Why Does God Want Us to Sing?

Pepper Road Song Worship Series | Sept 15–17, 2023

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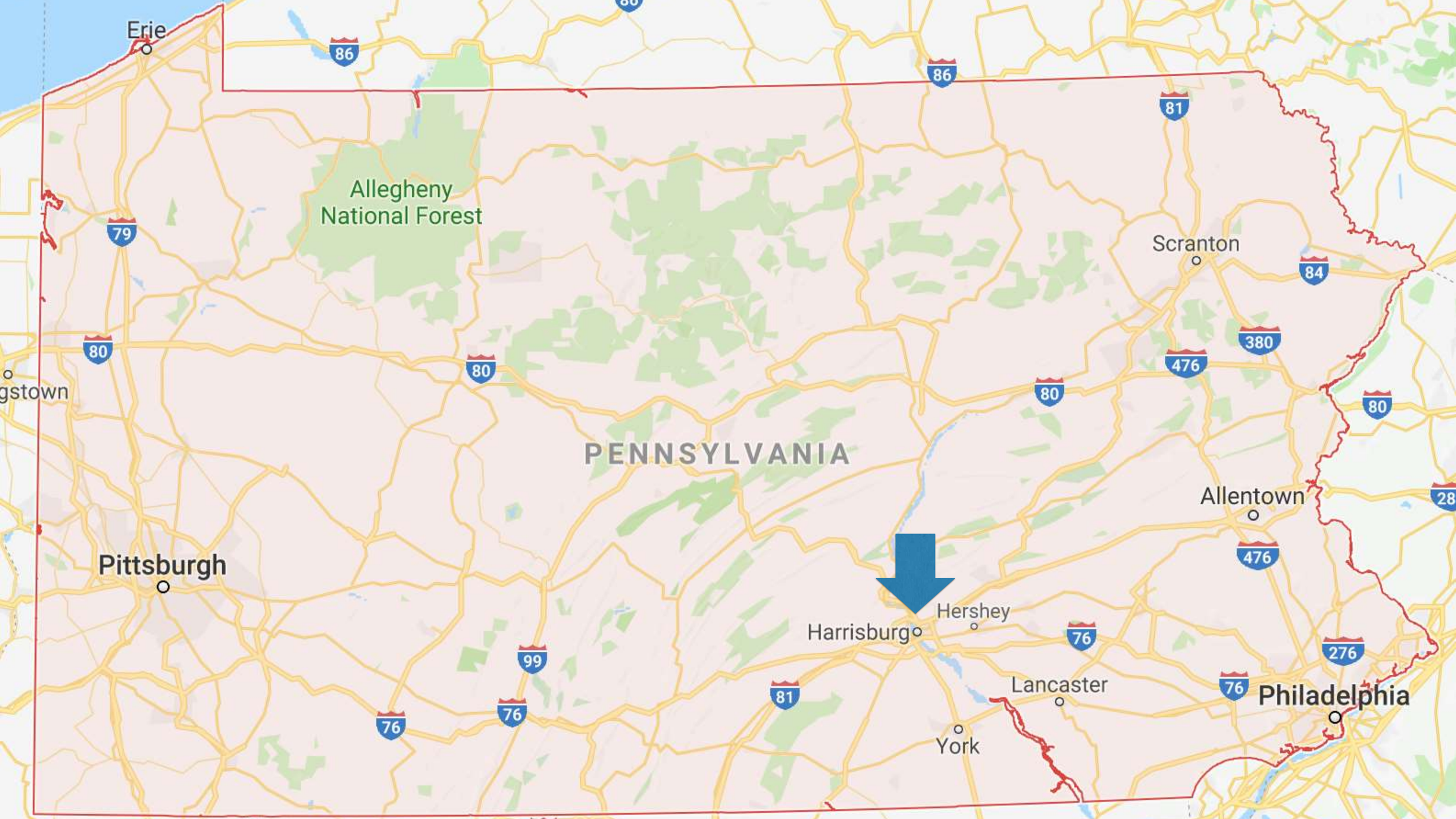
Erie
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86
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Allegheny
National Forest
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Scranton
84
80
380
476
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80
80
PENNSYLVANIA
Allentown
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Pittsburgh
Hershey
Harrisburg
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Lancaster
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Philadelphia
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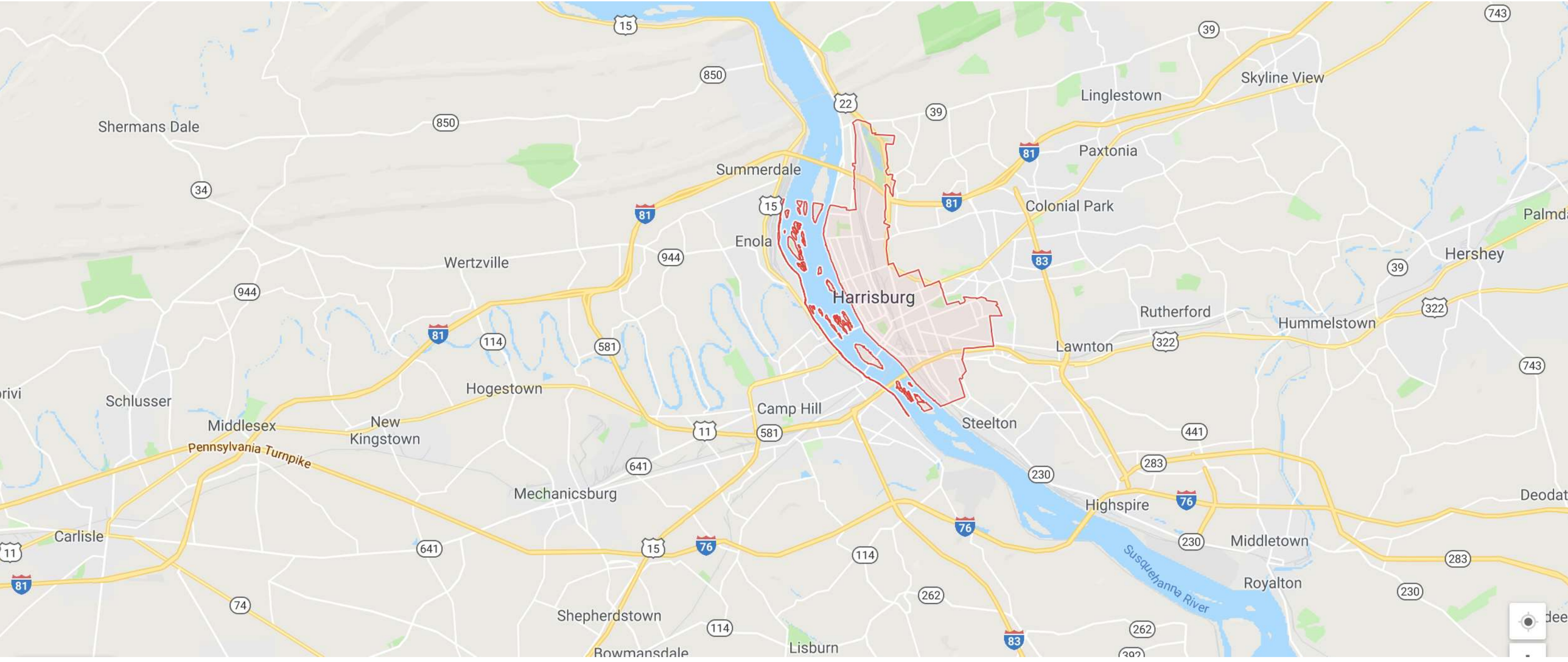
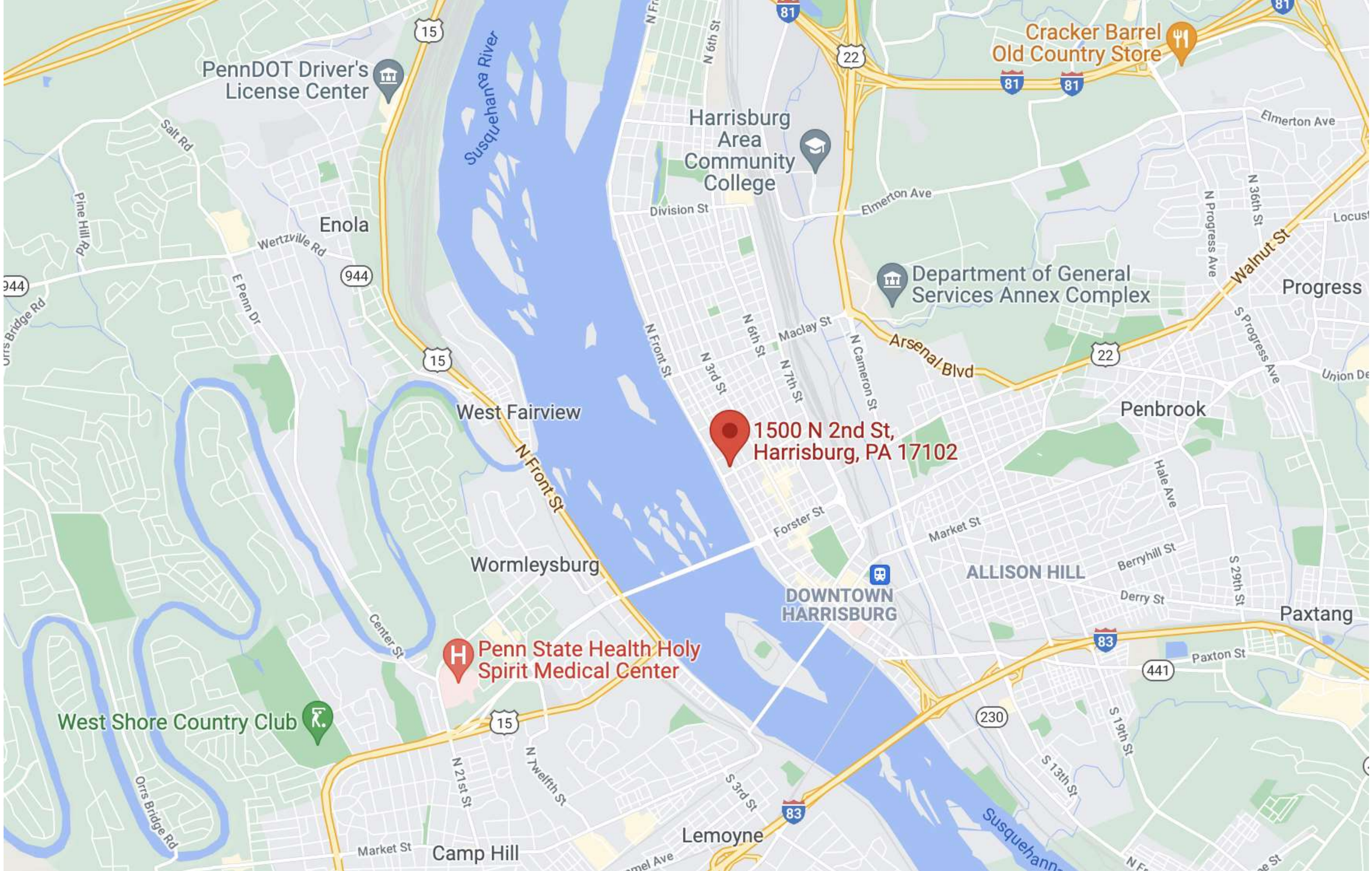
76
York



Shermans Dale
Summerdale
Enola
Wertzville
Harrisburg
Linglestown
Skyline View
Paxtonia
Colonial Park
Hershey
Rutherford
Hummelstown
Lawnton
Hogestown
Schlusser
Middlesex
New Kingstown
Camp Hill
Steelton
Pennsylvania Turnpike
Mechanicsburg
Highspire
Middletown
Royalton
Susquehanna River
Carlisle
Shepherdstown
Bowmansdale
Lisburn



PennDOT Driver's License Center
Susquehanna River
Harrisburg Area Community College
Cracker Barrel Old Country Store
Enola
Department of General Services Annex Complex
Progress
West Fairview
1500 N 2nd St, Harrisburg, PA 17102
Penbrook
Wormleysburg
DOWNTOWN HARRISBURG
ALLISON HILL
Paxtang
Penn State Health Holy Spirit Medical Center
West Shore Country Club
Lemoyne
Camp Hill
Susquehanna
Elmerton Ave
Division St
Maclay St
Arsenal Blvd
Walnut St
N Front St
Forster St
Market St
Berryhill St
Derry St
Paxton St
Center St
Salt Rd
Wertzville Rd
E Penn Dr
Pine Hill Rd
Orrs Bridge Rd
N 6th St
N 3rd St
N 7th St
N Cameron St
N Progress Ave
N 36th St
S Progress Ave
Hale Ave
S 29th St
S 19th St
S 13th St
S 3rd St
N 21st St
N Twelfth St
15
81
22
944
83
441
230

SAFE'n'SOUND

BE
THE
GOOD
FOUND

Why Does God Want Us to Sing?

Pepper Road Song Worship Series | Sept 15–17, 2023

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Why Does God Want Us to Sing?

- **Job 38:7** - To join with creation in our purpose: glorifying God

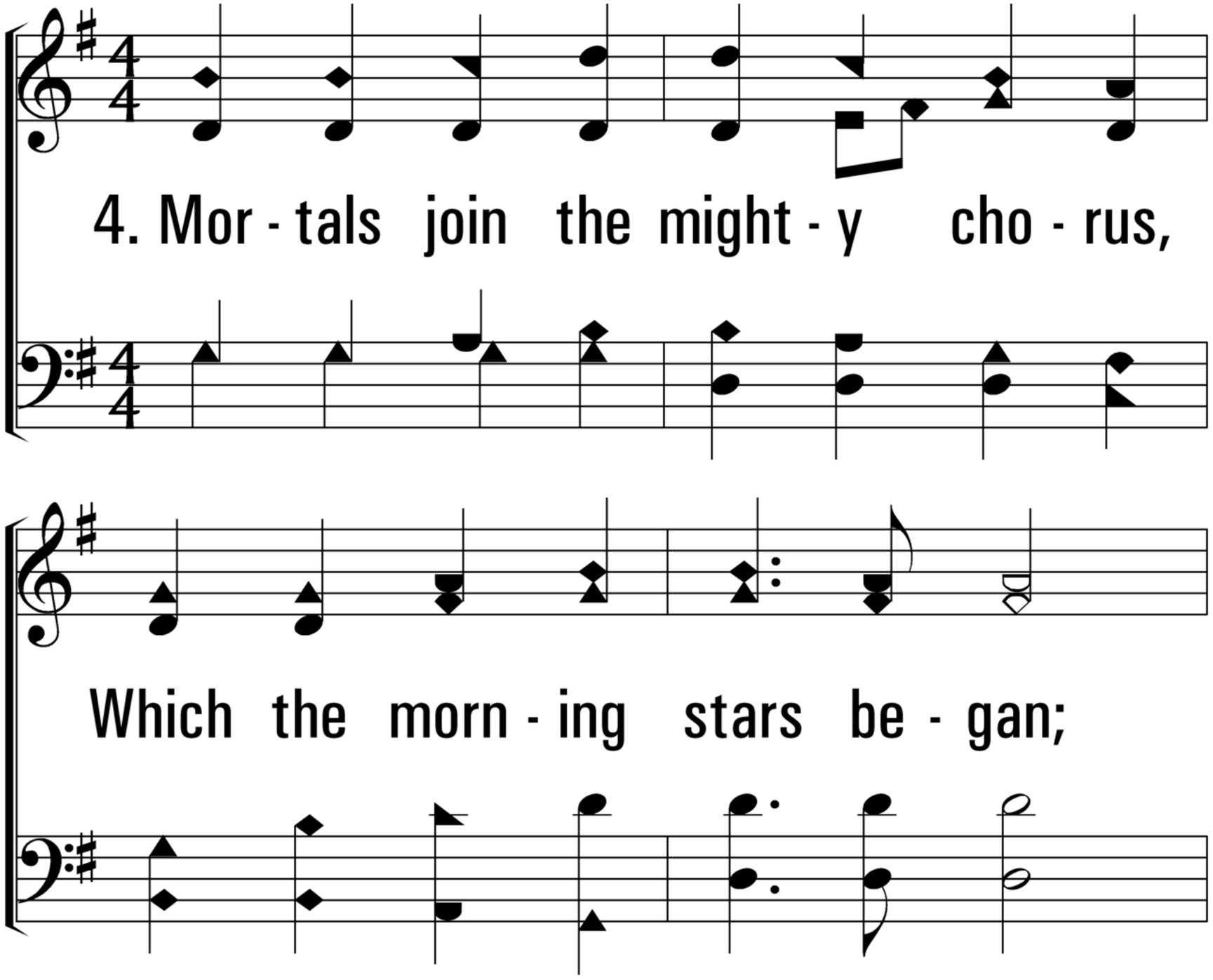
Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs #142

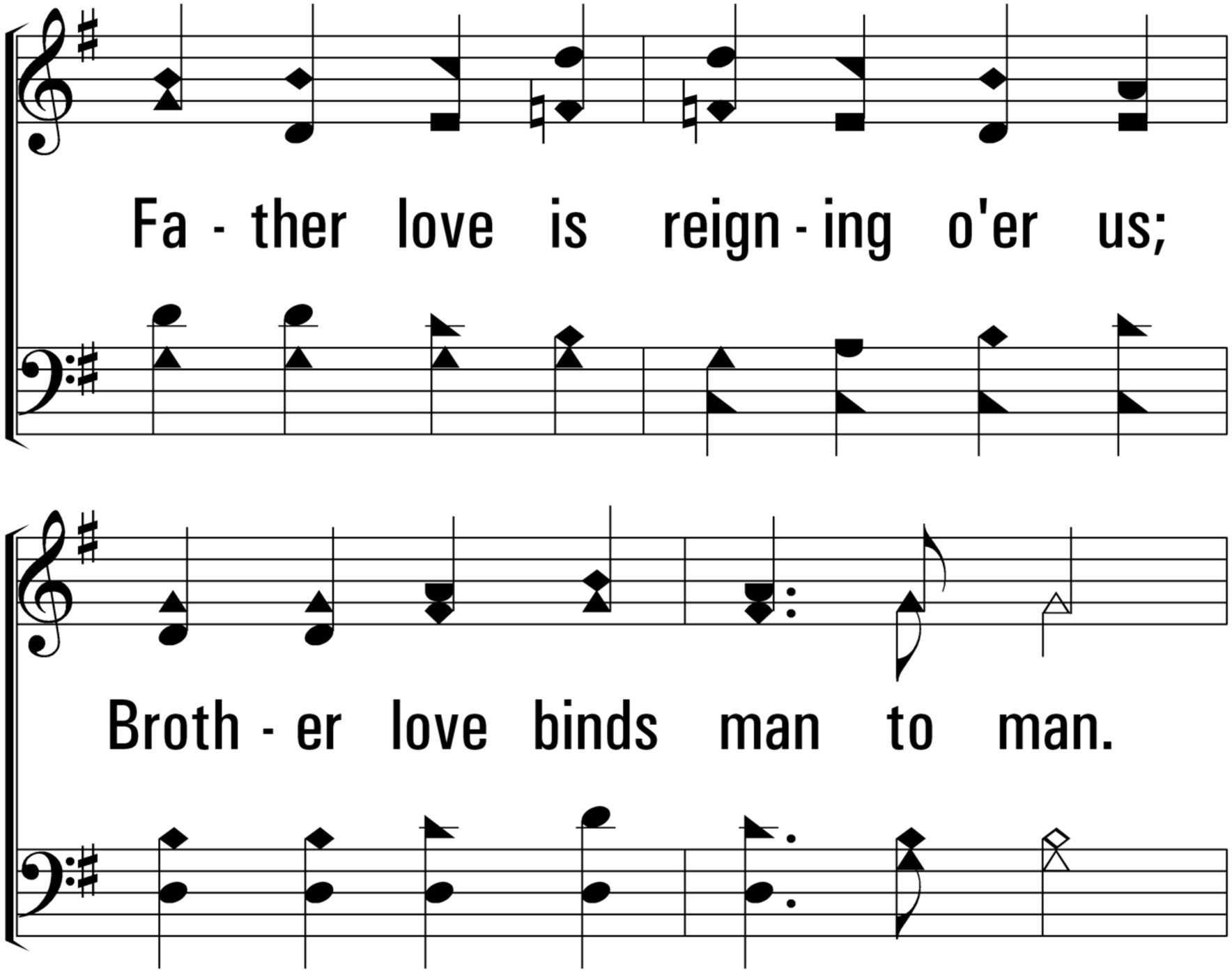
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

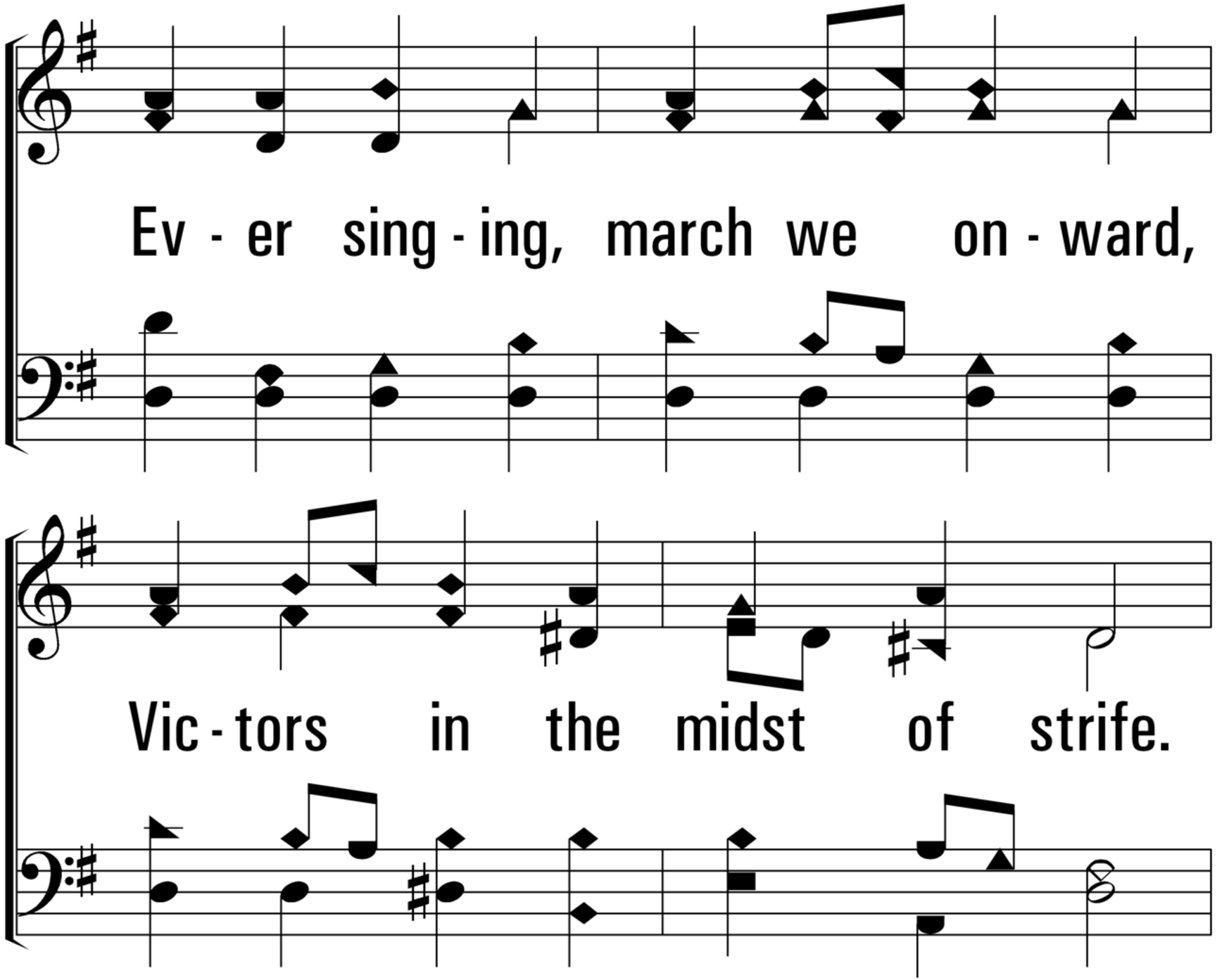
Author: Van Dyke, Henry / Composer: van Beethoven, Ludwig

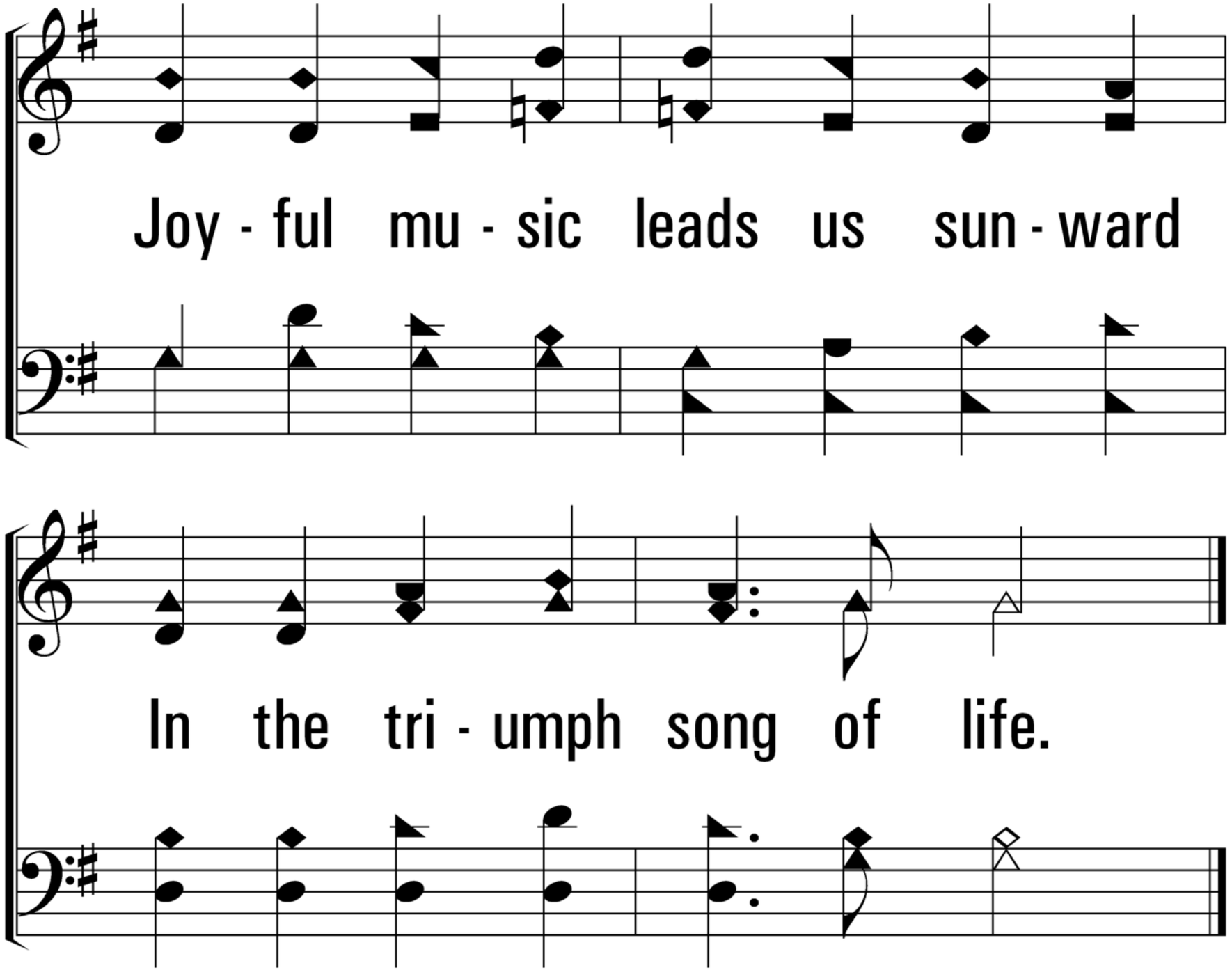
G Major
Starting Note: B
Time Signature: 4/4
Meter: 8.7.8.7.D

Public Domain


4. Mor - tals join the might - y cho - rus,
Which the morn - ing stars be - gan;


Fa - ther love is reign - ing o'er us;
Broth - er love binds man to man.


