

Discover the digital resources that are available for churches this Christmas, and find out what's still to come.

The theme of this year's Christmas campaign is Follow the Star: Join the Song. Inspired by Luke 2.20 (GNB) it highlights how singing can draw us closer to God and to each other as we journey from Advent to Epiphany and celebrate the birth of Christ. Read more on the campaign story [here](#).

One of the key trends in social media and digital content over the last couple of years has been the use of audio. The "duet me" trend, where a creator records part of the song and gets the audience to sing the second part of the song, has become one of the most popular pieces of content across TikTok, YouTube shorts, Instagram and Facebook reels. High engagement with “duet me” meant that in November 2022, Instagram launched a feature that allows users to add music to still images and refined their features to allow users to add music to their content with ease.

With the above in mind, lets unwrap this year's campaign elements and resources.

Preview the song [here](#).

A key element of the campaign is the invitation to all choirs and singing groups to sing a new version of 'The First Nowell.' There are free resources available to support choirs of all ages and stages to learn and perform the carol. Perhaps your church can find some creative ways to showcase your choir or singing group this Christmas.

Christmas webinars:

Webinars are a great way to learn and we have three different webinars that you can attend:

- **Explore Join the Song resources to support your church:** This webinar will offer information and ideas on how you can use the national branding, reflections and resources to help you to invite people to your church – both online and onsite. [Learn more and register for this webinar on Tuesday 19 September.](#)
- **Learn how to use Join the Song with under-18s:** Find out how you can engage under-18s through singing our new setting of The First Nowell. Learn about the resources available for under-18s and get practical ideas for using them in schools, church or at home. [Sign up to](#)

[join our webinar on Wednesday 27 September.](#)

- **Christmas 2023's digital resources unwrapped:** Join the Digital Labs team for this interactive session to look at the resources available for this year's Christmas campaign. [Sign up to join the webinar on Wednesday 11 October.](#)

The digital resources available:

- [Daily Advent and Christmas reflections](#) inspired by the words of familiar carols
- [Join the Song campaign logo pack](#) in a number of formats for print and digital
- [Brand and design guidelines](#) including colour palettes and approved fonts
- Music (including score sheet and lyrics sheet), social media and Powerpoint graphics, posters and other free tools and resources from [A](#)



Resources still to come:

- Digital promo planner, blogs and bitesize videos from Digital Labs to support churches in using the digital resources available.
- Custom image and video generator, Reflections poster, Poster templates from [A Church Near You \(registration required\)](#).

Where to start?

Now that the majority of the resources are available, here is a question for you to ponder on: what would be best thing that could happen within your church this Christmas?

It could be that you're hoping to see an increase in the attendance of children and young people at your services and events. Or perhaps that more people in your local community will engage with your Christmas content this year. Whatever your goal is, make sure you are clear on what you'd like to achieve, and then ask yourself how the Join the Song resources can help you to meet this goal. How can you use digital platforms to help you get the word out?

Once you have a better idea of this, start listing your events across the appropriate digital platforms such as AChurchNearYou.com, your website, and social media platforms. For example, Facebook and Instagram allow you to list your different events. Please ensure to list your events at least 8 weeks in advance to help you better plan what content will need to go out and when.

Content inspiration examples:

- Behind the Scenes: diary type content is a great way to let your audience follow you on a journey. They get to see the process and preparation before they see the final outcome.

For example, you can film your choir or singing group from when they first listen to the carol preview, during rehearsal (be sure keep any bloopers as they can make great content) and any public performances they might have. This type of authentic content performs really well online because it's relatable and inviting.

- Duet content: as mentioned earlier, could you do your own version of this trend?

For example, film your choir or music group singing part of the song and leave the backing track running for 30 to 60 seconds longer, use the title "Duet me" or "Duet us": Christmas edition and get your online audience to join in and participate.

Extra tip: if you want to go the extra mile and make it more engaging, you could do a quiz, where you ask your audience to fill in the gaps of the lyrics and ask them to comment how many they got right.

So, there you have it, the 2023 Christmas resources unwrapped and ready for you to start using in your preparations for the season. We look forward to seeing all you create, so make sure you use #JoinTheSong on all your posts so that we can see them and celebrate you. Over the next coming weeks, we will be releasing more resources and support on how to use them.

- Ruvimbo Makumbe, Digital Labs Manager

- **Images and copyright: A guide to using images online legally**

19/04/2024



- **How to make the most of Instagram to reach your audience in 2024**

12/04/2024



- **Everything you need to know about the Church Organiser**

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