the same pitch as the concluding note of the first phrase, and are quarter notes (i.e., half pulse).

The musical notation for Tone 1 is shown on a single staff. It begins with an *intonation* consisting of two eighth notes: *la* (F#4) and *do* (G#4). This is followed by a *reciting tone* consisting of a dotted half note *do* (G#4). Then comes a *prep* consisting of a quarter note *ti* (F#4). Finally, the *cadence* consists of a quarter note *do* (G#4), an eighth note *re* (A4), and a quarter note *ti* (F#4). Below the staff, three separate musical phrases are shown, each on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#):

- her com - pan-ions*: *la* (F#4), *do* (G#4), *re* (A4), *ti* (F#4).
- re - joice*: *do* (G#4), *re* (A4), *ti* (F#4).
- the The - o - to - kos*: *do* (G#4), *re* (A4), *ti* (F#4), *do* (G#4).

The *cadence* can be sung with two or more syllables.

Two musical phrases are shown, each on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first phrase, *the Lord is with— you*, shows a *cadence* consisting of a quarter note *do* (G#4) and a half note *re* (A4). The second phrase, *laid in a grave*, shows a *cadence* consisting of a quarter note *do* (G#4) and a half note *re* (A4). Below these, a third phrase, *ac - cord - ing to the flesh*, is shown on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#), consisting of a quarter note *do* (G#4), a quarter note *re* (A4), a quarter note *ti* (F#4), and a quarter note *do* (G#4).

Example of *Phrase B* (from the feast of the Meeting of our Lord, third sticheron at “*Lord, I Call.*”)

The musical notation for *Phrase B* is shown on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of a *reciting tone* (a dotted half note *do* (G#4)), a *prep* (a quarter note *ti* (F#4)), and a *cadence* (a quarter note *do* (G#4), an eighth note *re* (A4), and a quarter note *ti* (F#4)). Below the staff, the text *Let us receive Him Whose salva - tion Sim - e - on saw!* is written.

### PHRASE C

*Phrase C* consists of an *intonation* (a half note on the first accented syllable, sung on *re* of the scale), followed by the *reciting tone* sung on the same pitch, and the *cadence*, which consists of two descending pitches, *do* and *ti*.

The musical notation for *Phrase C* is shown on a single staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of an *intonation* (a half note *re* (A4)), a *reciting tone* (a dotted half note *re* (A4)), and a *cadence* (a quarter note *do* (G#4) and a quarter note *ti* (F#4)). Below the staff, the text *re re do ti* is written.

If unaccented syllables precede the first accented syllable of the text, these are sung on the same pitch (*re*).

The musical notation for Tone 1 is shown on a single staff. It begins with an *intonation* of three eighth notes: *re*, *re*, and *re*. This is followed by a *reciting tone* consisting of a single quarter note *re*. The *cadence* consists of a quarter note *do* followed by four eighth notes: *ti*, *do*, *re*, and *do*. Below the staff, the text "All those and sent forth" is written, with "All those" under the first *re* and "and sent forth" under the *re* of the reciting tone.

Likewise, if there is more than one syllable following the first accented syllable of the *cadence*, then these unaccented syllables are sung on the same pitch as the penultimate pitch (i.e., *do*).

The musical notation for Tone 1 is shown on a single staff. It begins with an *intonation* of three eighth notes: *re*, *re*, and *re*. This is followed by a *reciting tone* consisting of a single quarter note *re*. The *cadence* consists of a quarter note *do* followed by four eighth notes: *ti*, *do*, *re*, and *do*. Below the staff, the text "heav - en earth re - joice wor - thy of her" is written, with "heav - en" under the first *re*, "earth re - joice" under the *re* of the reciting tone, and "wor - thy of her" under the *do* of the cadence.

Example of *Phrase C* (from the feast of the Meeting of our Lord, third sticheron at "Lord, I Call.")

The musical notation for *Phrase C* is shown on a single staff. It begins with an *intonation* of three eighth notes: *re*, *re*, and *re*. This is followed by a *reciting tone* consisting of a single quarter note *re*. The *cadence* consists of a quarter note *do* followed by four eighth notes: *ti*, *do*, *re*, and *do*. Below the staff, the text "This is He Whom Da - vid an-nounced;" is written, with "This is He" under the first *re*, "Whom" under the *re* of the reciting tone, and "Da - vid an-nounced;" under the *do* of the cadence.

In this example, because of the brevity of the text, the *reciting tone* consists of only one word and one note, a quarter note on *re*.

#### PHRASE D

*Phrase D* consists of the *reciting tone* and the *cadence*. The *reciting tone* is *do*, while the *cadence*, beginning on the first accent of the cadential phrase, consists of a melodic pattern of 5 pitches (*ti*, *do*, *re*, *do*, and *ti*).

The musical notation for *Phrase D* is shown on two staves. The top staff shows the *reciting tone* as a single quarter note *do*, followed by the *cadence* consisting of a quarter note *ti*, a quarter note *do*, a quarter note *re*, a quarter note *do*, and a quarter note *ti*. The bottom staff shows the *reciting tone* as a single quarter note *do*, followed by the *cadence* consisting of a quarter note *ti*, a quarter note *do*, a quarter note *re*, a quarter note *do*, and a quarter note *ti*. Below the staves, the text "do ti do re do ti" is written, with "do" under the *do* of the reciting tone and "ti do re do ti" under the *ti* of the cadence.