Ev - er sing - ing, march we on - ward,
Vic - tors in the midst of strife.



END

Why Does God Want Us to Sing?

- **Job 38:7** - To join with creation in our purpose: glorifying God
- **Deut 31:19, Psalm 110** - To internalize vital truth & carry it with us
- **Eph 5:18-19** - To be *filled*—not with wine, but with His Spirit
- **Psalm 73** - To remember who God is
  - At the highest heights and lowest depths

Psalms, Hymns, & Spiritual Songs #29

The Rock of My Heart

Author: Bassford, M. W. / Composer: Schales, Glenda B.

F Major
Starting Note: A
Time Signature: 3/4
Meter: 9.8.10.8. with chorus (Irr.)

© 2000 Lynn and Janet Wall

Psalm 73 ESV

Truly God is good to Israel,
to those who are pure in heart.
But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled,
my steps had nearly slipped.
For I was envious of the arrogant
when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

Psalm 73 ESV

For they have no pangs until death;
their bodies are fat and sleek.
They are not in trouble as others are;
they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.
Therefore pride is their necklace;
violence covers them as a garment.
Their eyes swell out through fatness;
their hearts overflow with follies.

Psalm 73 ESV

They scoff and speak with malice;
    loftily they threaten oppression.
They set their mouths against the heavens,
    and their tongue struts through the earth.
Therefore his people turn back to them,
    and find no fault in them.
And they say, "How can God know?
    Is there knowledge in the Most High?"

Psalm 73 ESV

Behold, these are the wicked;
always at ease, they increase in riches.
All in vain have I kept my heart clean
and washed my hands in innocence.
For all the day long I have been stricken
and rebuked every morning.
If I had said, "I will speak thus,"
I would have betrayed the generation of your children.

Psalm 73 ESV

But when I thought how to understand this,
it seemed to me a wearisome task,
until I went into the sanctuary of God;
then I discerned their end.

Psalm 73 ESV

Truly you set them in slippery places;
you make them fall to ruin.
How they are destroyed in a moment,
swept away utterly by terrors!
Like a dream when one awakes,
O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise
them as phantoms.

Psalm 73 ESV

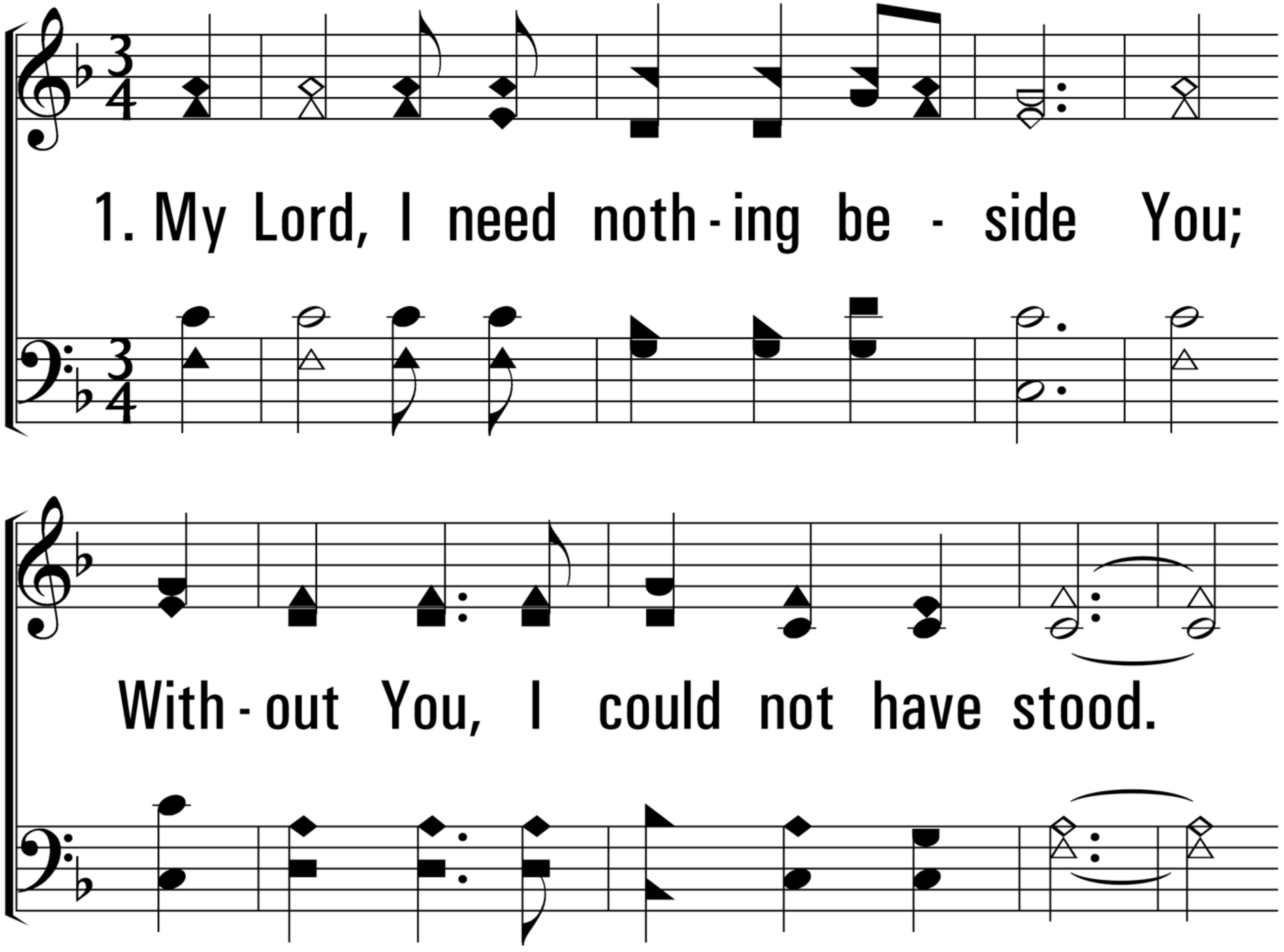
When my soul was embittered,
when I was pricked in heart,
I was brutish and ignorant;
I was like a beast toward you.
Nevertheless, I am continually with you;
you hold my right hand.
You guide me with your counsel,
and afterward you will receive me to glory.

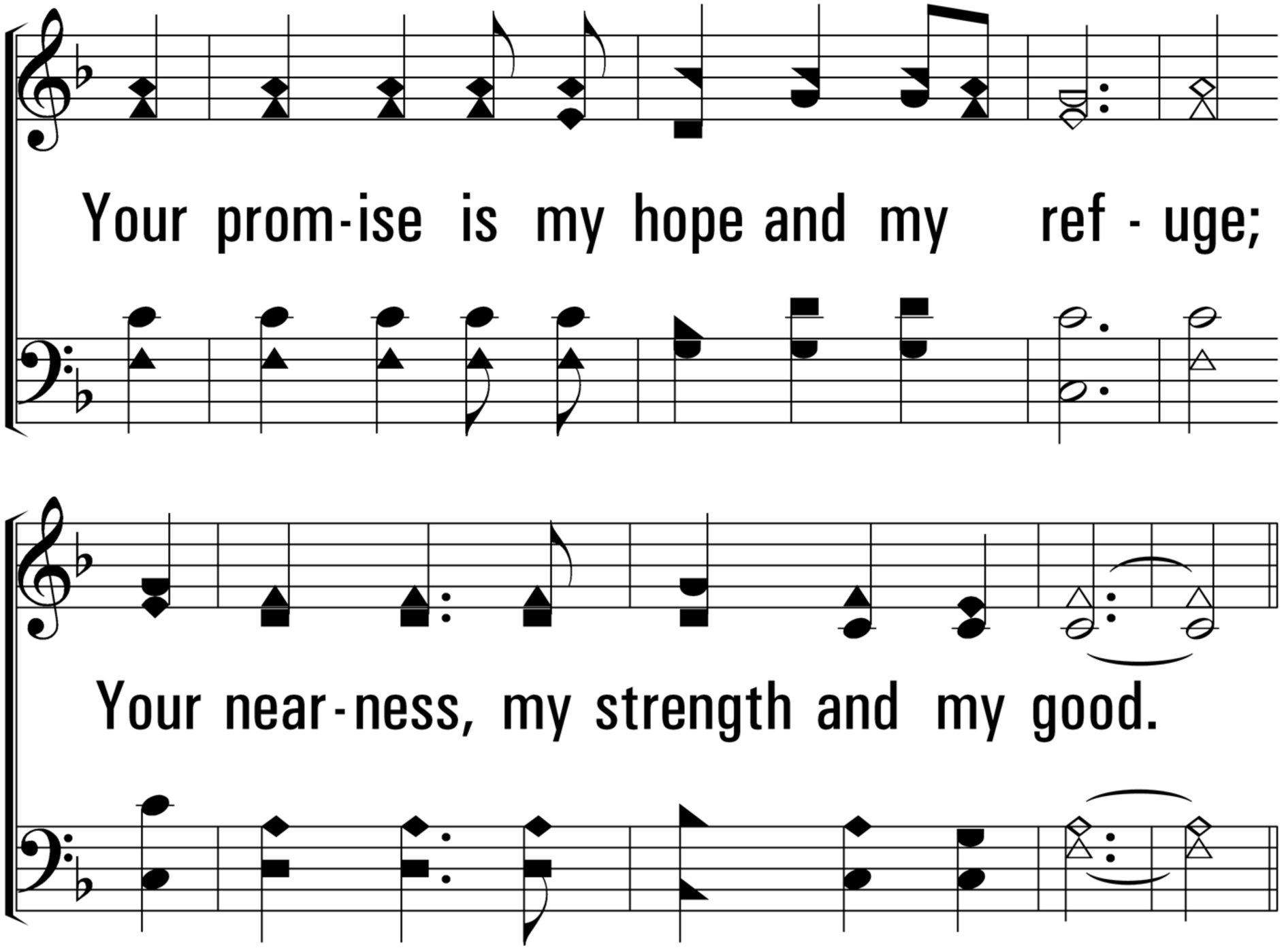
Psalm 73 ESV

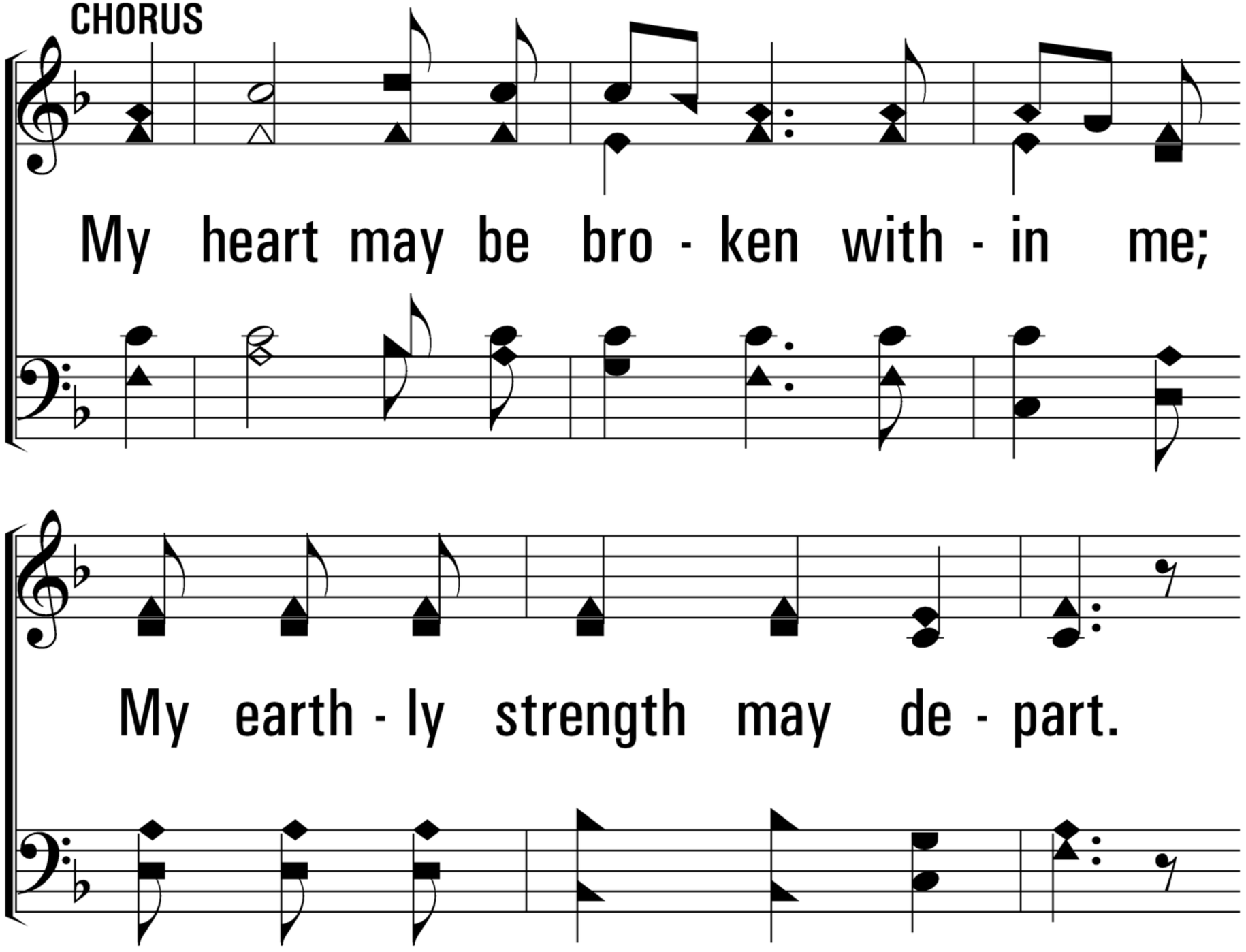
Whom have I in heaven but you?
And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you.
My flesh and my heart may fail,
but God is the strength [rock] of my heart and my portion forever.

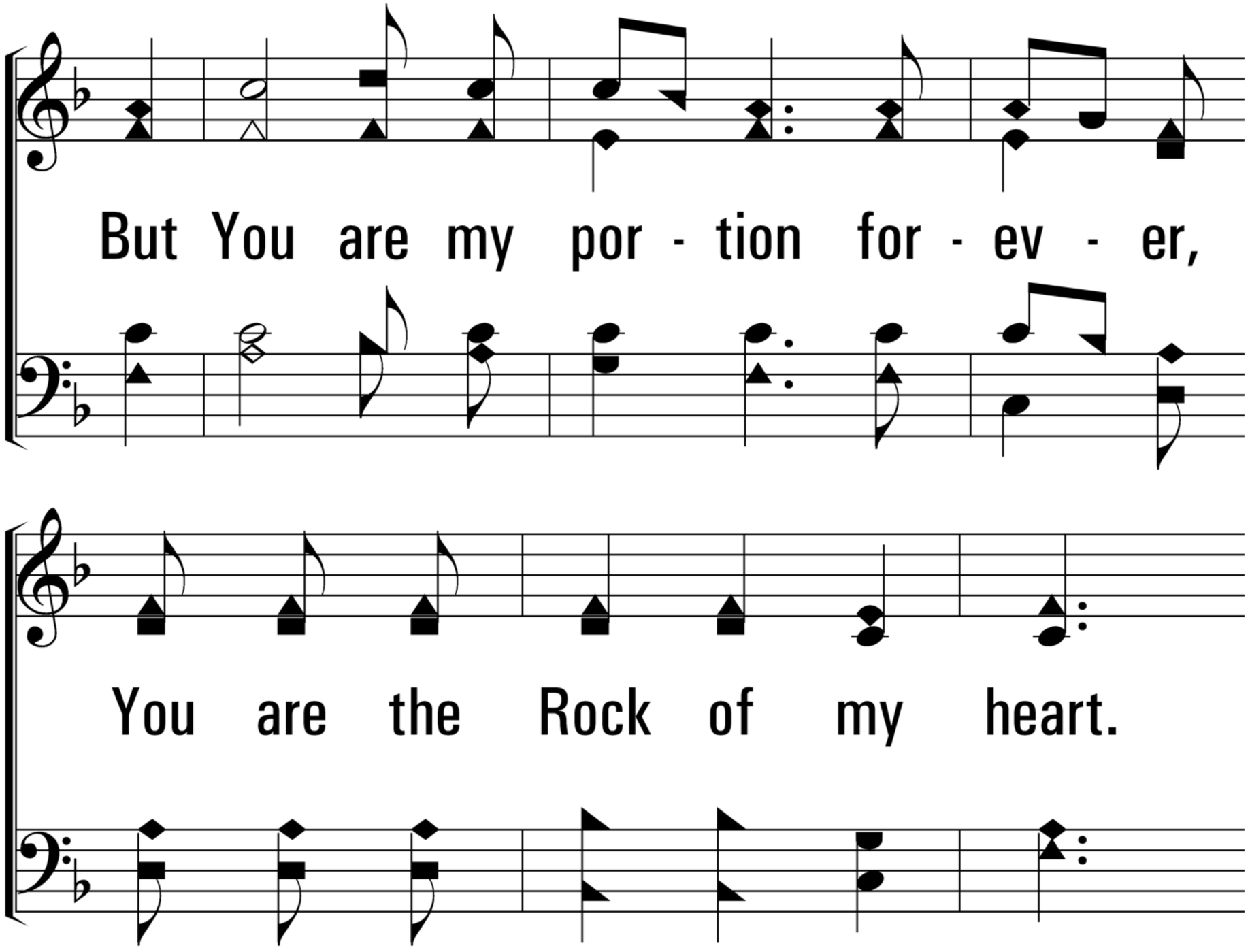
Psalm 73 ESV

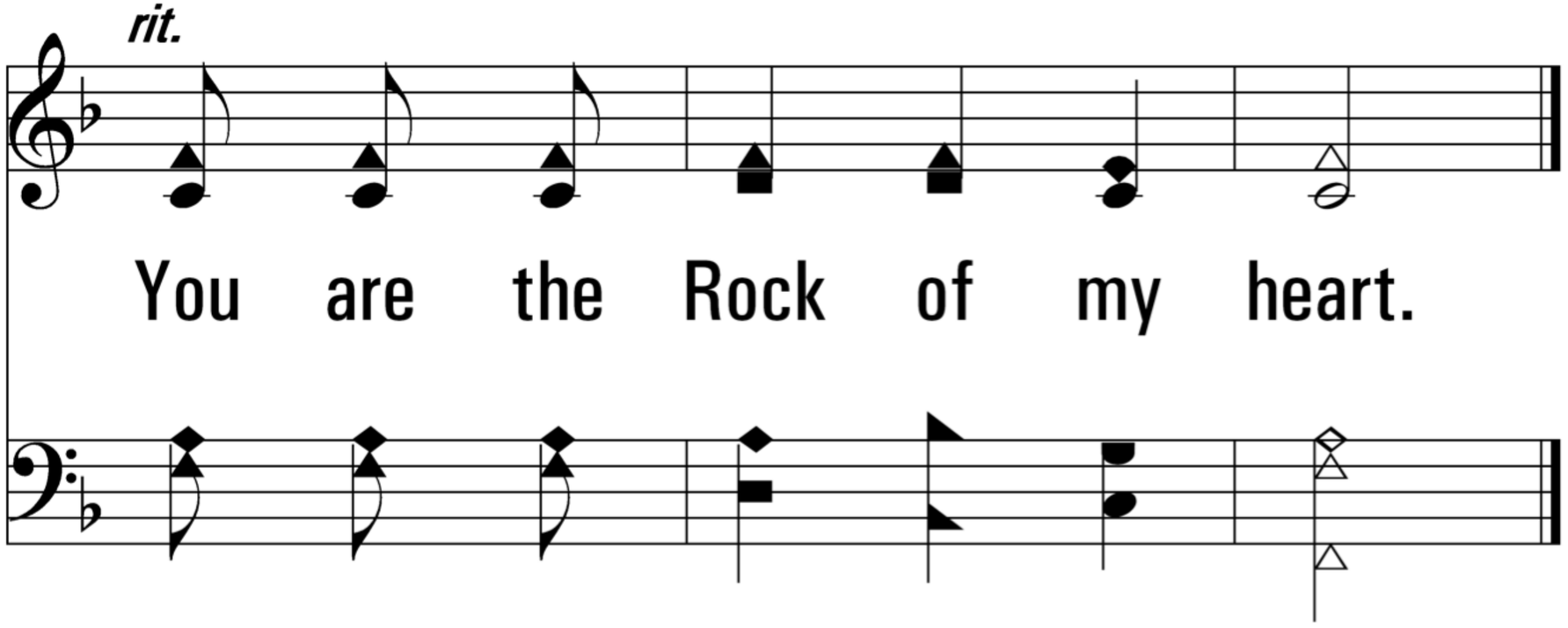
For behold, those who are far from you shall perish;
you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you.
But for me it is good to be near God;
I have made the Lord GOD my refuge,
that I may tell of all your works.


1. My Lord, I need noth - ing be - side You;
With - out You, I could not have stood.


Your prom-ise is my hope and my ref - uge;
Your near-ness, my strength and my good.


CHORUS
My heart may be bro - ken with - in me;
My earth - ly strength may de - part.


