

Foreword

I am delighted to offer this wonderful book by Robyn as my Advent book for 2021. It comes with heartfelt gratitude to Robyn, and to Evelyn. But it also comes with a warning – do not start to read unless you are ready to be compelled to continue!

Almost before I had begun, I was hooked. In the very first reflection, these words of Evelyn are quoted: ‘You know that there are better melodies.’ There can be few better summings-up of the hunger our hearts have for beauty, for adventure, for resolution, for consolation, joy, unity, and for the heart-breaking and heart-mending power of heaven’s music.

This book has sharpened my hunger for God’s presence, and helped me to depend more on him for the satisfaction of that hunger; it has encouraged me to listen harder, and reminded me that God’s symphony is all around me. It has invited me to be still, and to wait in the stillness; it has helped me to re-examine the hardships of this past year, and to find Christ at work in unseen corners. It has set before me a feast of resources and gentle encouragement to enter into adoration and, tellingly, it has increased in me the desire for others to hear this eternal music for themselves.

I hope these reflections will help you to find in the welcoming, awaiting, recognising and embracing of God’s advent the stirrings of the perfect music of His love and His kingdom, present and arriving.

This Advent season, as we enter consciously into the waiting between God’s promise and its fulfilment once more, I pray that every joy we find in earthly music may be multiplied many times over in our spirits, as we make space and prepare our inward ears to hear the stirring of the heavenly melody. As we join the song of the angels this Christmas, may our lives, as well as our voices, be tuned to that

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melody, so that we not only hear it, but also carry it into the restless world to which God is still – and always – coming.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Stephen Cottrell
Archbishop of York

