

## HAPPY ARE YOU

Responsorial Song from Psalm 128 for Sunday 27B  
for Psalmist/Cantor, Assembly & Descants  
with Keyboard, Woodwinds & Guitar

TONY BARR

*Fill our heart with peace and joy  
all the days of our life.*

Happy are you who, filled with awe,  
have chosen God's path.  
You shall enjoy your work each day  
for favor and fortune have found you.

Then may your wife be plentiful,  
a vine in your home,  
ripe as the olive; take delight,  
your children there, gracing your table.

Day after day, kept safe from harm,  
with evil at bay,  
may you be happy, prosperous too,  
the blessings of Zion upon you.

In years to come, your children's children  
may in your stead  
shall be ye with and kin,  
contentment throughout all the Nation!

The core of Jewish belief, this psalm is also central to the so-called Protestant work ethic. Work hard and well, and you will reap your deserts. It is a merit-based system seemingly at odds with Protestant theology. Luther was disillusioned with Rome, among many things, for selling indulgences, paying for our salvation in advance so as to finance the Crusades. Luther based his theology on Paul's teaching about justification in Romans, but argued that there was little we could do to earn our salvation, which was completely in God's hands. Justification may be achieved only through Jesus's sacrifice on our behalf and our belief that God's grace alone will save us. In his letter, James endorsed part of this argument, but also maintained that without good works, faith would be always empty.

But today, across every denominational spectrum, theology is evolving. What we have hitherto considered as doctrine, to be God's absolute, unchanging truths, are in fact evolving, alongside our relationship with God, whose claim is to be forever new. Doctrine is not to be called because the Spirit blows where she wills. What is changing is our understanding of doctrine, not as a block within a monolithic structure, but as a living Covenant, in hearts of flesh and blood, a face to face encounter with a God of surprises and constant challenge.

The word *joy* in the psalm begins from a low note, meant to elicit a smile; we cannot sing the word unless our facial expressions reflect it. Verse 2, *God's path* may pose a vocal challenge, unless the *s* is clipped and the *p* is a hard consonant. Likewise in verse 3, *the olive*, the *p* needs clear enunciation. Verse 3, *kept safe*, please enunciate *p*, *t* and *as* separate sounds, though naturally and without exaggeration. Verse 4, *kith and kin*, separate all three words as people, with the *k* almost as a dance, and pay similar attention to the *ts* in *contentment throughout*. This elementary attention to diction can make the psalm all the more enjoyable, while luxuriating in the rhythmic flow of the text.

The joy of discovery is the heart of Psalm 128, a blessing hymn of thanksgiving for the One in whom we find happiness and joy and delight. Rather than being ruled from stern edicts, we have been offered a path to enlightenment, not a road with a pre-designed map, no pre-ordained point of arrival. Our journey is one which leads us deep into the human spirit, on an unfolding journey into the heart of Ultimate Beauty and Peace. This is the heart of my thanksgiving to God of my people, God of endless Ages (Ex 15, The Song of Moses): *Tony Barr*

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# Happy Are You

*Responsorial Song from Ps 128 for Sunday 27B*

INTRO ♩ = ca. 58

Flute

music & text from Ps 128 Tony Barr

Oboe or Clarinet (in F#m)

Fill our heart with peace and joy every day of our

Flute

Oboe or Clarinet (in F#m)

♩ REFRAIN

Flute *on selected Refrains*

Oboe or Clarinet *on selected Refrains*

Descants I+II *on selected Refrains*

All Fill \_\_\_ with peace \_\_\_ and joy \_\_\_ ev - 'ry \_\_\_ of our

Fill \_\_\_ our heart with peace and joy \_\_\_ ev \_\_\_ day of our

(Guitar tacet)

Em Am Bm7 C D

1-4

*to Verses or Final*

FI

life.

life.

life.

life.

Em

Am

B

Em

Am7

B

E

rall..

VERSES Psalmist (or Cantor) from the ambo

1. Hap - py are you who, filled with awe, have cho - sen God's  
2. Then may your wife be plen - ti - ful, a joy in your  
3. Day af - ter day, kept safe from harm, - il at  
4. In years to come, your child - ren's child - ren may in y

Em Em C Am

1. path. You shall en - joy your work each day, for  
2. home, ripe as the o - live; take de - light, your  
3. bay, may you be hap - py, pros - p'rous too, the  
4. sight! Peace shall be your's, kith and kin, con -

Em C Am G Em

1. fav - or and good fortune have found you. —  
2. chil - dren, grace, ta - ble. —  
3. bles - sings of Zion up - on you. —  
4. tent - ment through out all the Na - tion! —

Am Em B B7 Am

*D.S.*

# Happy Are You

*Responsorial Song from Ps 128 for Sunday 27B*

REFRAIN ♩ = ca. 58

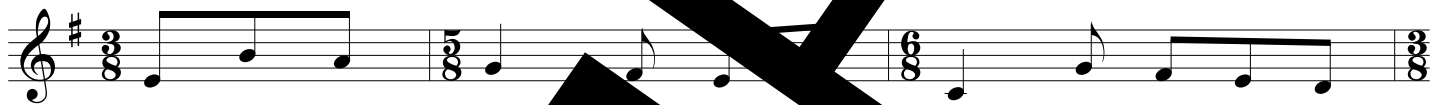
Music & text from Ps 128 Tony Barr

Descants I+II on selected Refrains



All Fill with peace and joy every day of our life.  
Fill our heart with peace and joy every day of life.

VERSES Psalmist (or Cantor) from the ambo



1. Hap - py are you filled with awe, have chos - en God's
2. Then may your wife be fruitful, a vine in your
3. Day af - ter day, safe from harm, with ev - il at
4. In years to come, your child - ren play in your



1. path. You shall joy your work each day, for
2. home, ripe as the olive; take de - light, your
3. bay, may you be - p'rous too, the
4. sight! Rejoice be yours, on kith and kin, con -



1. fav - or and for - tune have found you. \_\_\_\_\_
2. when there, trac - ing your ta - ble. \_\_\_\_\_
3. es - sings of - on up - on you. \_\_\_\_\_
4. ment - ment - all the Na - tion! \_\_\_\_\_

to Refrain