But You are my por - tion for - ev - er,
You are the Rock of my heart.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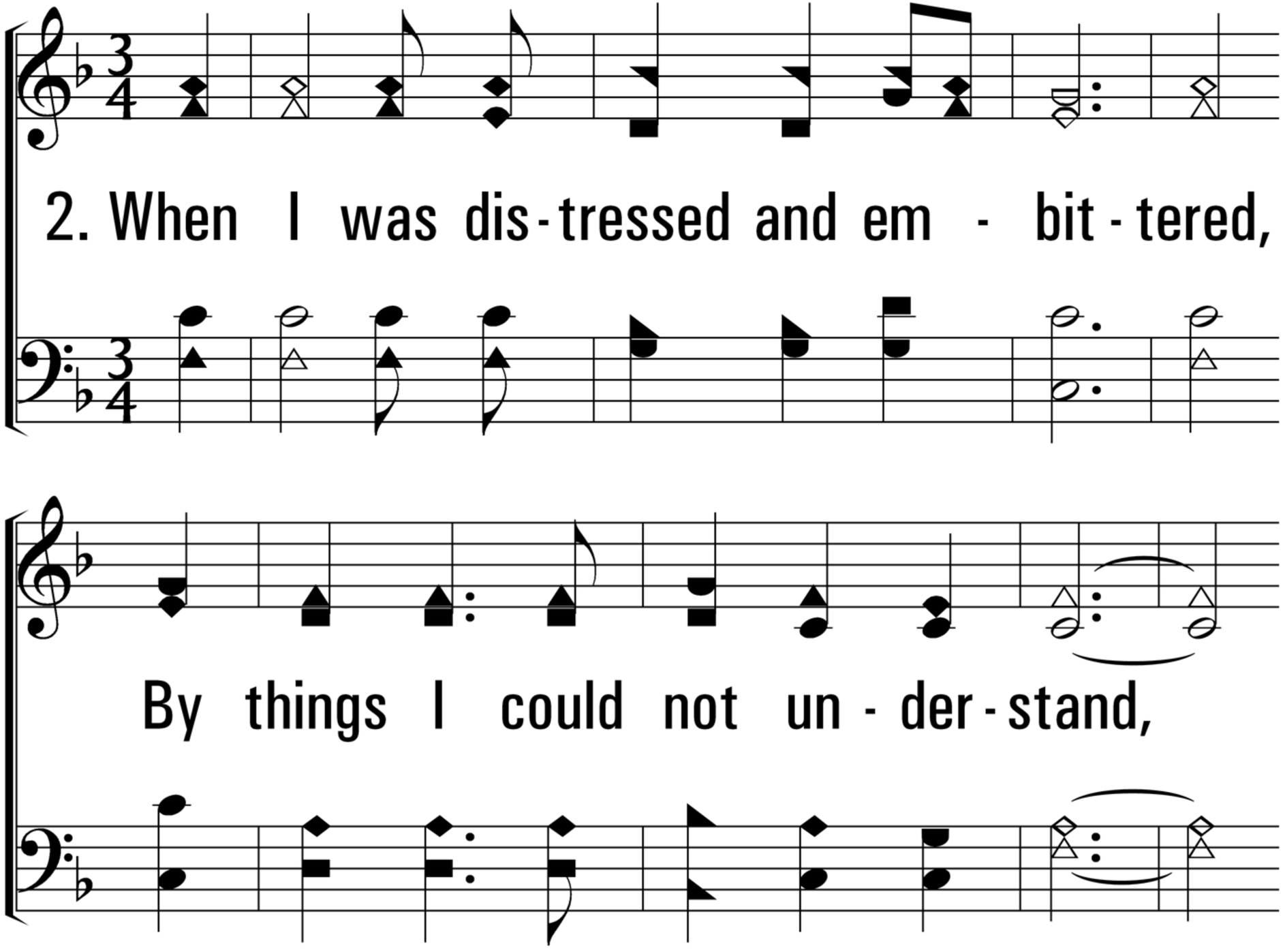
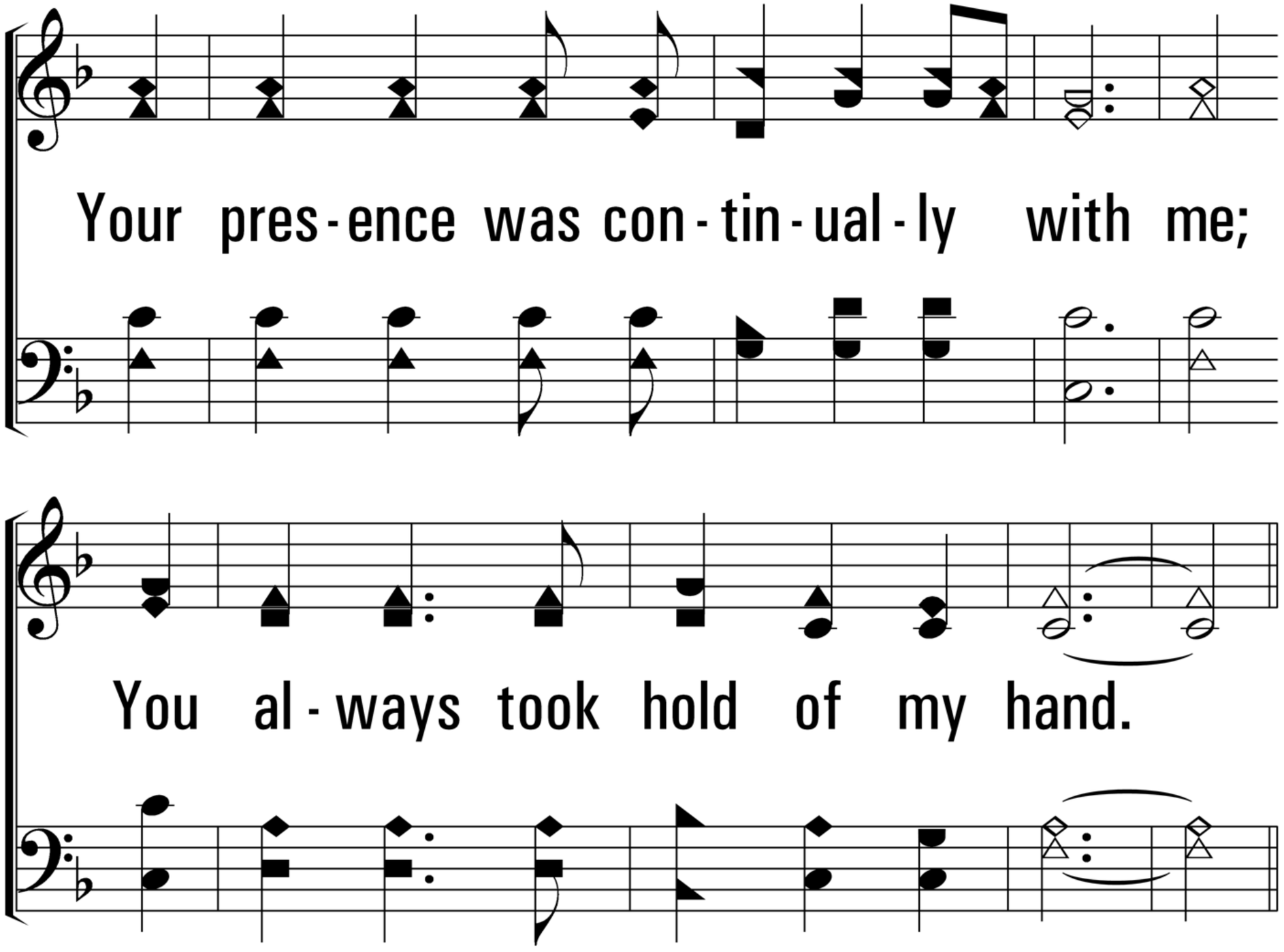
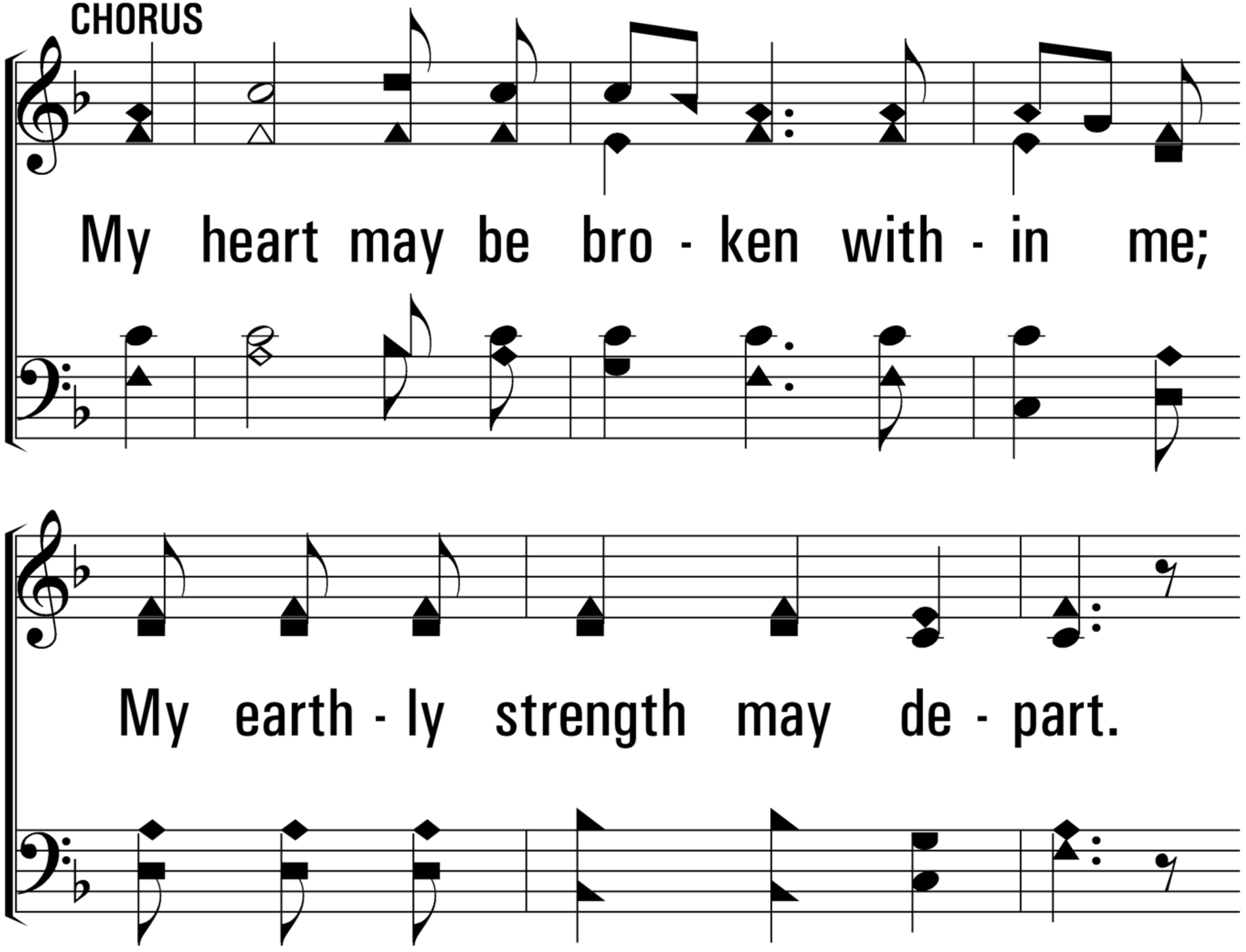
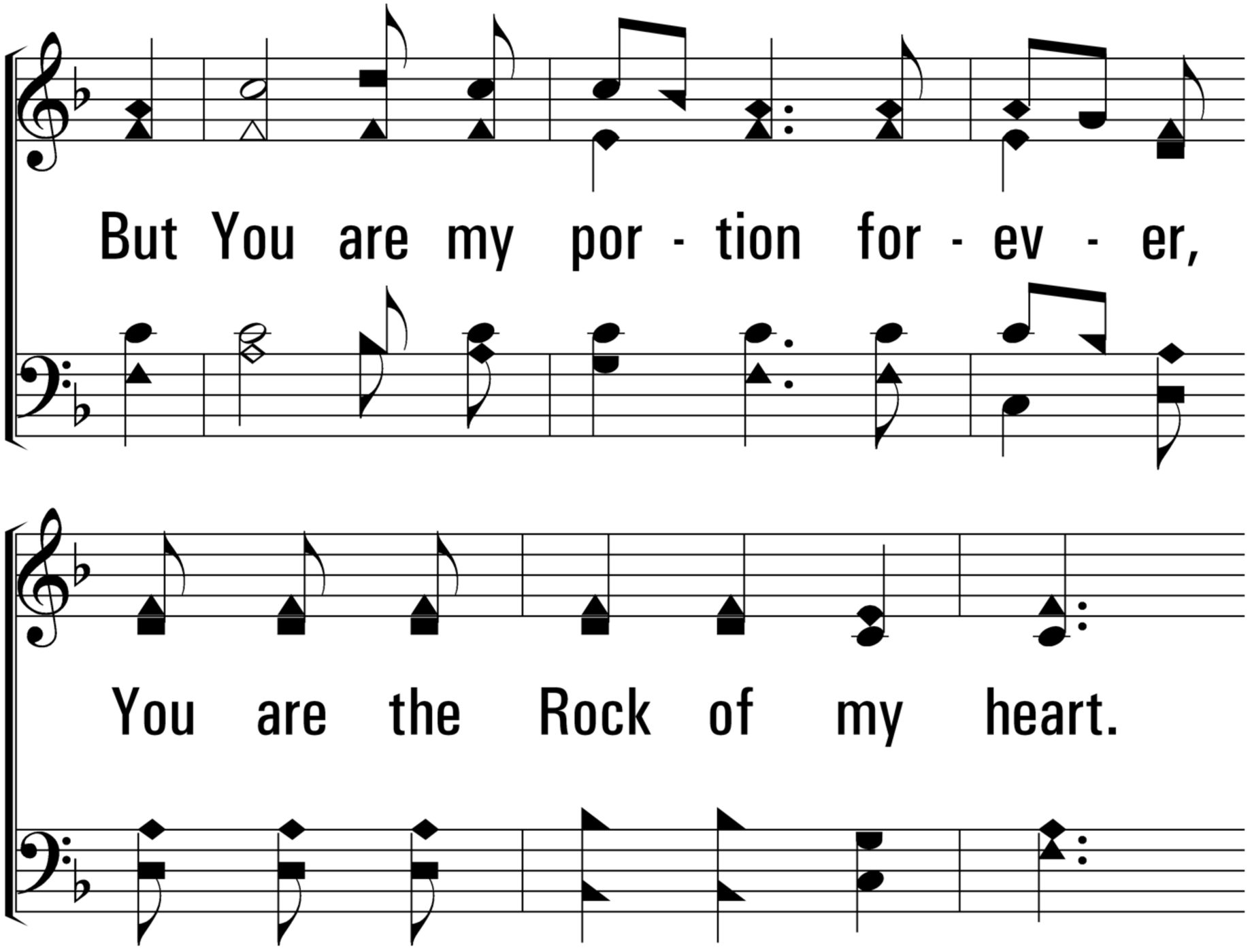

2. When I was dis - tressed and em - bit - tered,
By things I could not un - der - stand,


Your pres-ence was con-tin-ual-ly with me;
You al-ways took hold of my hand.


CHORUS
My heart may be bro - ken with - in me;
My earth - ly strength may de - part.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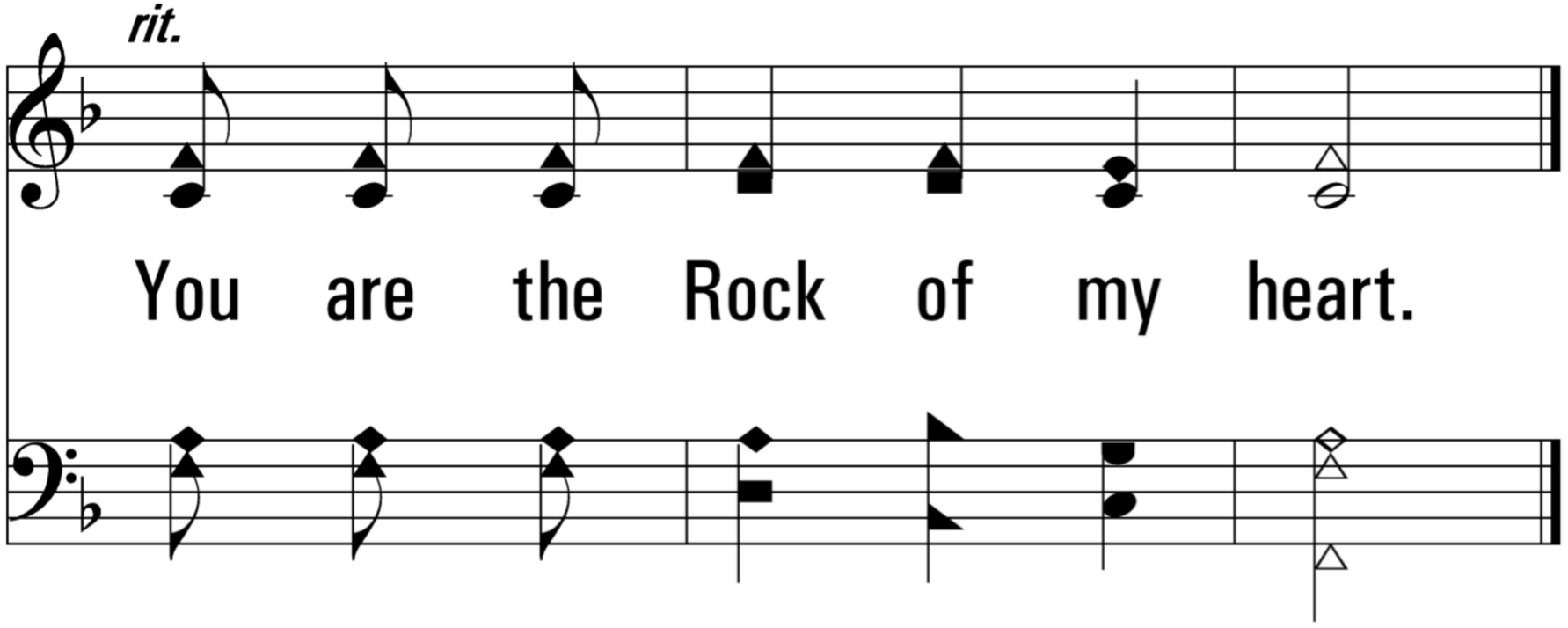
You are the Rock of my heart.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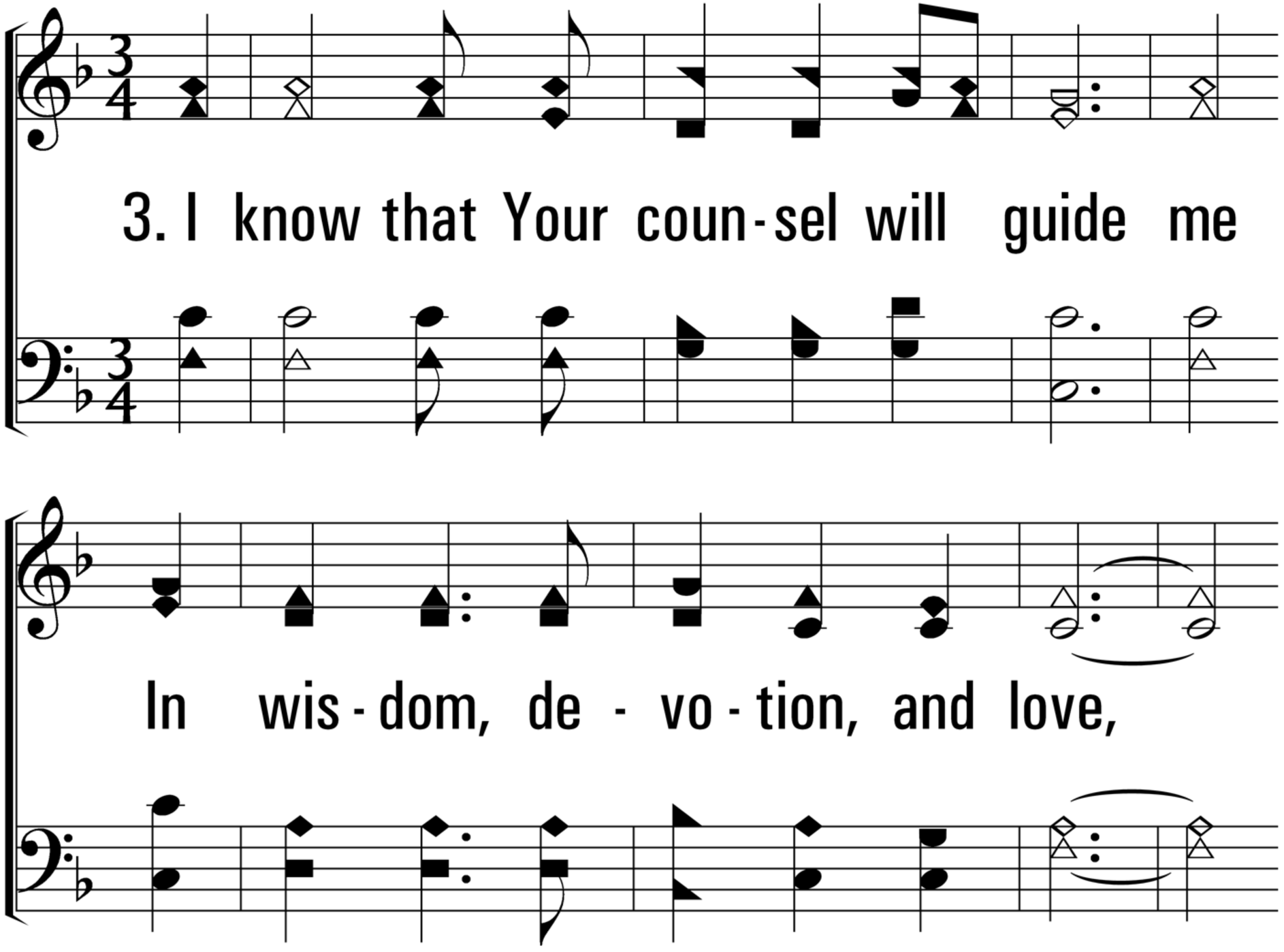
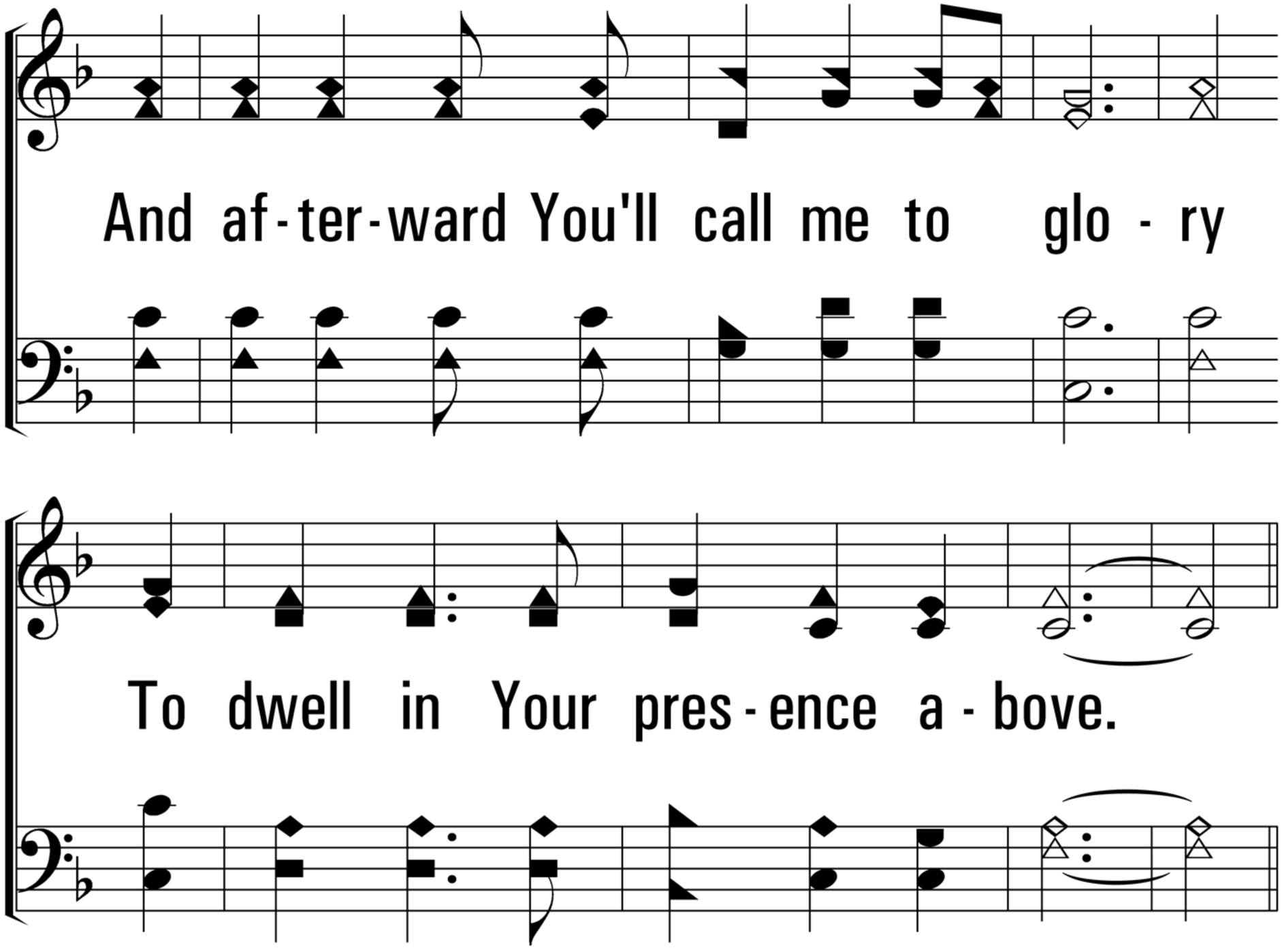
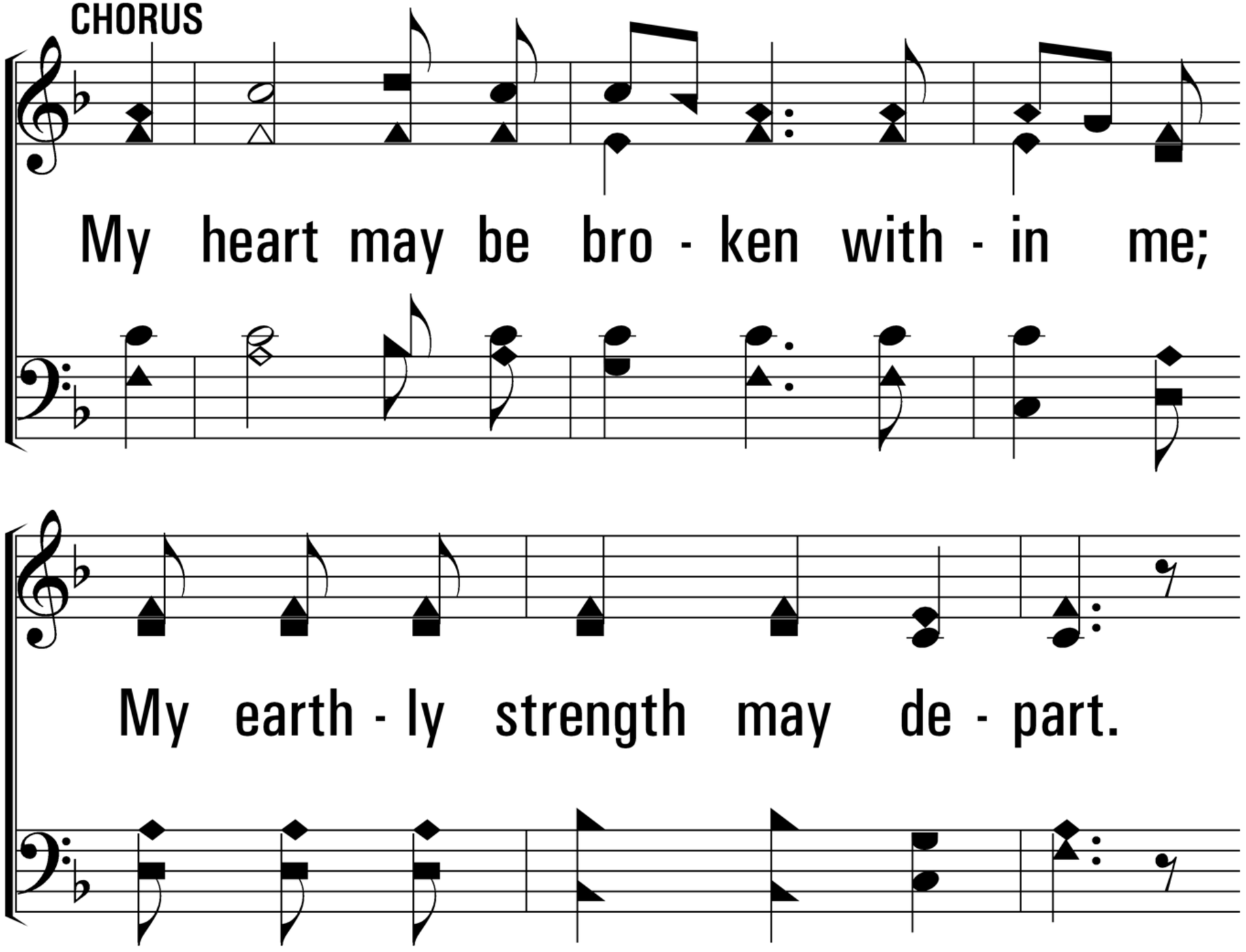
You are the Rock of my heart.


3. I know that Your coun-sel will guide me
In wis-dom, de - vo-tion, and love,


And af-ter-ward You'll call me to glo - ry
To dwell in Your pres-ence a-bove.


