

TEACH US TO COUNT OUR DAYS

Responsorial Song from Psalm 90 for Sunday 28B
for Cantor, Assembly & Descant
with Keyboard, Eb Trumpet & Guitar

TONY BARR

*Never abandon your love for us,
that we may sing and dance for joy.*

Teach us to count our days,
may we gain wisdom of heart.
Why have you hidden your face?
How much longer must we still wait?
Come to rescue your own!

Fill us at dawn with love,
that we may sing out our joy.
Show us your favor and love,
may we prosper and be fruitful
and be pleasing to you.

Then wake your anger and come,
lead us to freedom and relief.
And never leave us, O God,
may our children sing of you,
our strength and our salvation.

Of late post-Exilic writing, Psalm 90 is a good example of lamentation, in which the three elements are rearranged. It begins with a hymn of confidence in God's faithfulness (generally the outcome or final stage of a lament), leading to the lamentation about human frailty and sinfulness, closing with prayers for help. These verses have been taken from the final section of the psalm.

Both the first reading and the second for a Sunday of Year B are from a Wisdom tradition. Wisdom is the feminine presence of God, with God's beginning. The first reading from Wisdom 7:7 begins, *I prayed and understanding was given to me, I pleaded and the spirit of Wisdom was given to me.* In the Gospel, Mark 10:17-30, a man ran up to Jesus and, calling him *Teacher*, asked what he might do to be welcomed into life without end. In their original simplicity, the Gospels regard Jesus as teacher, and not master, as the one who embraces the way of wisdom.

In this section of the psalm, requests about how to live, about gaining a fuller appreciation of how best to spend one's life. But rather than exciting dogmatic answers couched in credal statements, these answers are as simple as the questions which framed them - because they are lessons on life as framed by the questions themselves.

As it is written as a strophic song, though more unusually of 5 lines per verse, the meaning extends beyond the confines of the song. It is considered an open-form song, not only because of the assembly refrain but also because we derive their meaning from the context in which they are sung, the ritual moment of reflecting on the meaning of the questions, those particular Scripture readings. Hence the recommendation that the verses be preferred by a psalmist and from the ambo, the place of scriptural proclamation.

- Tony Barr

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INTRO ♩ = ca. 86

Music & text from Ps 90 Tony Barr

Piano introduction in G major, 4/4 time. The melody is in the right hand, and the bass line is in the left hand. The tempo is marked as ca. 86.

REFRAIN

Bb Trumpet on selected Refrains

Descant on selected Refrains

All Nev - er a - band - on your love.

Nev - er a - band - on your love that we may

G D Am D

Sing and for joy.

Sing and for joy.

Am7 Em7 D C/D G C/D

rit.

VERSES

Psalmist (or Cantor) from the ambo

1. Teach us to count our days, may we gain - dom art.
 2. Fill us at dawn with love, that we may out joy.
 3. Then wake your pow'r and come, lead us to a life!

G Em Am D C D Em7

a tempo

1. Why have you hid - den your face How long - er must we still wait?
 2. Show us your fav - or and grace, pros - per dai - ly through toil,
 3. And nev - er leave us to fate, our chil - dren sing of your name,

Cmaj7 G Am Bm Bm Gmaj7 Cmaj7

1. - cue your own!
 2. be to you.
 3. on suc - c is from you.

D Em7 Dsus4 C/D G C/D

rit.

to Refrain

SAMPLE

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REFRAIN ♩ = ca. 86

Descant on selected Refrains

Music & text from Ps 90 Tony Barr

All Nev - er a - ban - don your love.

Nev - er a - band - on your love we may

Sing and dance for joy.

sing and dance

VERSES

Psalmist (or Cantor) from the ambo

1. Teach us to count our days, may we gain wis - dom of heart.
2. Fill us at dawn with your love, that we may sing out our joy.
3. Then wake your pow'r and come, lead us to free - dom and life!

1. Why have you hid your face? How much long - er must we still wait?
2. Show us your favor and grace, may we pros - per dai - ly through toil,
3. And nev - er let us be brought down to fate, may our chil - dren sing of your name,

to Refrain

1. Come to us and we will give thanks, for you are our God.
2. For our days are in your hand, and our breath is in your power.
3. For our success is from you, and we are in your hand.