Most often the *cadence* will include two or more words; the accented syllables sung as half notes on *ti* and *re*.

di - vine — bright - ness      ev - er - last - ing light

ac - quired your in - ter - ces - sion

Example of *Phrase D* (from the feast of the Meeting of our Lord, third sticheron at “Lord, I Call.”)

reciting tone      cadence

this is He Who spoke in the Proph - ets,

### FINAL PHRASE

The *Final Phrase* consists of a *reciting tone* and the *cadence*. The *reciting tone* is sung on *re* of the scale, with either the last syllable or the last two syllables serving as a preparation to the *cadence*. If only one syllable serves as the *preparation*, then it is sung a third lower (*ti*); if two syllables serve as the *preparation*, they are sung as descending seconds, (quarter notes on *do* and *ti*).

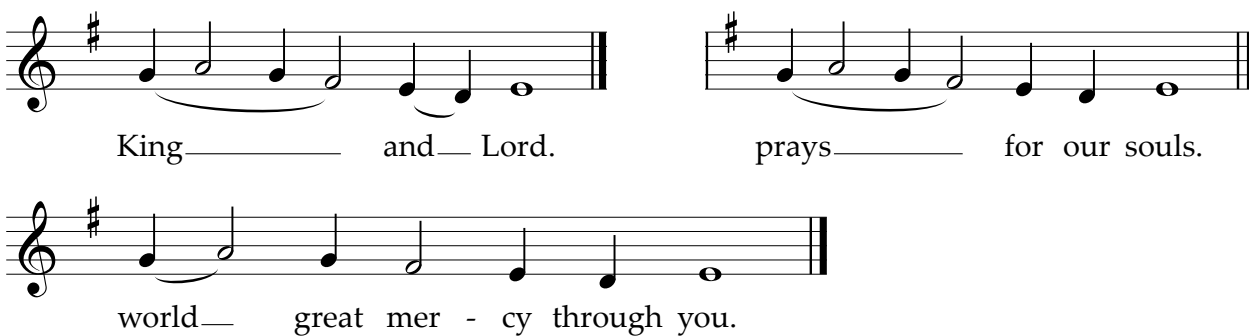
The *cadence* consists of two groupings or melodic phrases: the first consisting of a descending quarter note, an ascending half note, followed by a descending quarter note; the second consisting of a descending half note, two descending quarter notes, and concluding with an ascending whole note. Depending upon the text, the second grouping might begin with two quarter notes instead of the half note (as in the second example below).

reciting tone      prep      cadence

re      do ti do re do ti la sol la

re      do ti do re do ti la sol la

The cadence will usually consist of three or more syllables.

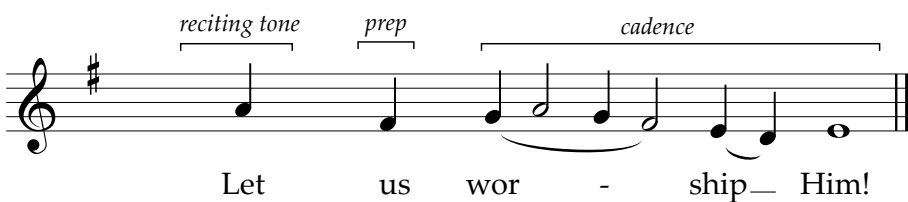


Three musical staves in G-clef and F# key signature. The first staff has a half note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on G4, and a half note on F#4. The second staff has a half note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on G4, and a half note on F#4. The third staff has a half note on G4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on B4, a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on G4, and a half note on F#4.

King — and — Lord.      prays — for our souls.

world — great mer - cy through you.

Example of *Final Cadence* (from the feast of the Meeting of our Lord, third sticheron at "Lord, I Call.")



A musical staff in G-clef and F# key signature. The notes are: G4 (half), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (half). Brackets above the staff label the sections: 'reciting tone' for the first note, 'prep' for the second note, and 'cadence' for the last four notes.

Let us wor - ship — Him!

# Melodic Phrases in Four-Part Harmony – Kievan Chant, Tone 1

arr. from B. Ledkovsky

**Phrase A**

*intonation* *reciting tone* *prep* *cadence*

re re mi re re ti do ti la

ti ti do ti ti sol sol sol mi

sol sol do sol sol re mi re do

sol sol do sol sol la

**Phrase B**

*intonation* *reciting tone* *prep* *cadence*

la ti do do ti do re ti

mi sol sol sol sol sol sol

do re mi do sol re mi fa re

la sol do do sol do sol sol

**Phrase C**

*intonation* *reciting tone* *cadence*

re re re re re do ti

ti ti ti ti ti sol sol

fa fa fa fa fa mi re

sol sol sol sol sol do sol

**Phrase D**

*reciting tone* *cadence*

do do ti do re do ti

sol sol sol sol sol sol

mi mi re mi fa mi re

do do sol do ti do sol

**Final Phrase**

*reciting tone*      *prep*      *cadence*

re      re      do      ti      do      re      do      ti      la      sol      la

ti      ti      do      sol      sol      sol      sol      sol      re      fi

fa      fa      mi      re      mi      fa      mi      re      do      ti      re

sol      sol      sol      sol      do      ti      do      sol      sol      sol      re

## Stichera on "Lord, I Call"

*The Meeting of Our Lord - February 2*

Kievan Chant

arr. from B. Ledkovsky

Phrase A

Soprano  
Alto

Tenor  
Bass

Come, — let us also go to meet Christ with di-vine — songs!

Phrase B

Let us receive Him Whose salva-tion Sim - e - on saw! This is He

Phrase C

Whom Da-vid an-nounced; this is He Who spoke in the Proph - ets,

Phrase D

Who, — for our sakes, has taken flesh and Who speaks through the Law. //

Phrase A

Final Phrase

Let us wor - - - ship — Him!