CHORUS
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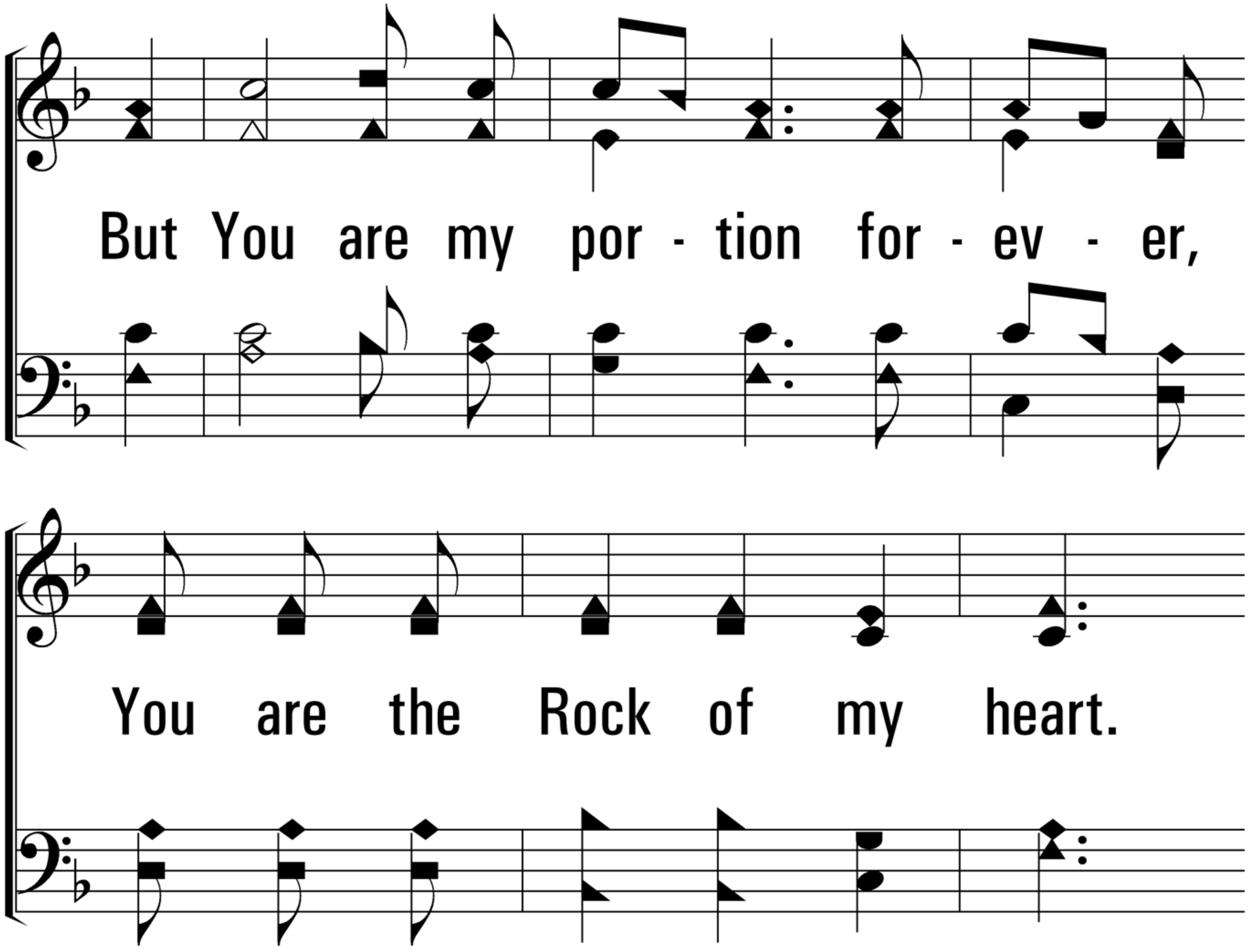
My earth - ly strength may de - part.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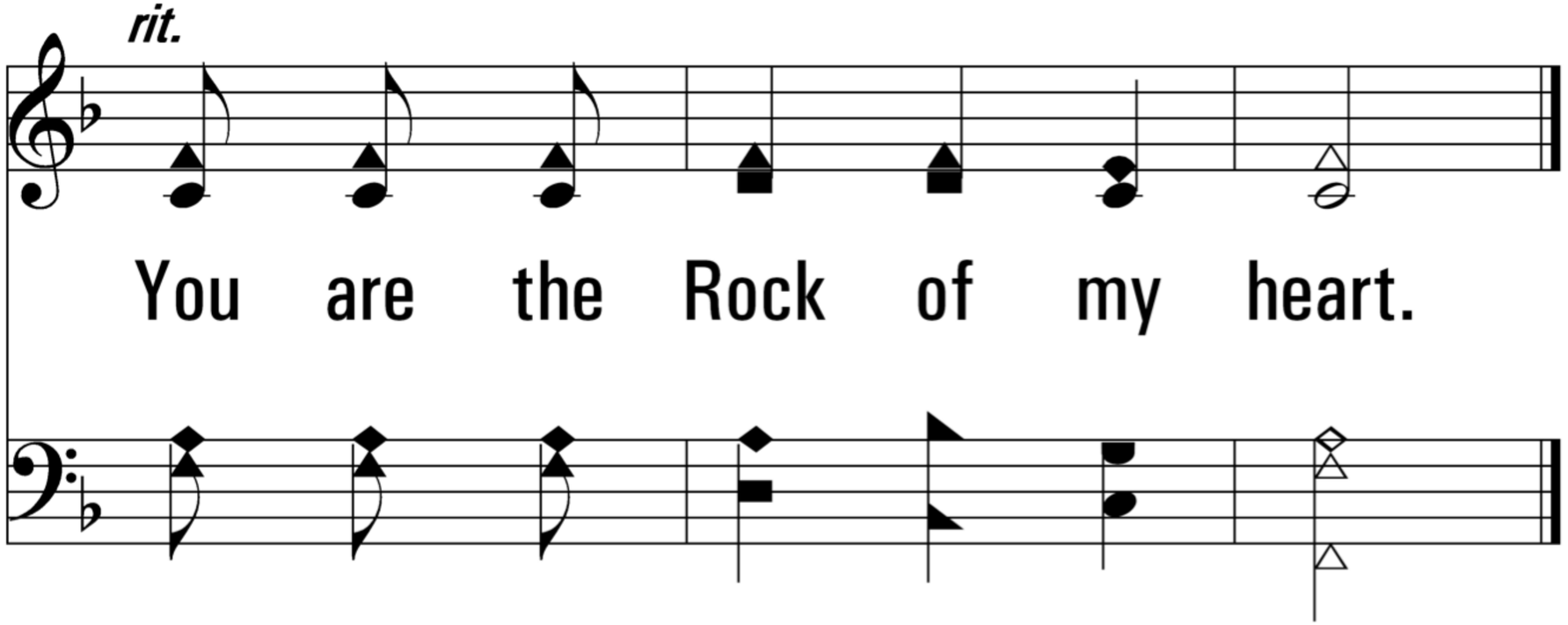

END

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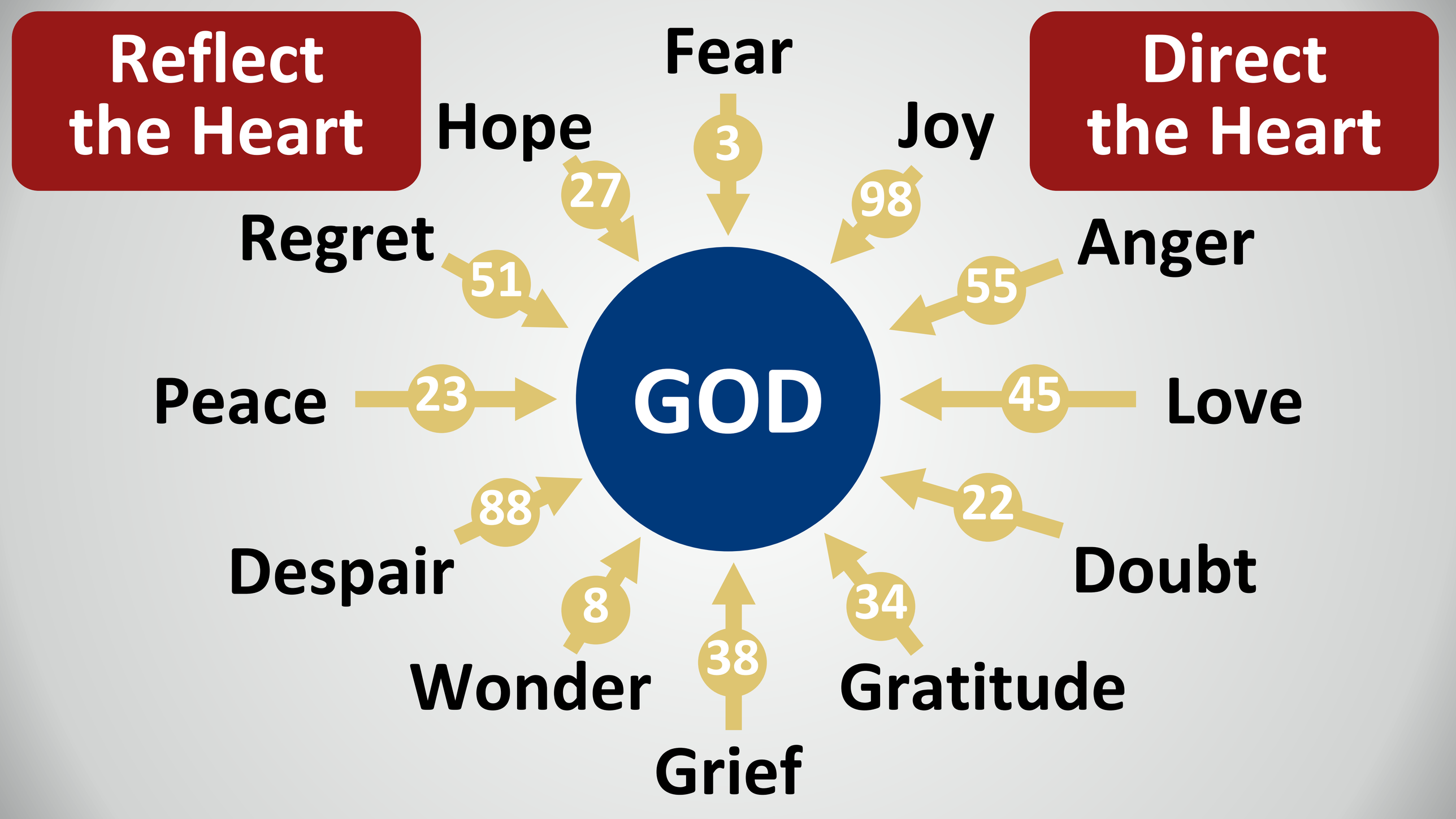
- **Job 38:7** - To join with creation in our purpose: glorifying God
- **Deut 32:19, Psalm 110** - To internalize vital truth & carry it with us
- **Eph 5:18-19** - To be *filled*—not with wine, but with His Spirit
- **Psalm 73** - To remember who God is
  - At the highest heights and lowest depths
  - To process the range of human experience: praise & lament


Reflect the Heart
Direct the Heart
Fear
3
Hope
27
Joy
98
Regret
51
Anger
55
Peace
23
GOD
45
Love
88
22
Despair
Doubt
8
34
38
Wonder
Gratitude
Grief

The Importance of Lament

- Lament psalms outnumber praise psalms
- A holy way to process grief alongside joy

- Jesus wept & Jesus weeps with us
- We learn to relate to & better comfort others

The Importance of Lament

The Problem with Happy-Face Christianity

by Matt Bassford

The other day, a friend of mine unburdened himself on Facebook about his struggles with depression. He talked about his confusion and fear and self-hatred. I came away from his post feeling deeply saddened and troubled, not only because of his plight, but because of my conviction that as a brotherhood, we have failed him and those like him.

I agree with Steve Wolfgang that the greatest failure of the Lord's church in the past 50 years has been the failure to raise up men who will be spiritual leaders. Right behind that one, though, is surely our failure to meet the needs of and give a voice to Christians who wrestle with depression, grief, and suffering.

The Importance of Lament

Indeed, there exists in our teaching and especially in our singing the presumption that Christians ought to be happy people. I think this is driven by salesmanship. We want the lost to come to Christ, so we feel the need to make Christianity as attractive as possible by pretending that everything is A-OK with us. "Look how wonderful my life is!!! Don't you want to have a life as wonderful as mine???"

This is problematic for several reasons. First, it's fundamentally dishonest. You can be a faithful Christian and still, for reasons beyond your control, have a miserable life. To argue otherwise is quite literally to adopt the position of Job's friends.

The Importance of Lament

Nonetheless, Christians who are suffering intensely often are expected to paste a smile on and act like nothing's wrong. I've seen a sister who had lost her child six weeks beforehand get rebuked on Facebook for dwelling on her grief. If we believe that Christians ought to be happy all the time, then Christians who are obviously unhappy introduce cognitive dissonance that we're not prepared to handle. Clearly, even though they have every reason to be unhappy, they must be doing something wrong! Lack of faith, probably.

Second, it's not faithful to the witness of Scripture. One would never guess it from much of our teaching and preaching, but the Bible reflects more deeply on human suffering than any other book ever written. Many of the great heroes of faith were men and women of intense suffering.

The Importance of Lament

Job was one such, obviously, but there are many more. David wrote that he felt like God was drowning him. Elijah pleaded with God to kill him. Paul despaired even of life. Even Christ Himself was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

We need to talk about these things because they are written for us to talk about. The book of Job (the whole thing, not just the first two and final chapters) exists for a reason. Half the psalms in Psalms exist for a reason. 1 Peter exists for a reason. All those stories about the suffering of the godly exist for a reason. I don't think it's so we can ignore them and talk about upbeat passages that we're comfortable with ("Do not be anxious!") instead.

The Importance of Lament

Finally, it's not helpful. Here, I want to focus particularly upon our singing. In contrast to the Psalms, which offer the mourning consolation and sometimes simply self-expression (see Psalm 89, which contains nothing resembling a resolution), our hymn repertoire is overwhelmingly, relentlessly, bouncy and cheerful. The help we offer to suffering brethren frequently sounds like "Sing and Be Happy", which admittedly is fun to sing but seems to have learned compassion from Dolores Umbridge.

The Importance of Lament

We can do better than this. Indeed, we must. We can be open about our own griefs and understanding toward Christians who can't get over theirs. We can be honest with the word and grapple with the hard questions about suffering that it presents. We can weep with those who weep in our singing as fully as we rejoice with those who rejoice.

Will all this sadness and suffering deter seekers? I think the opposite is true. When we act like we don't have any problems, we aren't being genuine, and insincerity is always repellent. If, on the other hand, we are willing to be vulnerable and honest, if we offer consolation and meaning to those who mourn, it's more than likely that mourners will start showing up.

The Importance of Lament

- Lament psalms outnumber praise psalms
- A holy way to process grief alongside joy

- Jesus wept & Jesus weeps with us
- We learn to relate to & better comfort others

Why Does God Want Us to Sing?

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- **Psalm 73** - To remember who God is
  - At the highest heights and lowest depths
  - To process the range of human experience: praise & lament
- **Ex 15:1-18** - To remember who we are as God's people
  - Where we've come from, where we're going

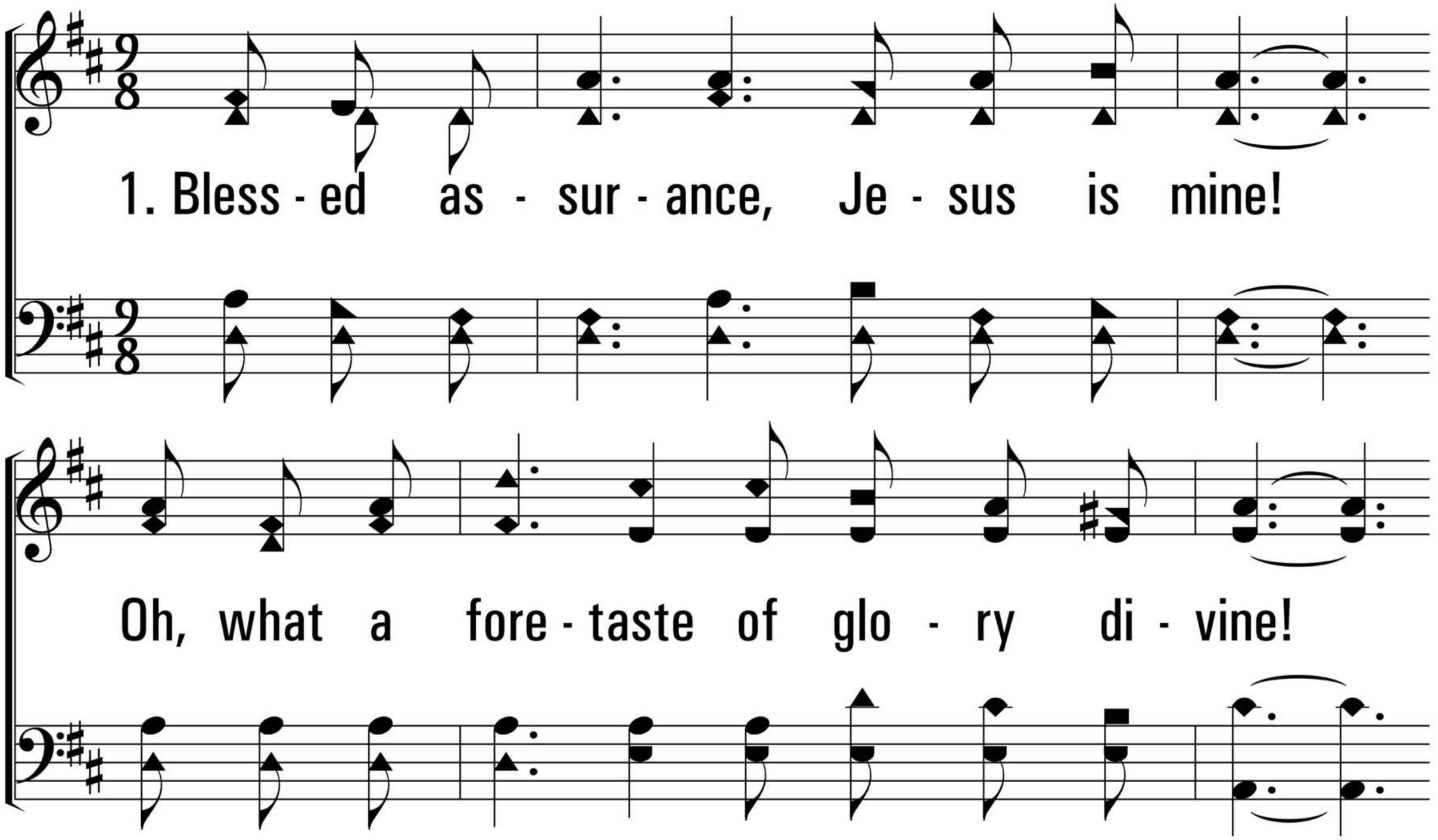
Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs #545

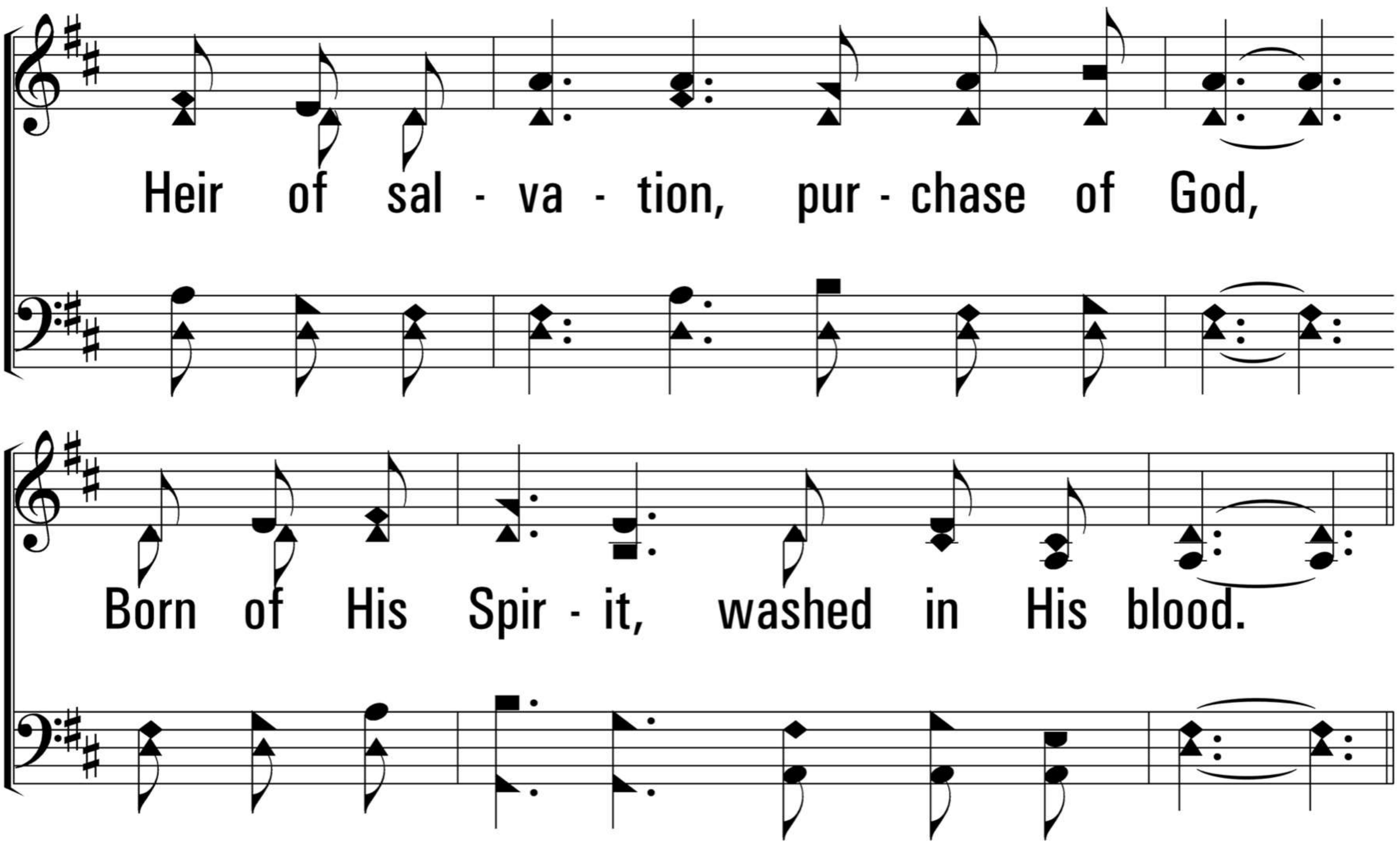
Blessed Assurance

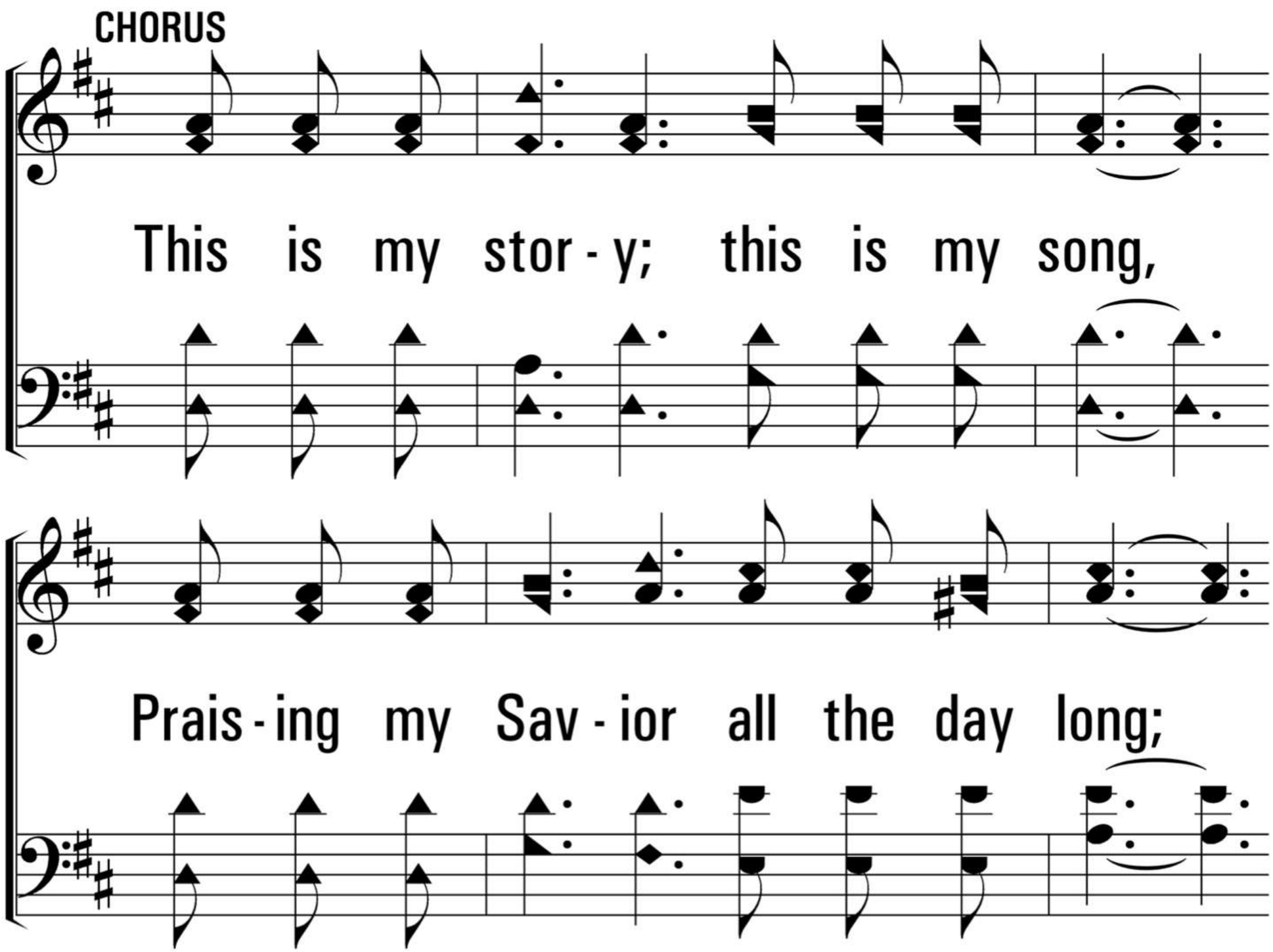
Author: Crosby, Fanny J. / Composer: Knapp, Phoebe Palmer

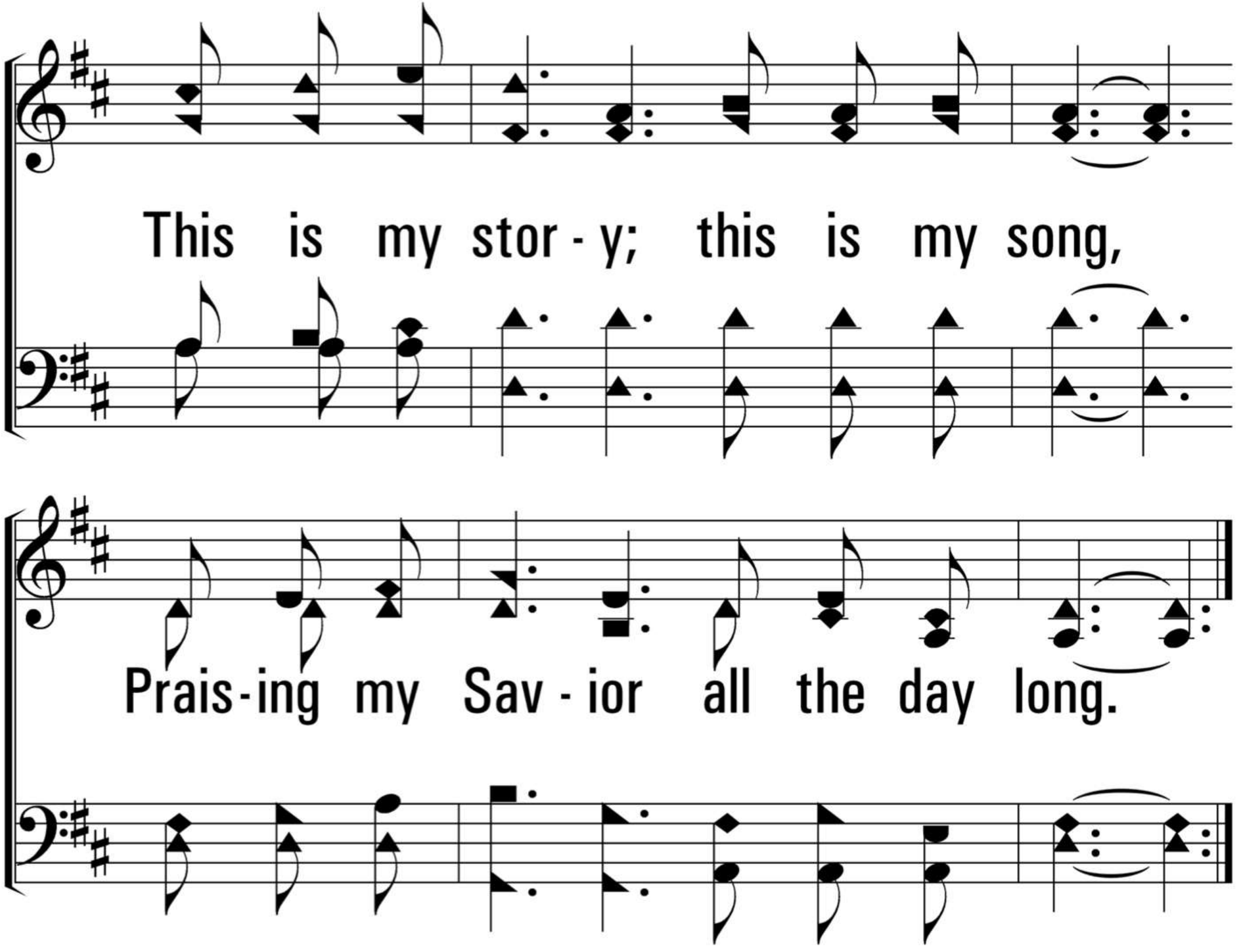
D Major
Starting Note: F#
Time Signature: 9/8
Meter: 9.10.9.9. with chorus

Public Domain


1. Bless - ed as - sur - ance, Je - sus is mine!
Oh, what a fore - taste of glo - ry di - vine!


Heir of sal - va - tion, pur - chase of God,
Born of His Spir - it, washed in His blood.


