

Note: for male or mixed choirs, F as reciting note works

Breathing and rhythm

Breath is drawn between the first phrase and the second phrase within each tone, creating an obvious pause between the first and second line of text within each couplet after the asterix (*). When text is broken up into a triplet rather than the usual couplet, there is no pause after the dagger (†), we might draw a quick breath, but don't have any long pause until the asterix.

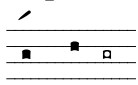
When singing antiphonally there is no pause between the last phrase sung by one half of the choir and the first sung by the other. The momentum swings immediately. This retains the sense that the contemplative pause is *within* each couplet or triplet phrase, but not between.

Slowly is not holy!

The reciting note is sung at a talking pace, which always feels fast for singing, and accelerating slightly at very long phrases. Choirs will find the dynamic of rhythm that works best, but we find that the easiest is to stick to the principle of sing as you would talk, with only the final syllable slightly extended and sung feathering out to nothing. Once again this will seem fast for singing, but this is the pace at which the intellect will take it in.


This means that *within* each couplet or triplet phrase, the syllable at the asterix (*) tails off quickly into a silent moment. However when singing antiphonally, *between* each couplet the final syllable of the tone tails off into the beginning next repetition of the tone sung by the other half of the choir. There is very little pause between the two.

Dealing with neums (grouped notes applied to a single syllable) and multiple notes at the end of phrases: 1. Generally: this is best shown by an example. If the final phrase of


the tone is  and there are one or more syllables after the emphasis, then as might

be expected, one simply applies the following notes to the following syllables. We will consider the example of three, two and one and syllables after the emphasized syllable:

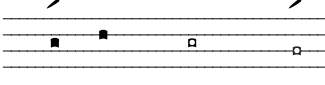
...wilderness.




....sérvant



...mischief in their héarts.

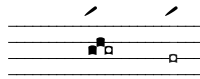


Lórd?



When there are no syllables to apply these extra notes to then all applied to the emphasized syllable which is sung as neum

...and cóme dón.



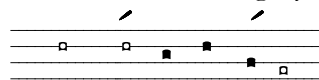
Special examples:

1. In **Mode VIII, second bar** here are some examples:

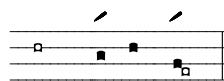
...defence of the Móst Hígh



.....shadow óf the Almíghty



....will I trúst



3. Mode III, first bar (more complex version) there are three notes between the ultimate and the penultimate emphasized syllables. If we followed the standard rule the in some situations we would have a four-note neume, a three-note or a two-note neume, or no neums at all depending upon how many syllables there are between the ultimate andthe penultimate emphasized syllables.

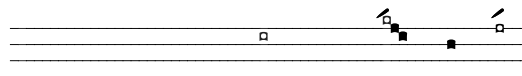
For example, **four-note** neume:

and béareth forth góod séed, *



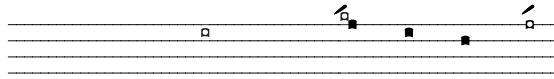
Three-note:

Glory be to the Fáther and to the Són*



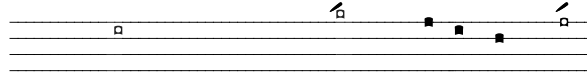
Two-note (on the word 'come'):

O let the wickedness of the ungodly cóme to an énd; *



No neum:

When I was in trouble, I called upon the Lórd, *



When I sing these, I feel that the no-neum and two-note neum versions work.

But the three-note and four-note do not (ie when there are less than two syllables between the ultimate and the penultimate emphasized syllables it does not work). So in these particular cases I place the penultimate emphasis in the tone on the antipenultimate in the text, that is I use the last three emphasized syllables in the text rather than two. So the examples above become:

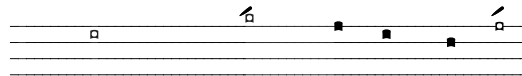
For example, **four-note** neum:

and béareth forth góod séed, *



Three-note:

Glory be to the Fát^her and tó the Són*



In each case I treat the middle emphasis in the text (the words 'good' and 'to' in the phrases above) as though they are not emphasized at all. Note how in the last example, there are now four syllables and only three note to apply to them, so I sing both syllables of the word 'Father' on the same note.

How to sing the neums - where to place the emphasis

This is a work in progress, and you should experiment with patterns of emphasis - to come up with what works well. You will very likely to do better than me. Having said that this is what I have found seems to work so far:

Second and in general, I attack the neum from the start, emphasizing the first note hardest, and moving quickly through to the final note. It is almost as though in a single syllable, a two note neum is split into two half notes...almost!