CHORUS
This is my stor - y; this is my song,
Prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long;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Prais - ing my Sav - ior all the day long.

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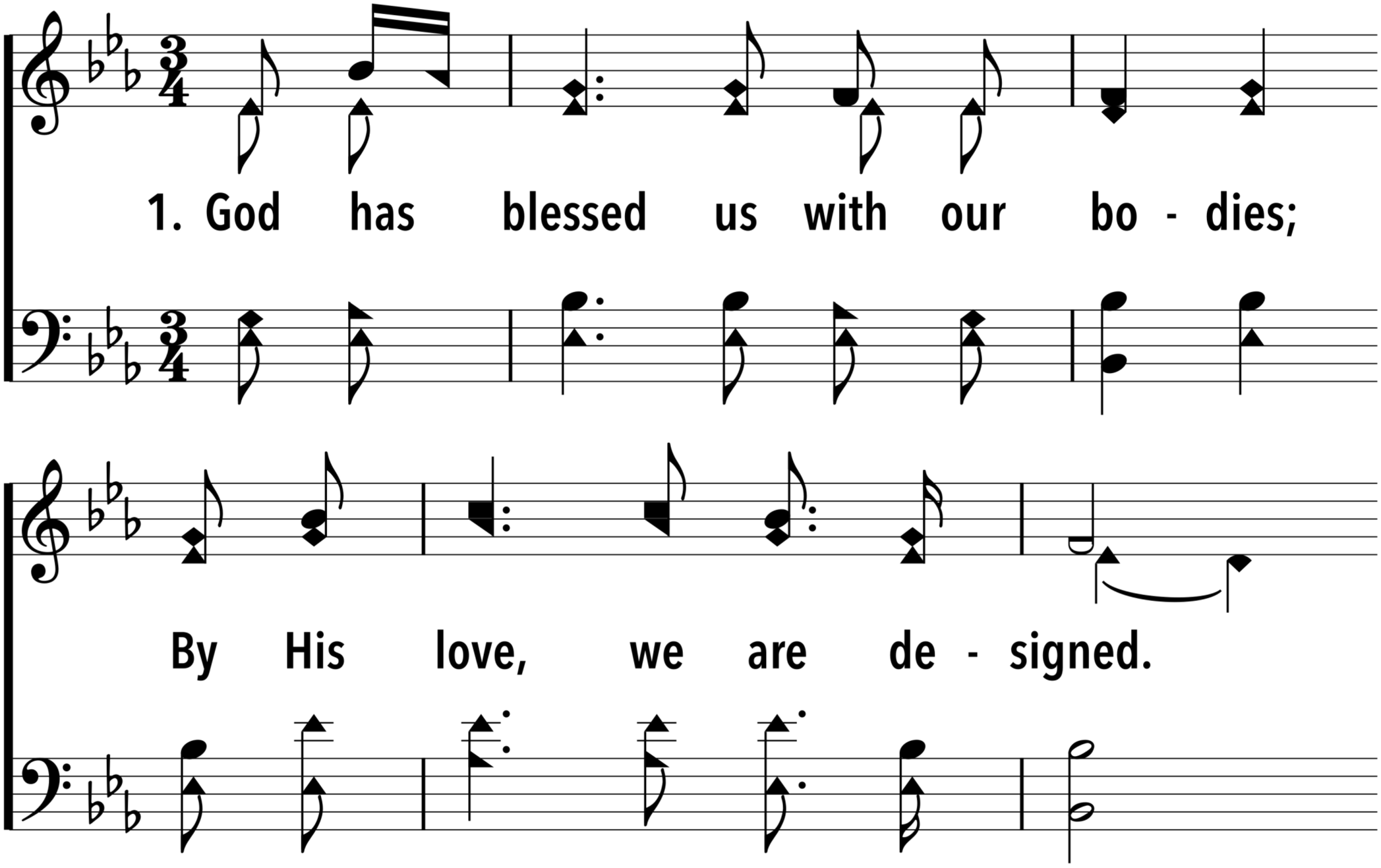
- **Psalm 73** - To remember who God is
  - At the highest heights and lowest depths
  - To process the range of human experience: praise & lament
- **Ex 15:1-18** - To remember who we are as God's people
  - Where we've come from, where we're going
  - As individuals and as a community

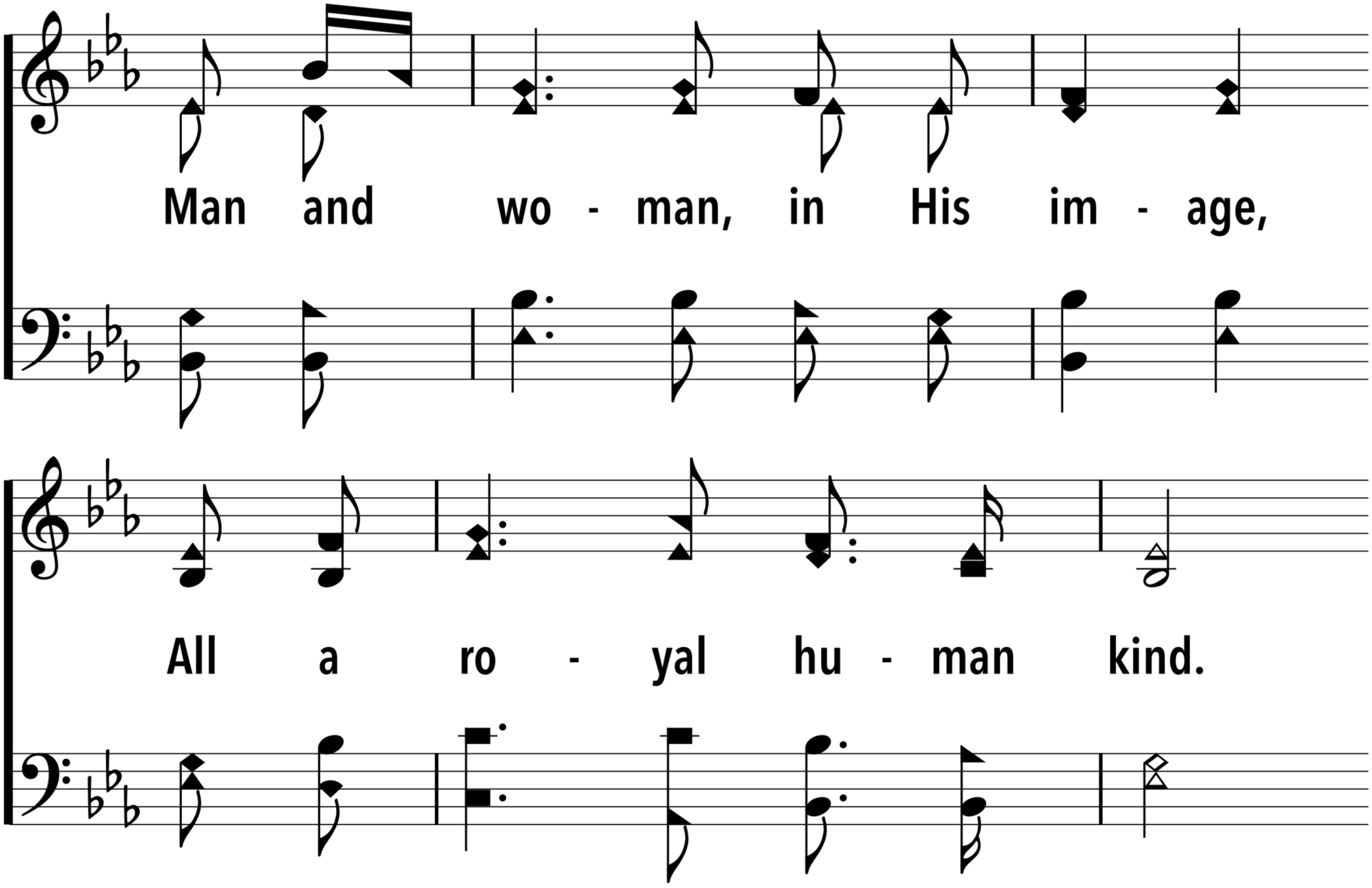
Powerpoint / Handout

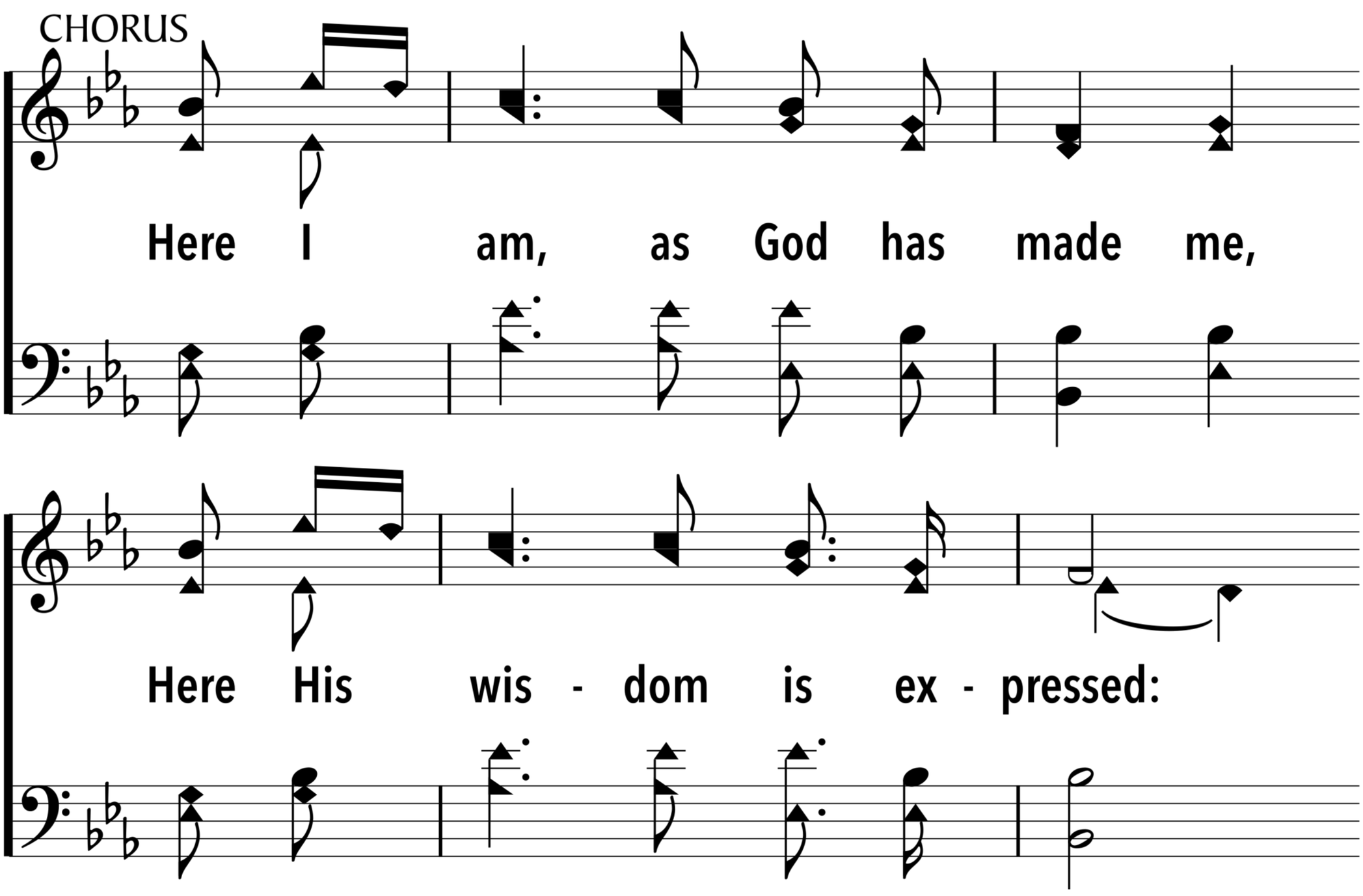
As God Has Made Me

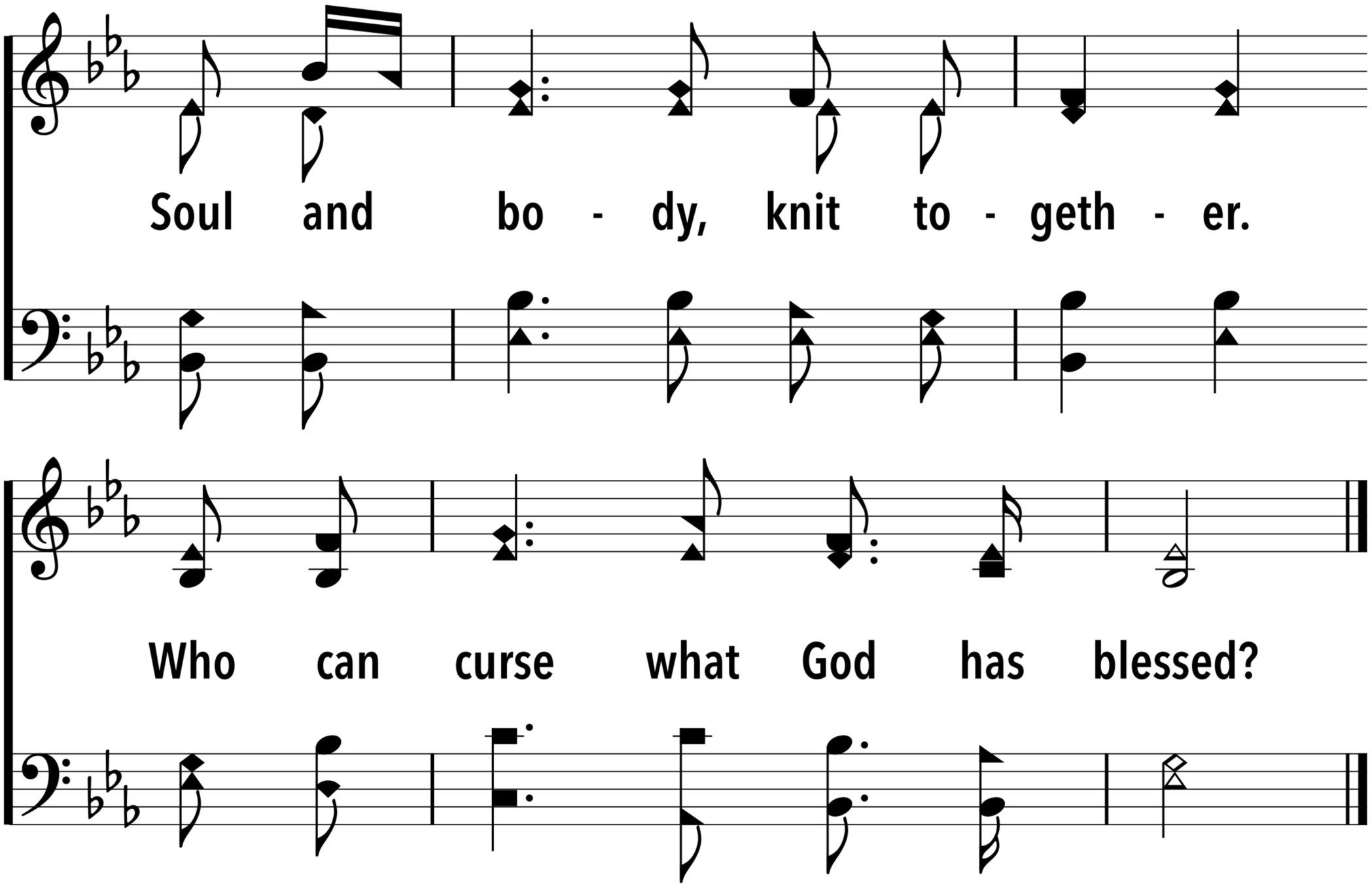
Words: 8.7.8.7. with chorus • Zach Olson (2023)
Music: SOMA • S. E. Rouse (2023)
© 2023 Zach Olson

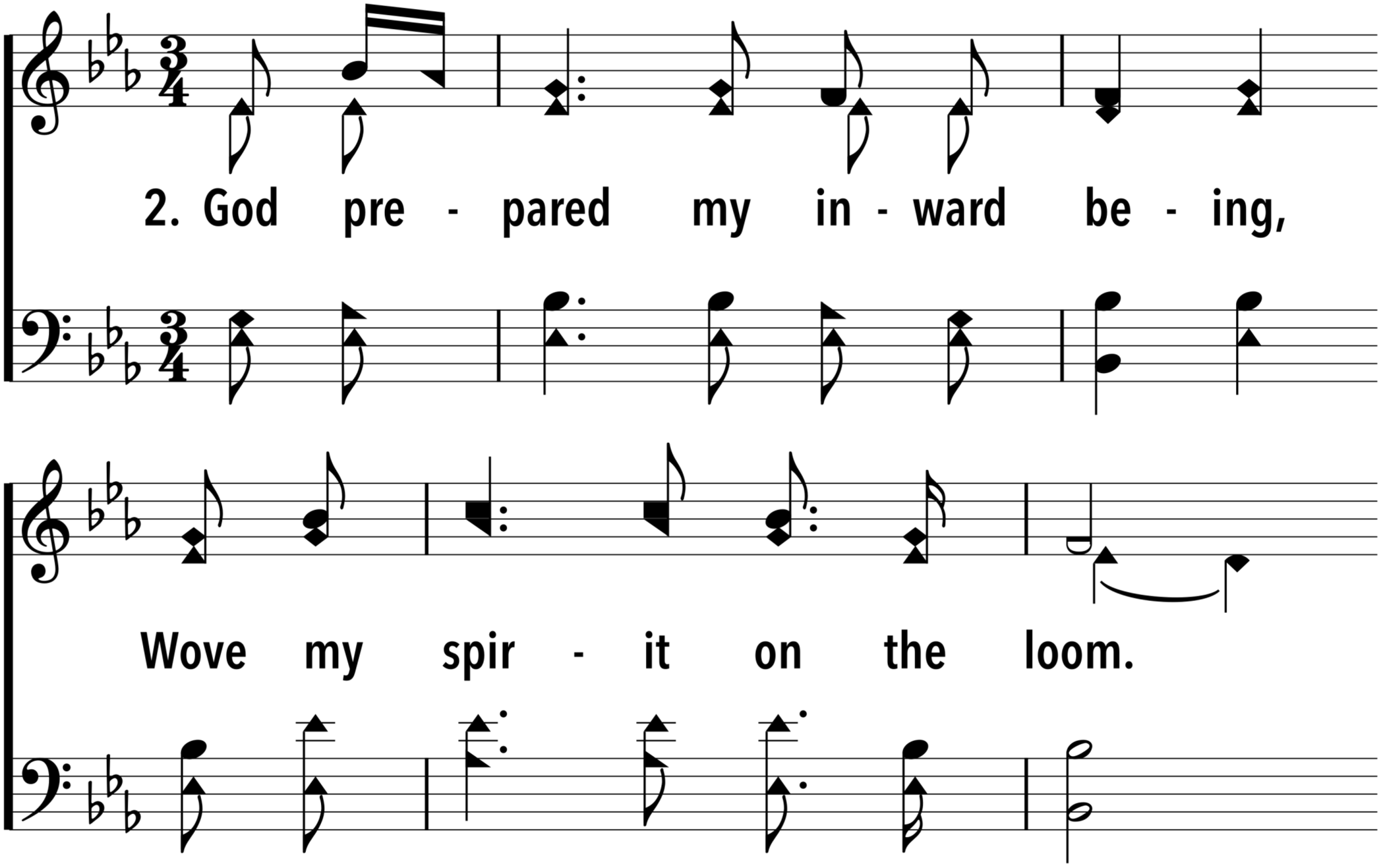
E♭ - 3 - DO

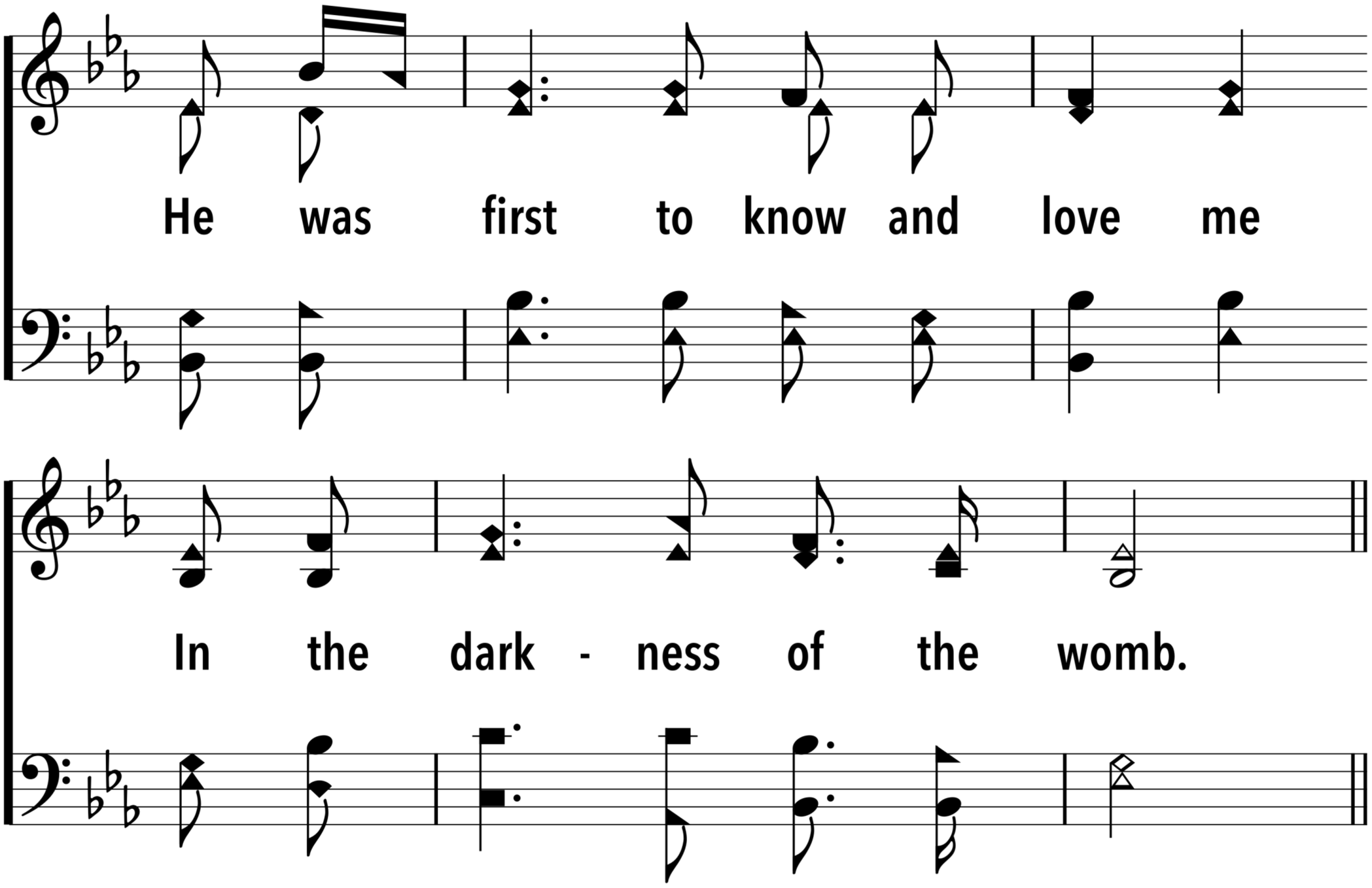

1. God has blessed us with our bo - dies;
By His love, we are de - signed.

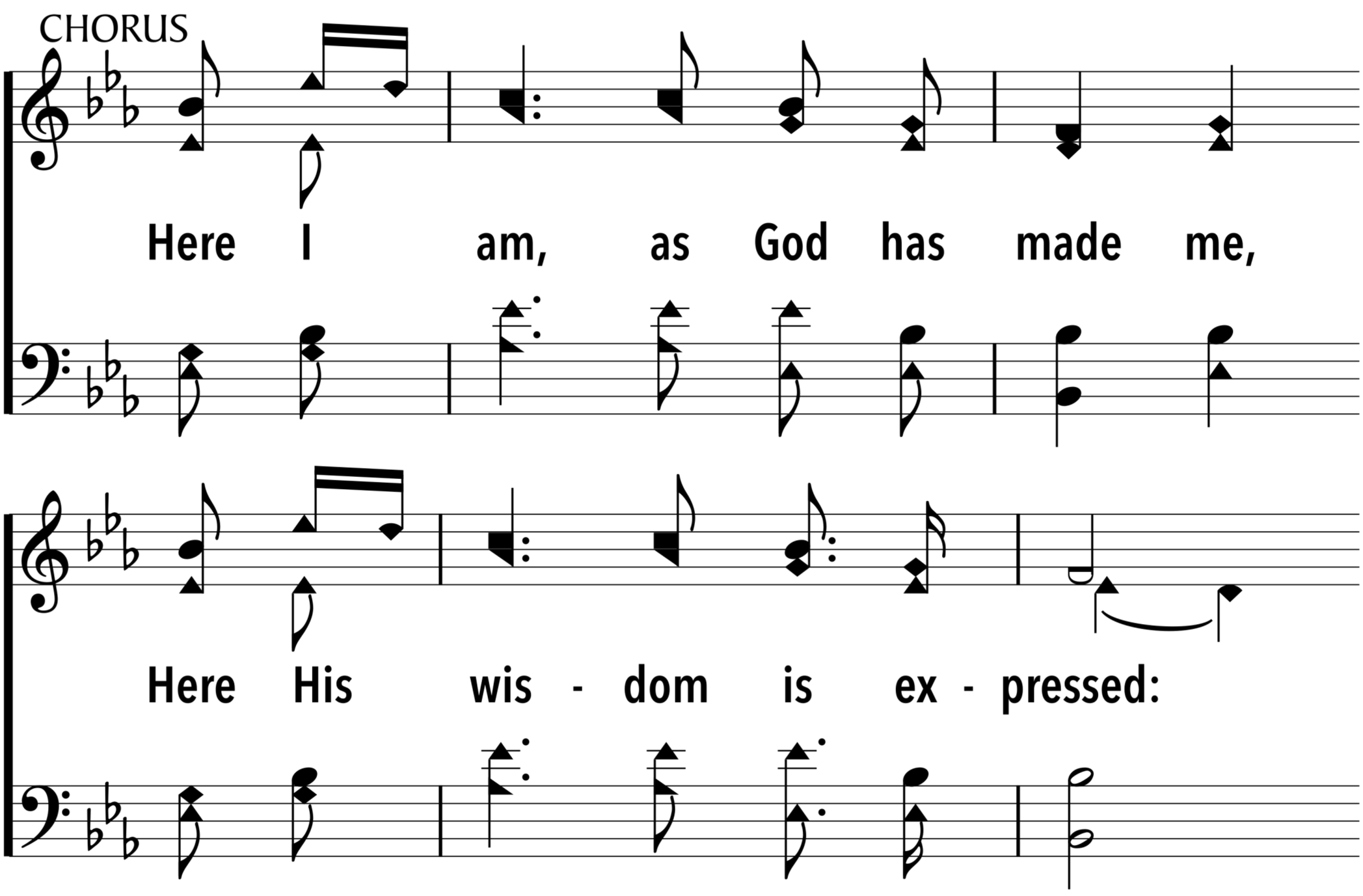

Man and wo - man, in His im - age,
All a ro - yal hu - man kind.


CHORUS
Here I am, as God has made me,
Here His wis - dom is ex - pressed:


Soul and bo - dy, knit to - geth - er.
Who can curse what God has blessed?


2. God pre - pared my in - ward be - ing,
Wove my spir - it on the loom.


He was first to know and love me
In the dark - ness of the womb.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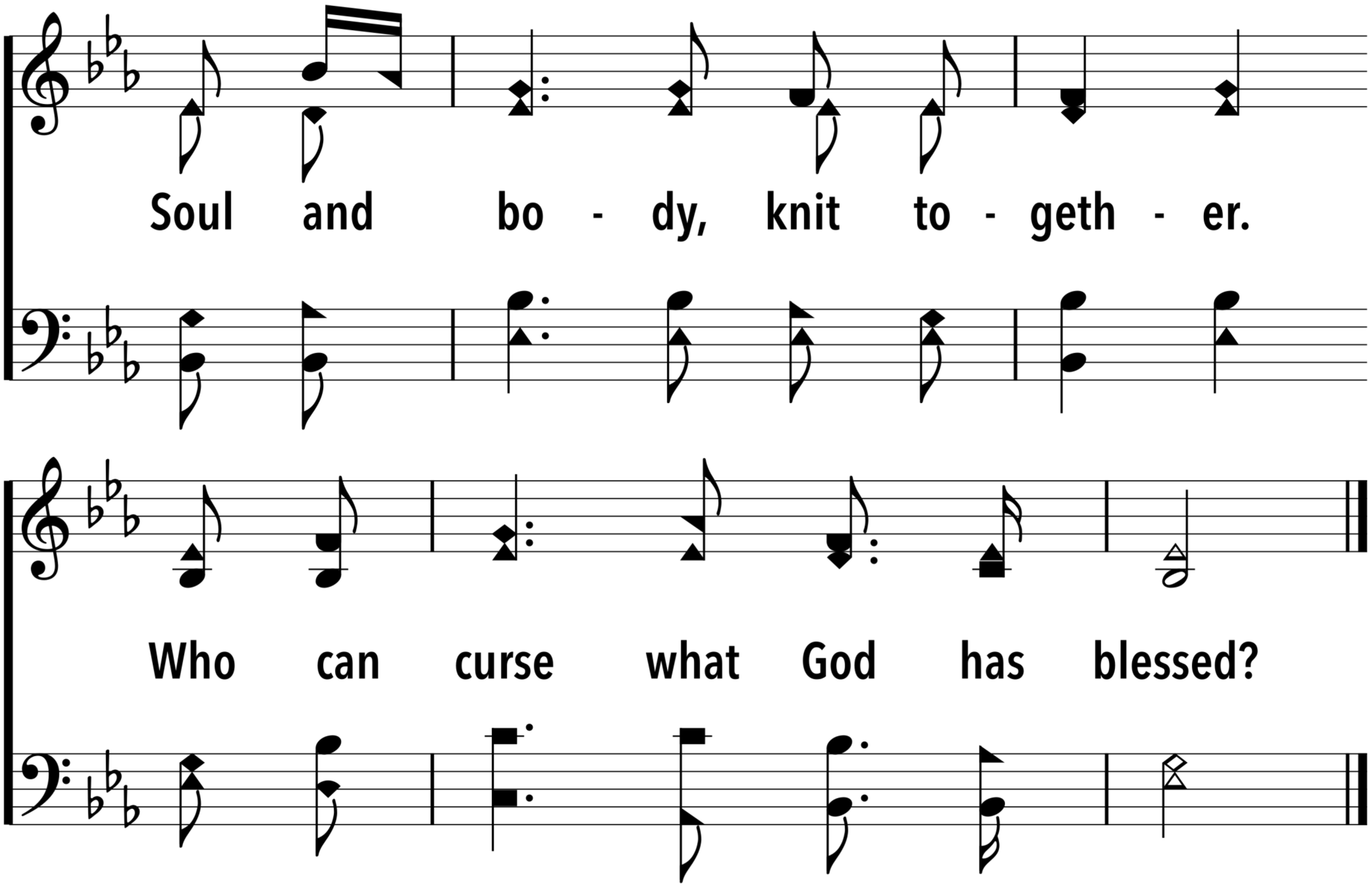
Here His wis - dom is ex - pressed: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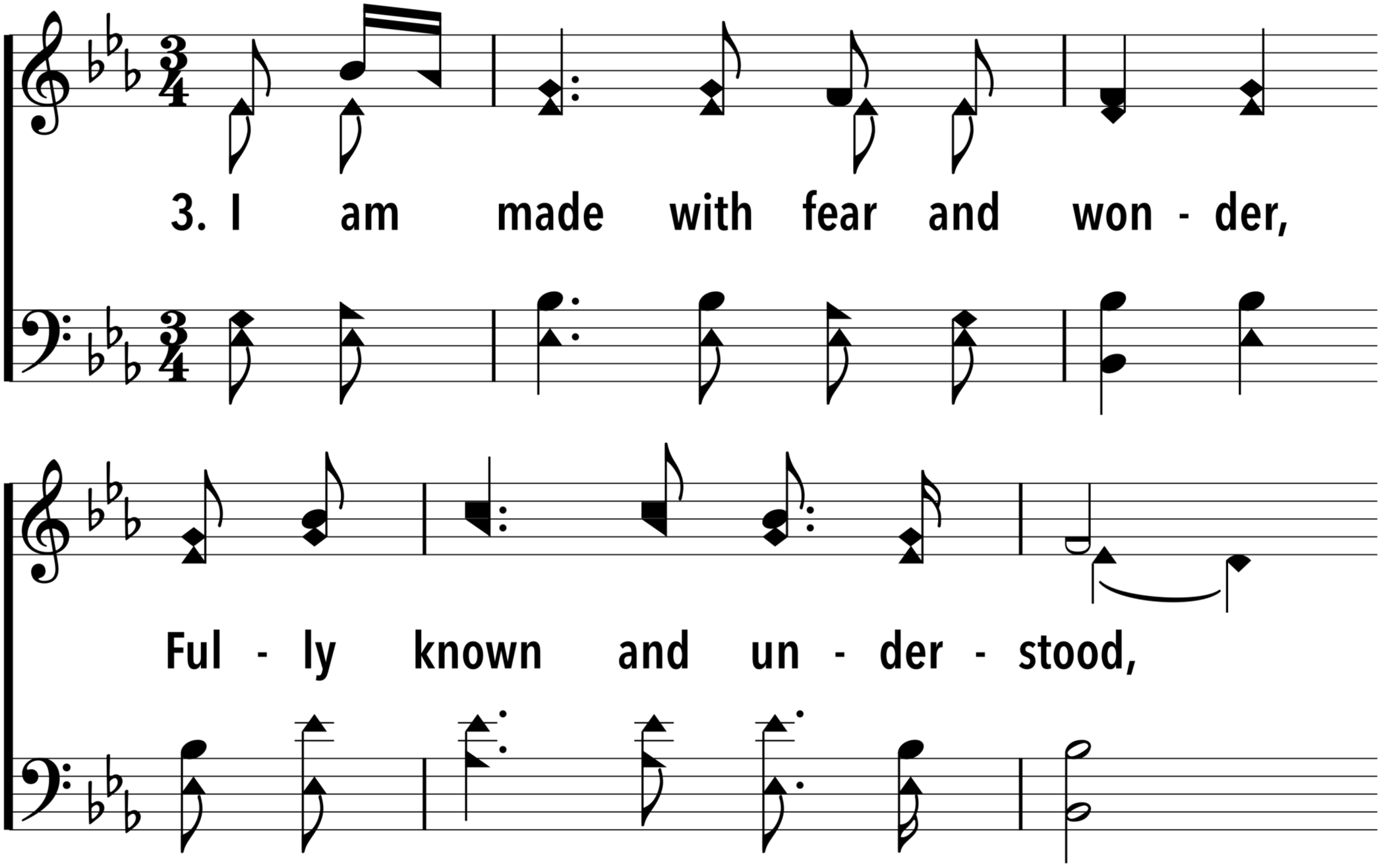
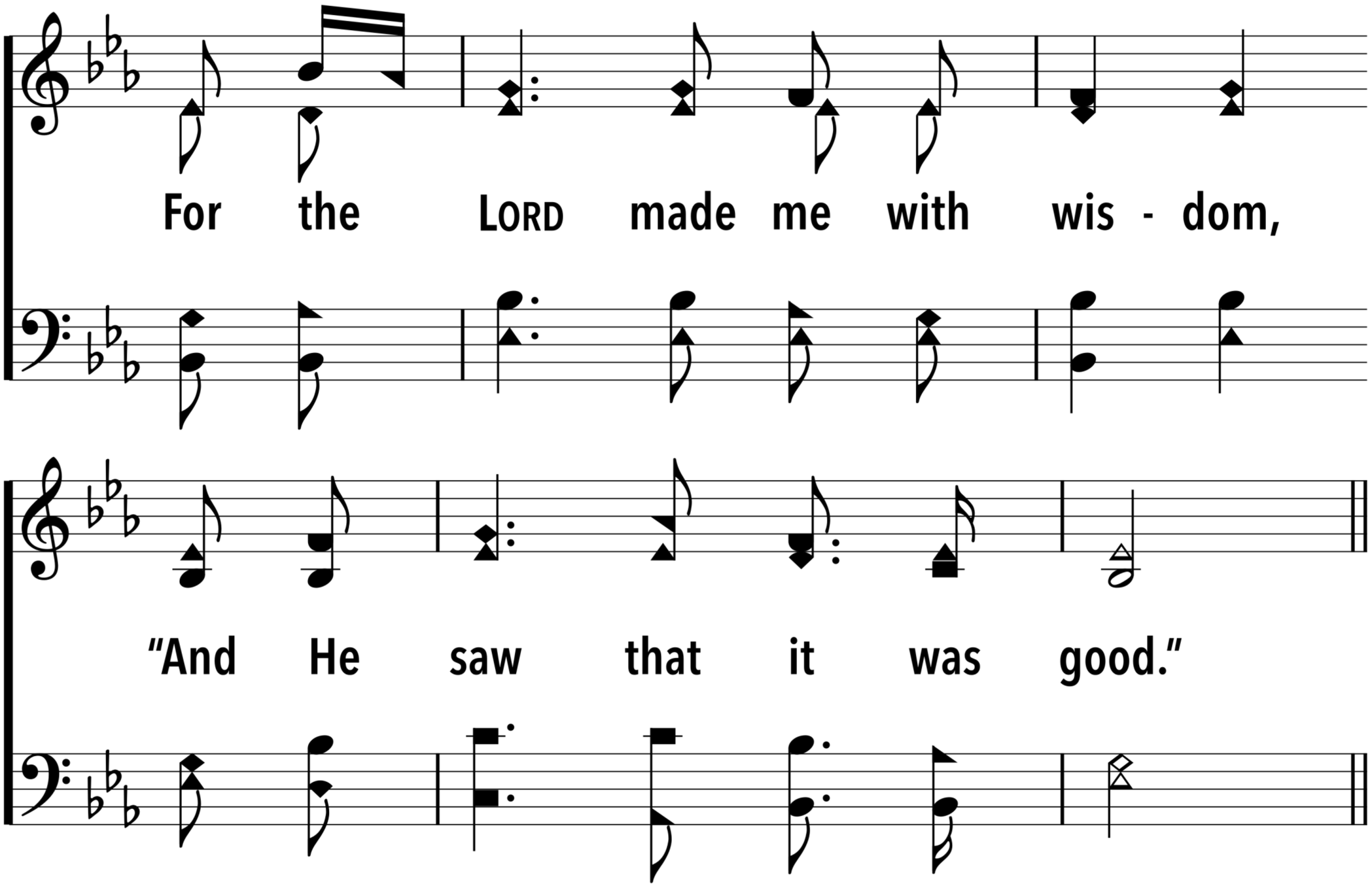
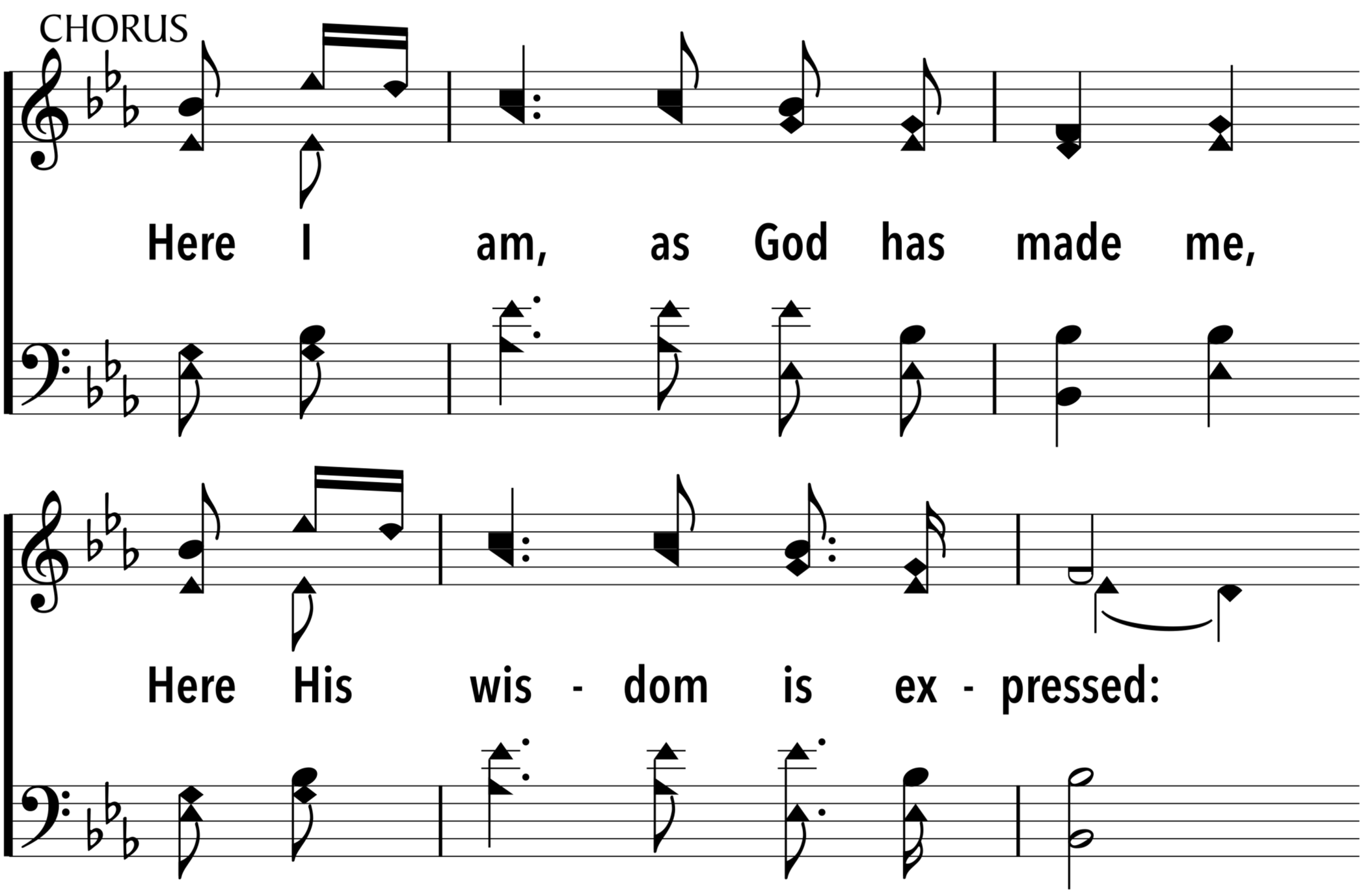
Who can curse what God has blessed?


3. I am made with fear and won - der,
Ful - ly known and un - der - stood,


For the LORD made me with wis - dom,
"And He saw that it was good."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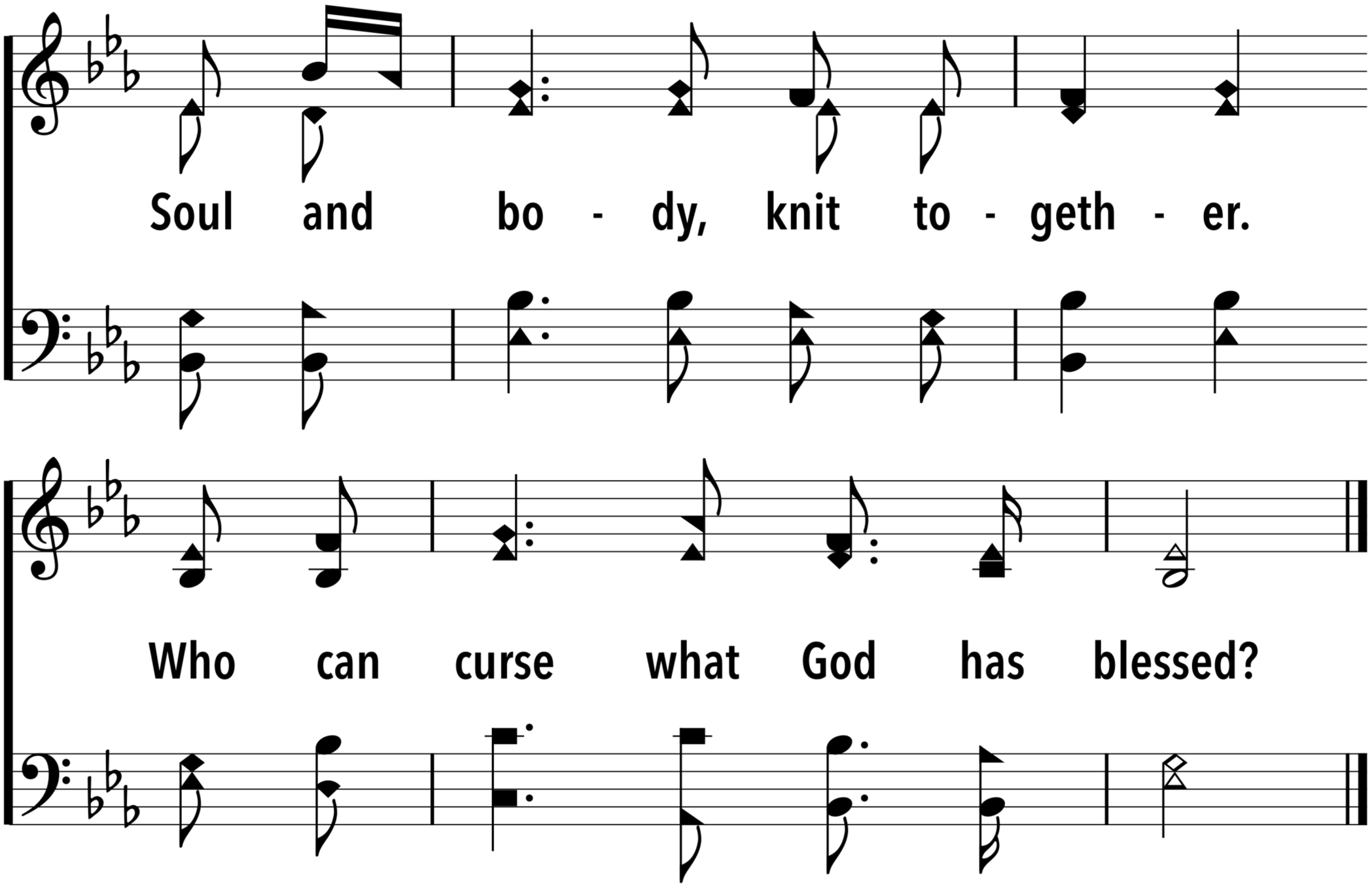
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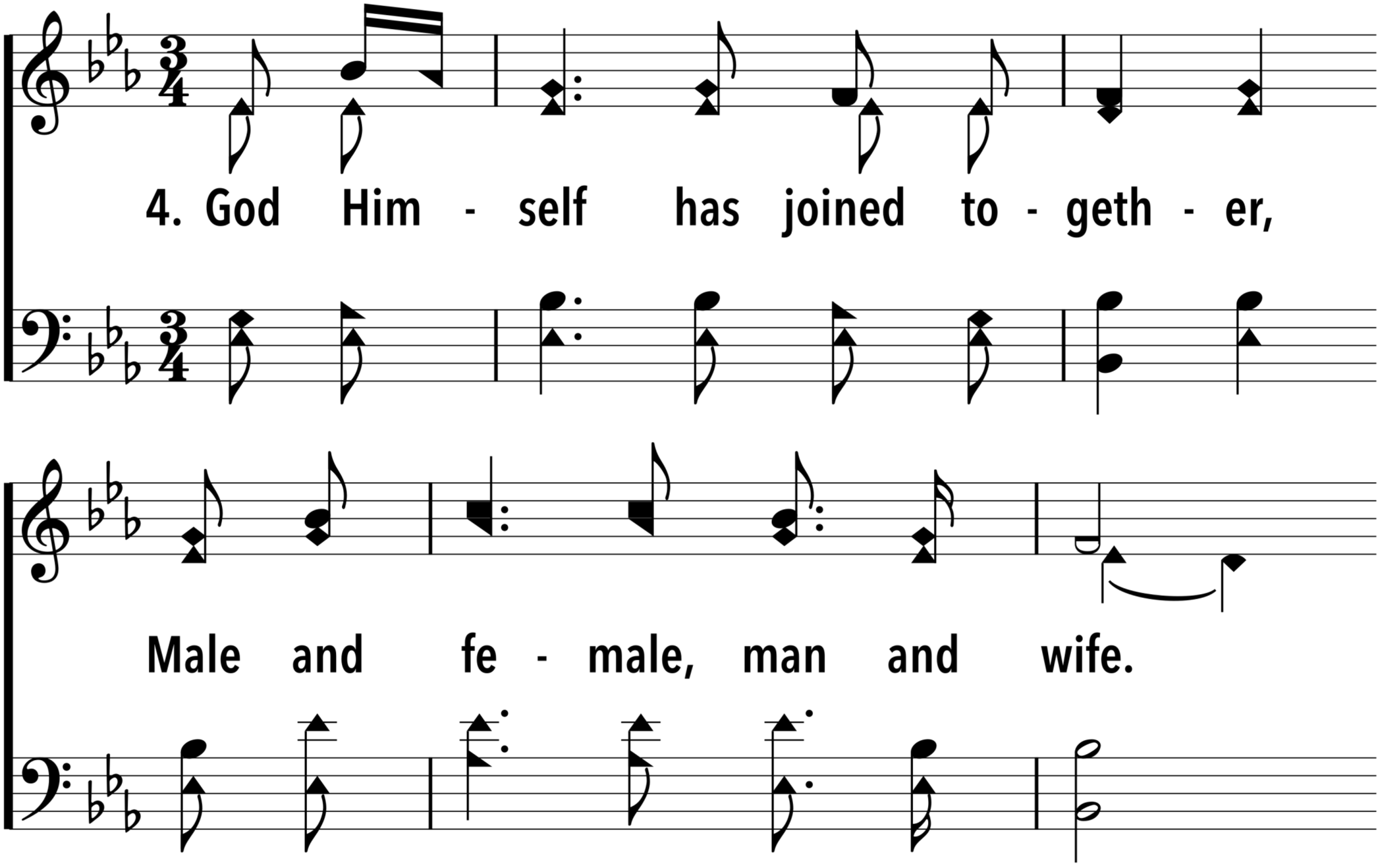
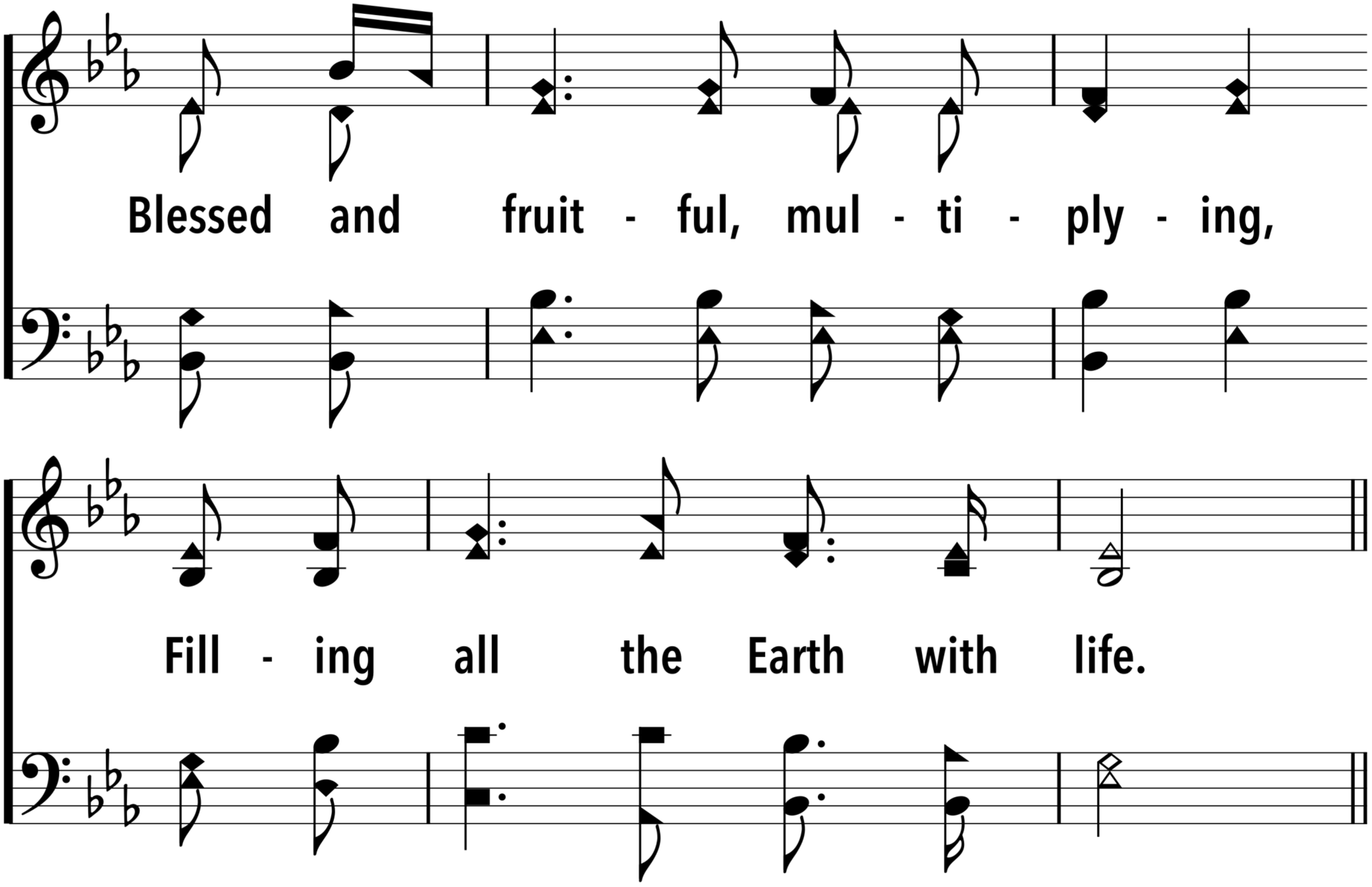
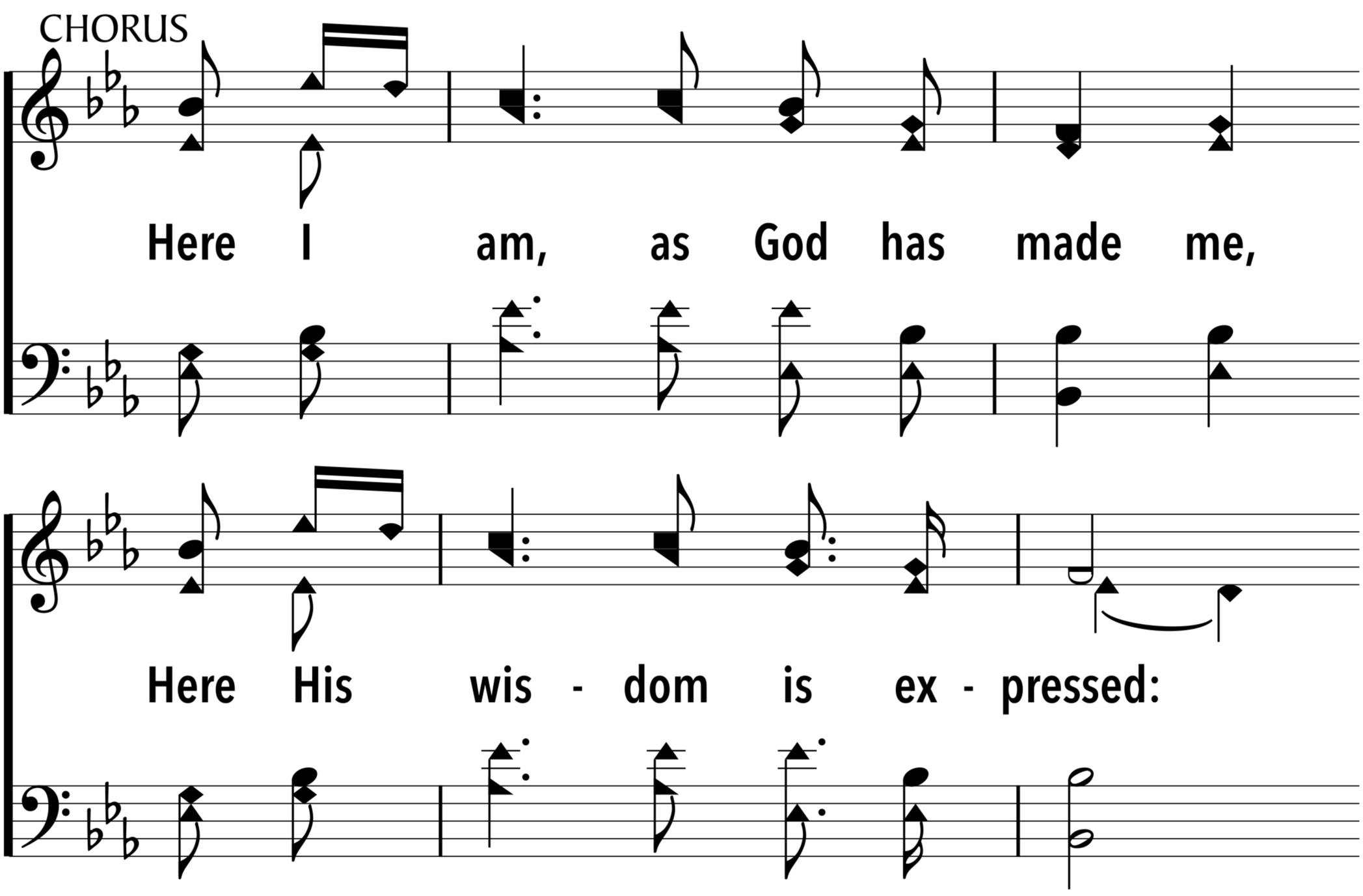

4. God Him - self has joined to - geth - er,
Male and fe - male, man and wife.


Blessed and fruit - ful, mul - ti - ply - ing,
Fill - ing all the Earth with life.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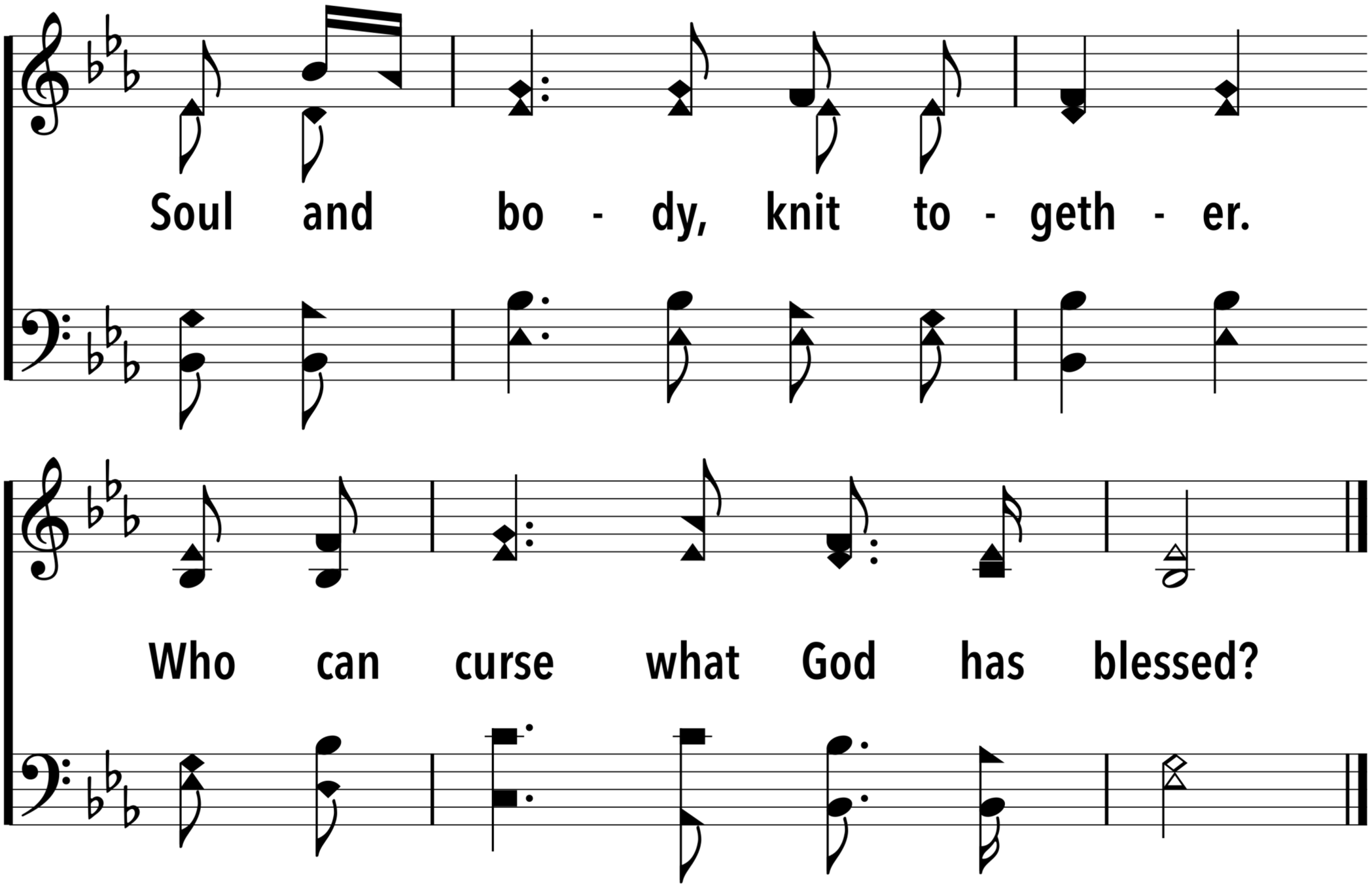
Soul and bo - dy, knit to - geth - er.
Who can curse what God has blessed?

END

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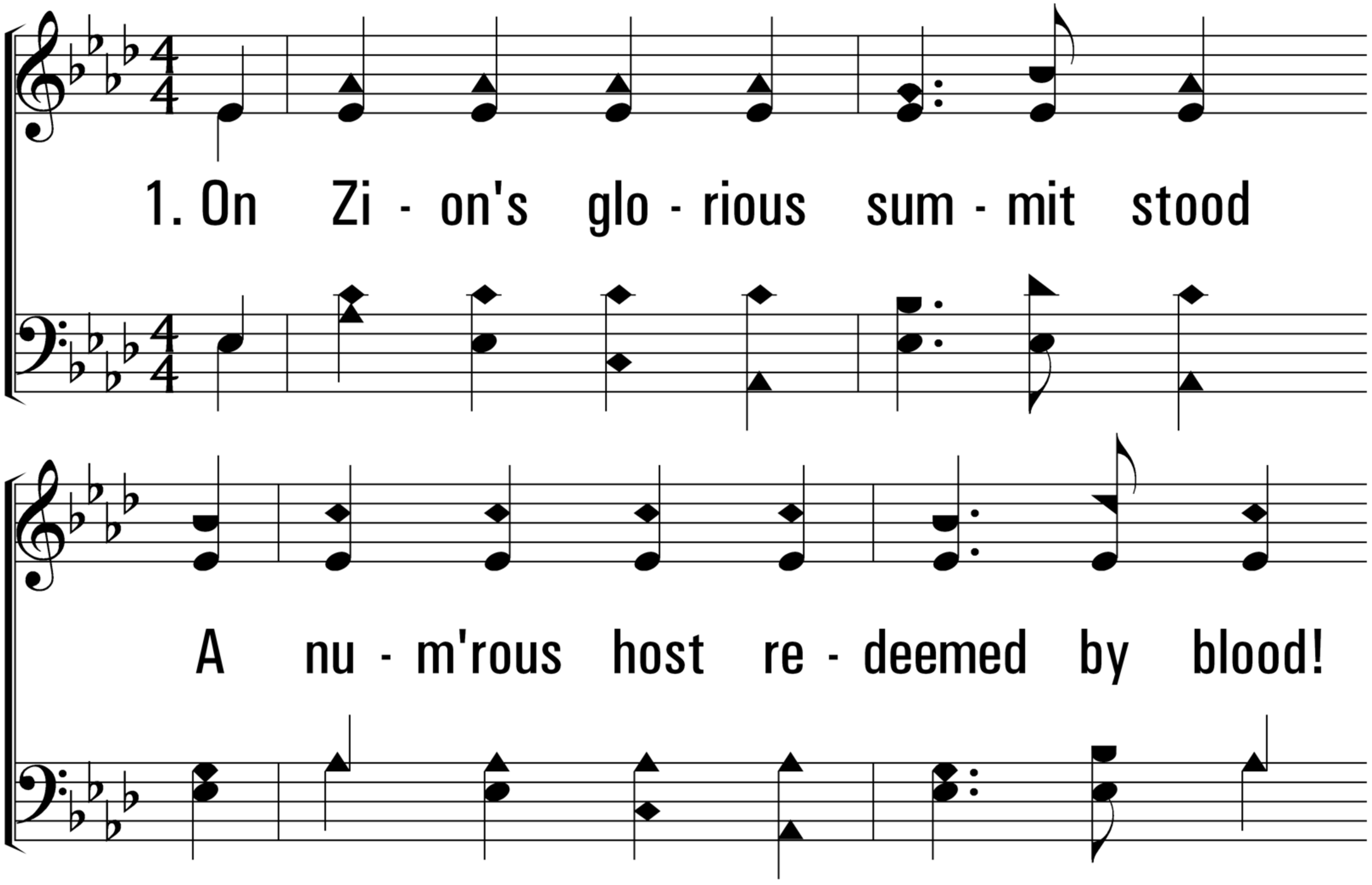
Psalms, Hymns, & Spiritual Songs #722

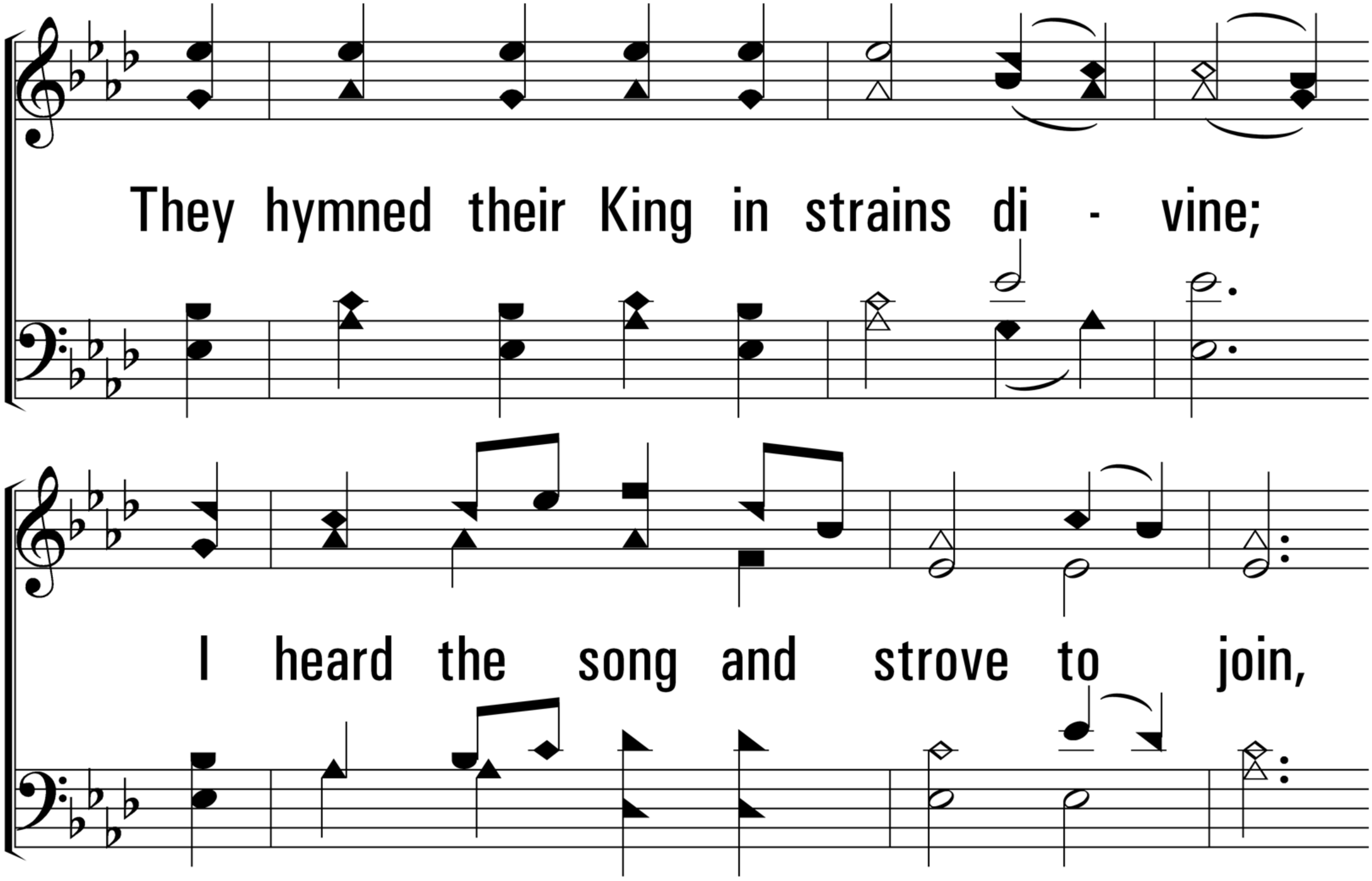
On Zion's Glorious Summit

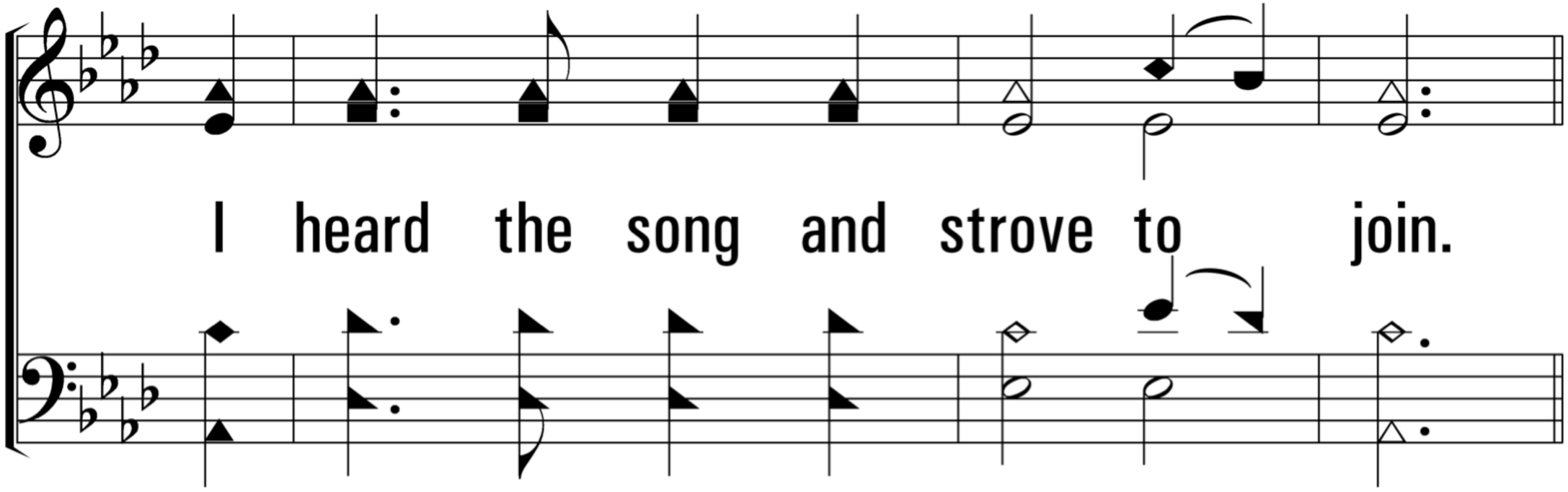
Author: Kent, John / Composer: Skene, Robert

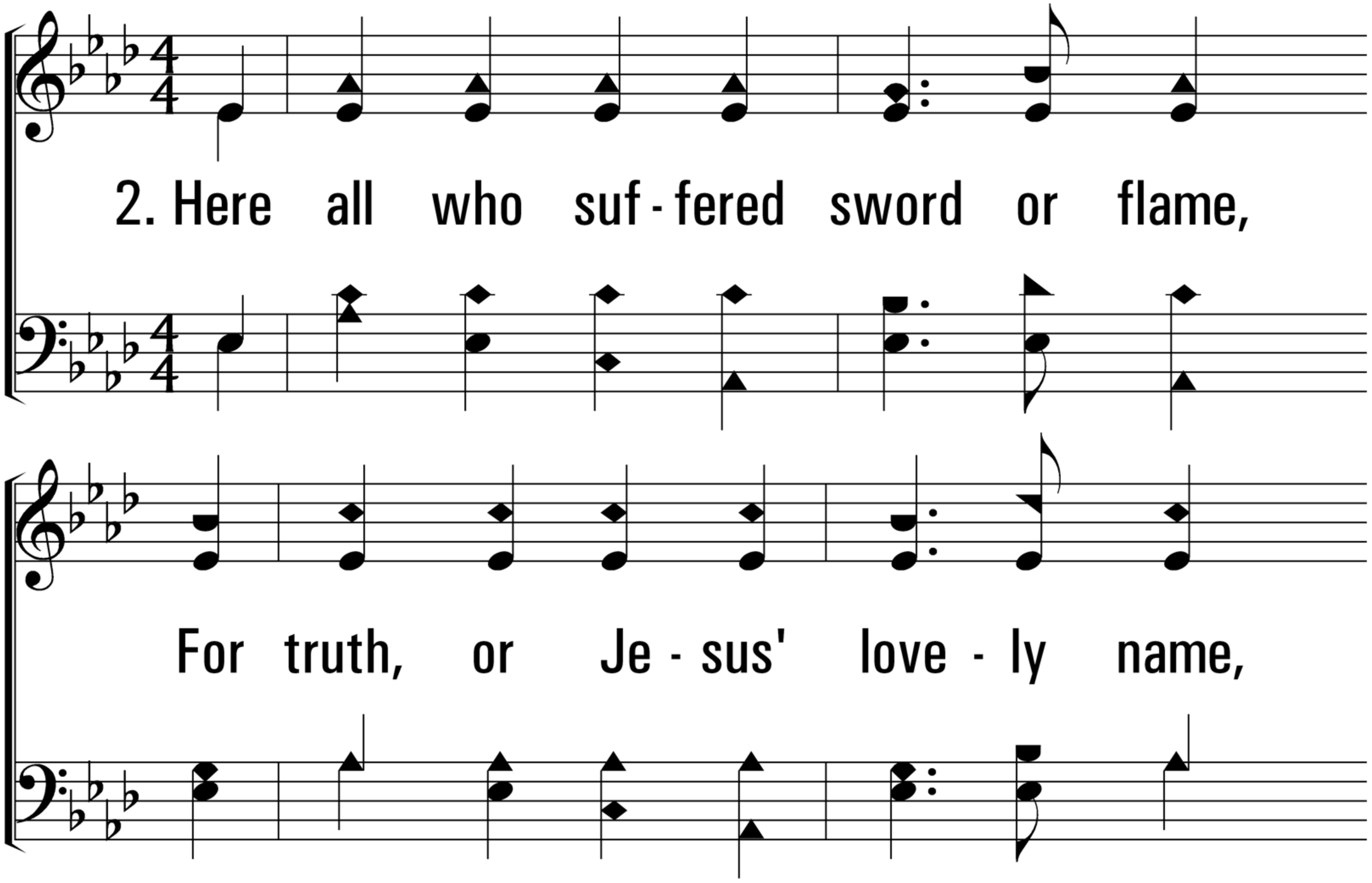
Ab Major
Starting Note: Eb
Time Signature: 4/4
Meter: LM with sanctus

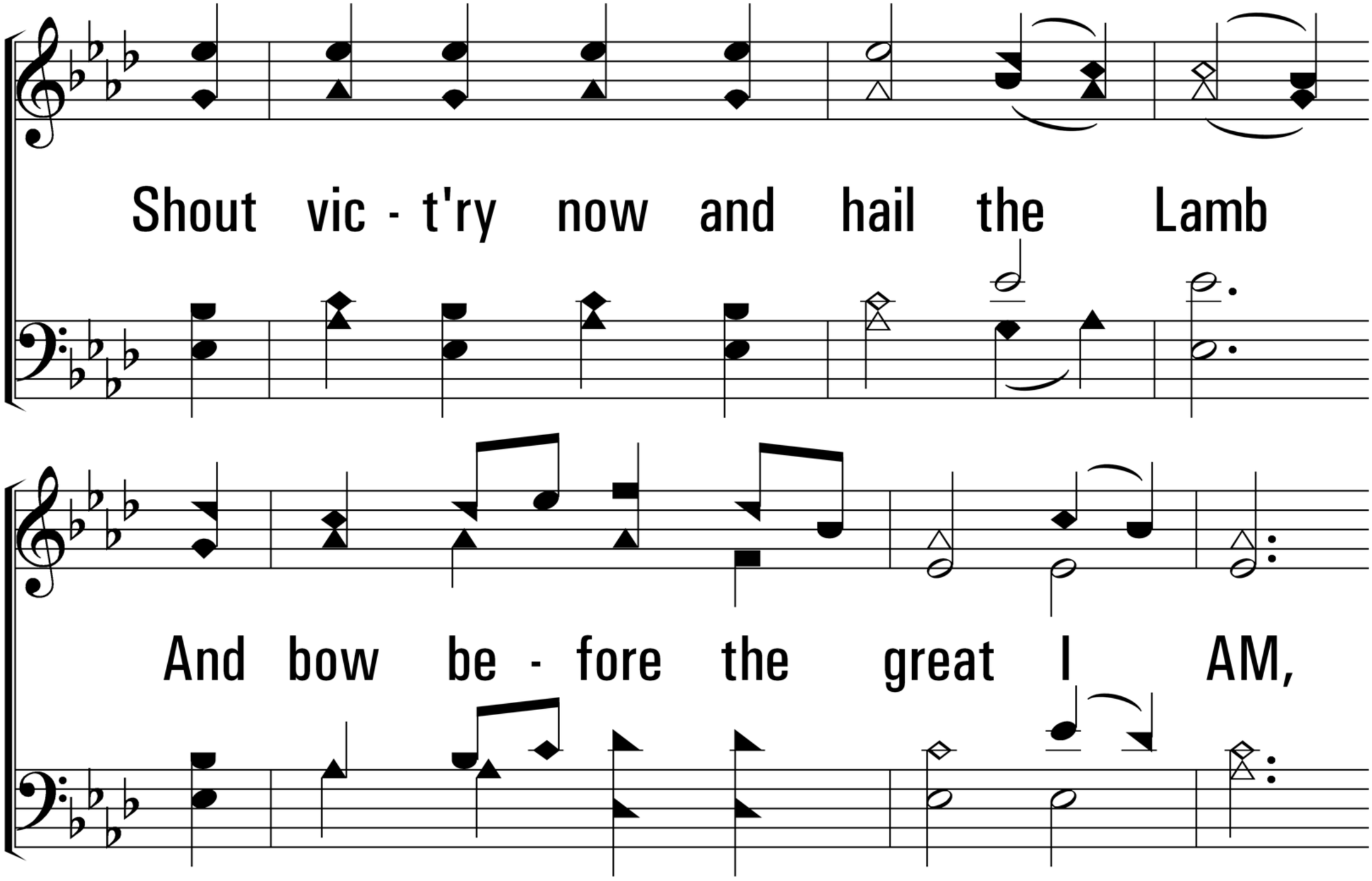
Public Domain

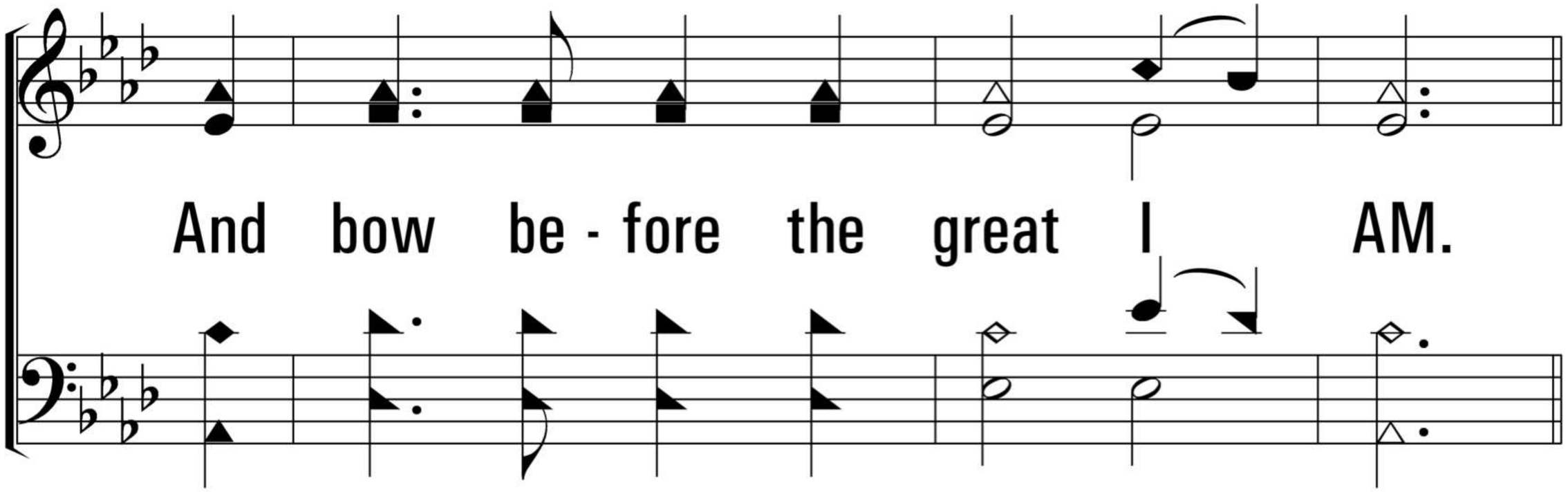

1. On Zi - on's glo - rious sum - mit stood
A nu - m'rous host re - deemed by blood!

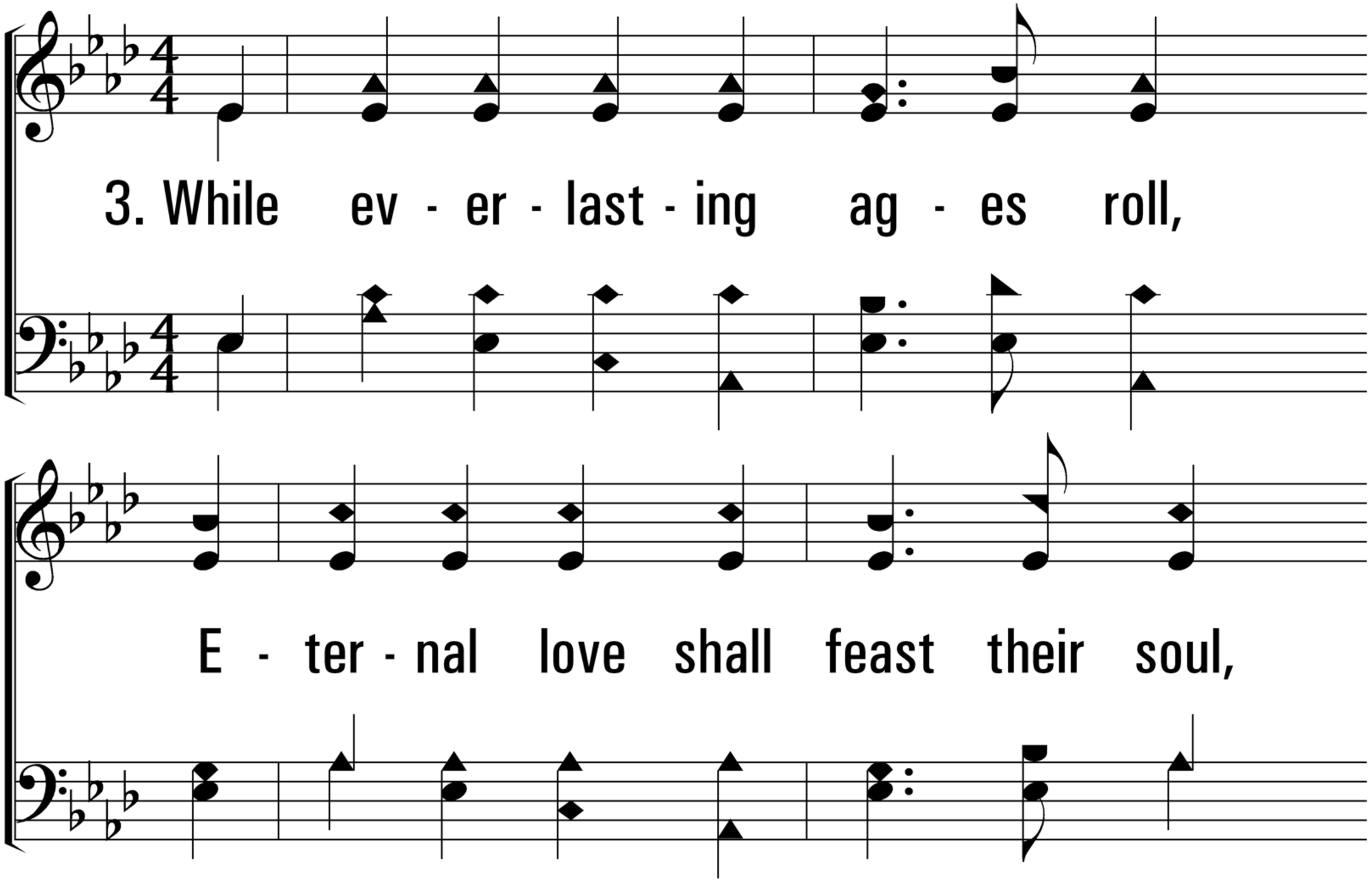

They hymned their King in strains di - vine;
I heard the song and strove to join,

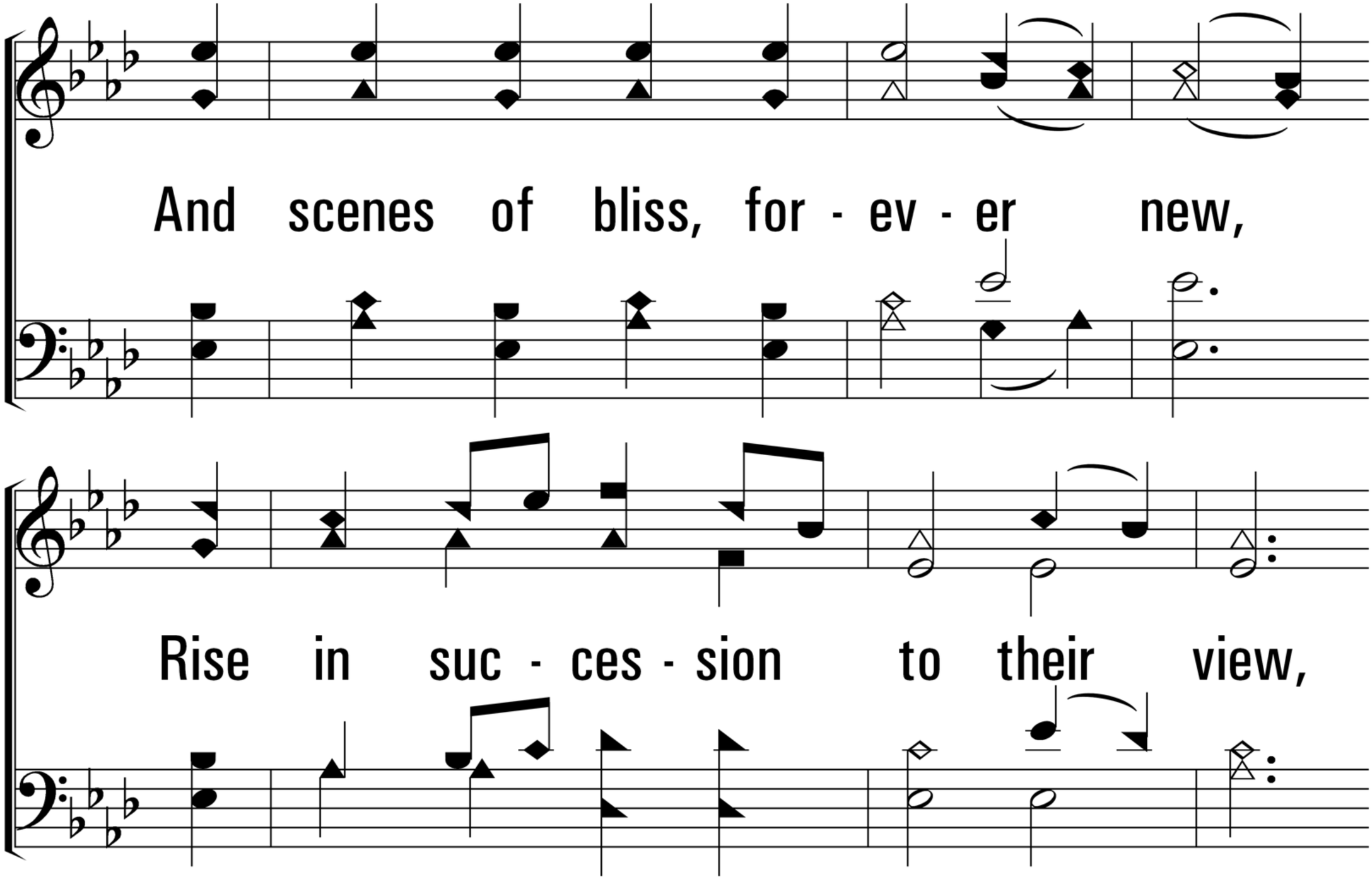

I heard the song and strove to join.

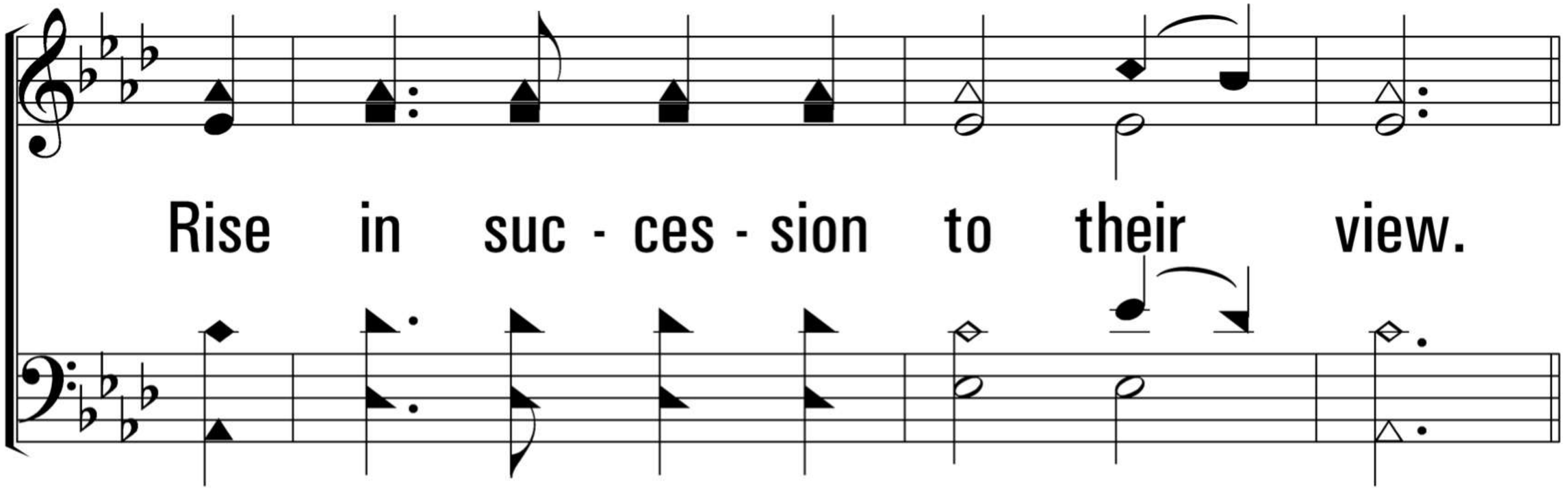

2. Here all who suf - fered sword or flame,
For truth, or Je - sus' love - ly name,

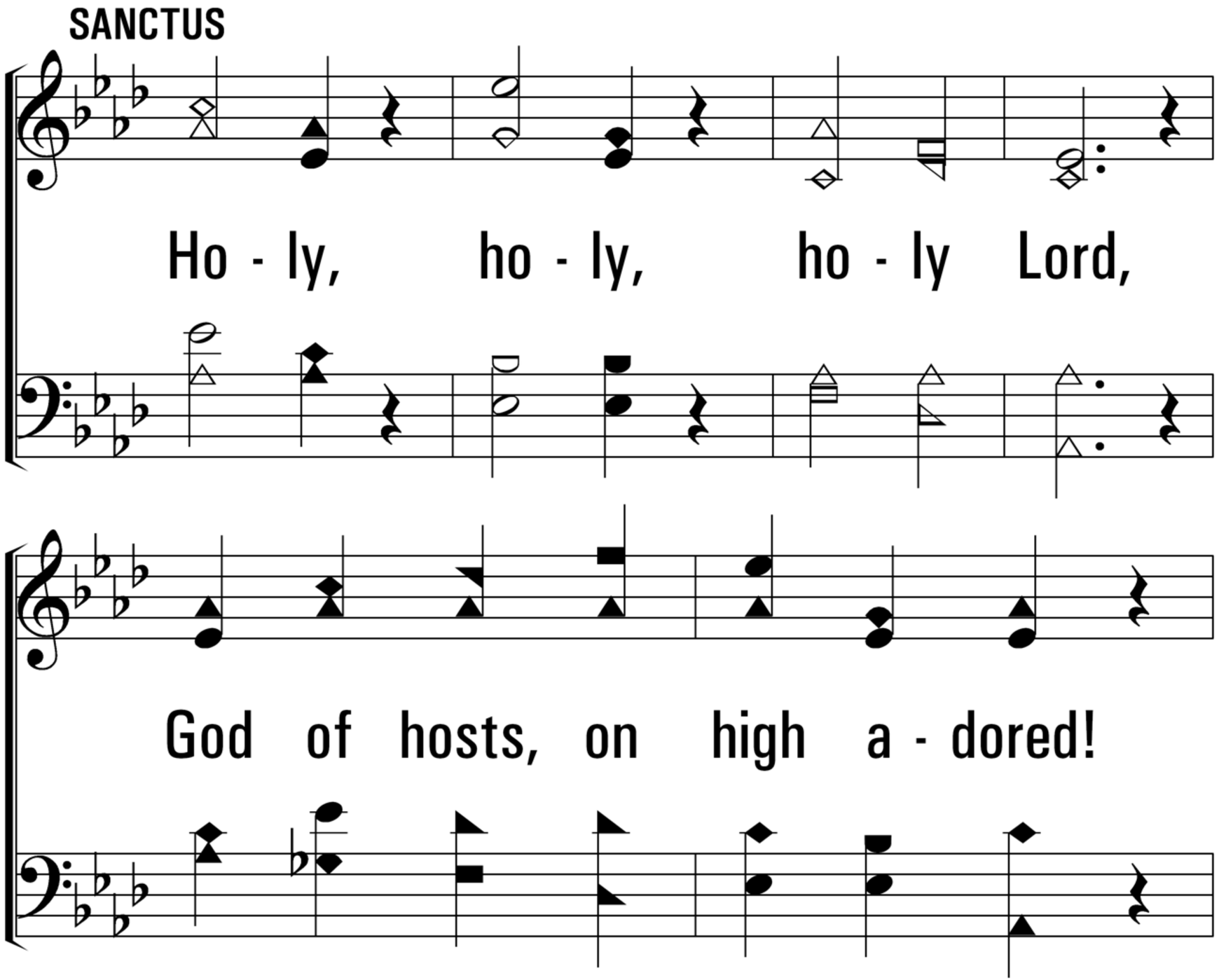

Shout vic - t'ry now and hail the Lamb
And bow be - fore the great I AM,

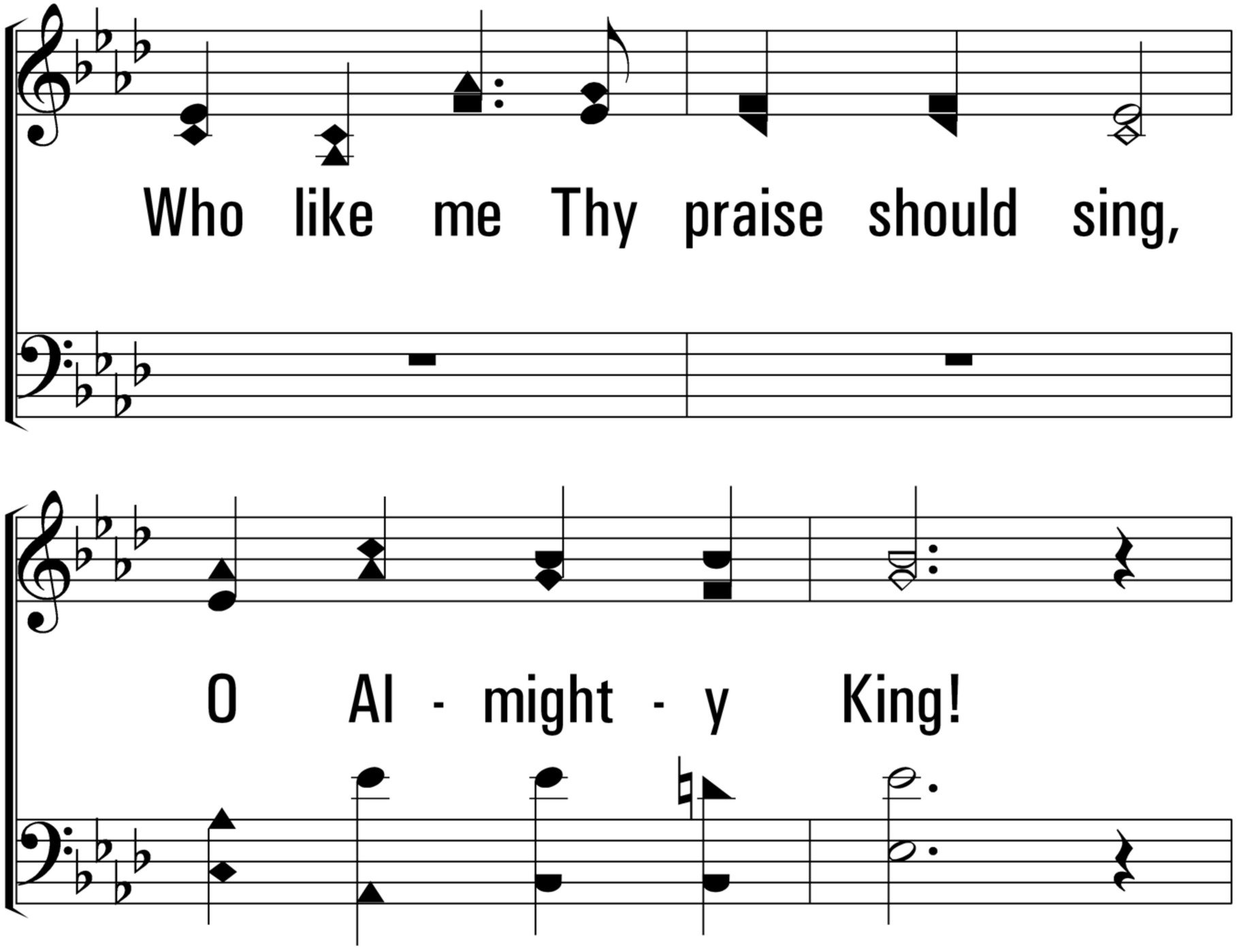

And bow be - fore the great I AM.

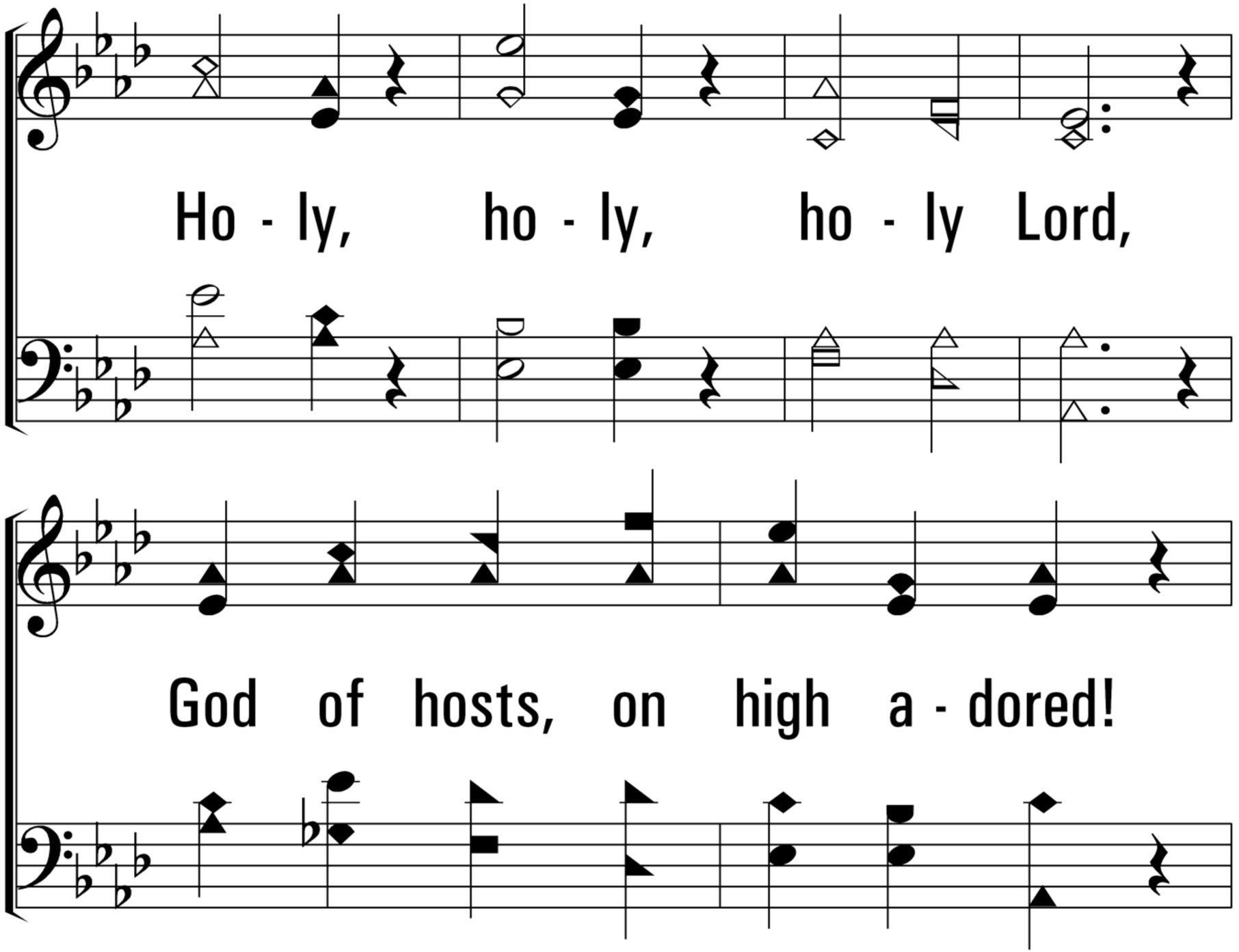

3. While ev - er - last - ing ag - es roll,
E - ter - nal love shall feast their soul,

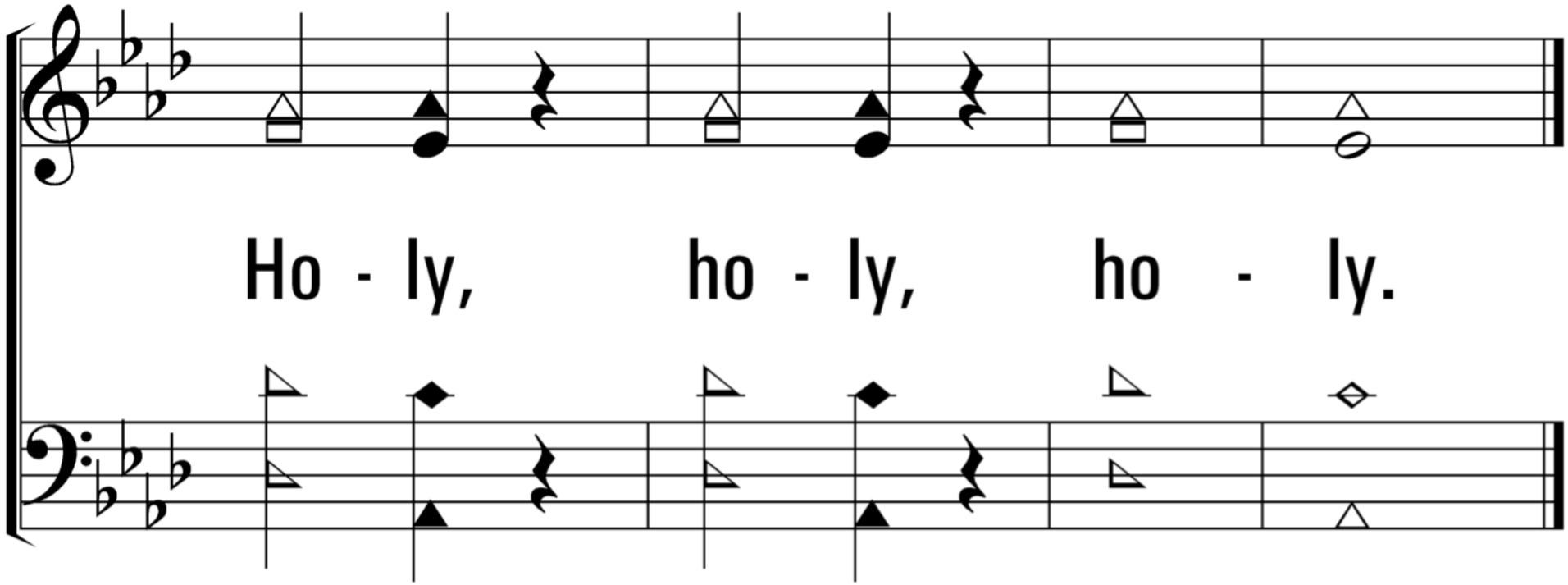

And scenes of bliss, for - ev - er new,
Rise in suc - ces - sion to their view,


Rise in suc - ces - sion to their view.


SANCTUS
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
God of hosts, on high a - dored!


Who like me Thy praise should sing,
O Al - might - y King!


Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
God of hosts, on high a - dored!



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