



GOD, YOU ARE MY GOD, FOR YOU I LONG

Responsorial Song for Morning Prayer from Psalm 63 for Sunday

22A

for Psalmist, Assembly, Decant & Duet

with Keyboard, Flute & Guitar

TONY BARR

*I thirst for you, my God.
I long to see you facet*

*phase one
distress and alienation*

God, you are my God, for you I long ,
my soul thirsts for you alone.
Always, my heart pines for you
like the parched, weary land, craving water.
I look to your Holy Place
to see your power and glory!

*phase two
despair born of remembrance*

I remember you as I lie on my bed,
all night my thoughts turn to you.
Always, you have kept me in safety,
in the shelter of your wings I delight!
I cling to you for protection,
your right hand shall guide and keep me.

*phase three
the oracular consultation*

*phase four
a rebirth of ecstatic contentment*

My life is a blessing to you,
my hands raised in song to your name.
You fill me with joy at your banquet,
every breath that I take shall praise you!
What are my days without your love?
My lips make constant thanksgiving;

Let all who try to destroy my life
be wiped from the face of the earth.
Your power drives injustice to flight,
the proud tumble down to the dust.
The just shall rejoice in your presence,
only the living shall give you glory!

As with all these psalm settings, instrumental pieces are to be played only if those instruments are available.
At its most basic form, all the psalm needs is a psalmist (cantor) and assembly.
Reommended is for two psalmists (cantors) singing alternating verses, determined by their vocal range.

Full	2
Score.....	7
Choral/Vocal	9
Score.....	10
A Lamentation from Exile.....	
A Liturgical Text.....	

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God, You Are My God, For You I Long

Responsorial Song from Psalm 63 for Sunday 22

INTRO ♩ = ca. 60

Music & text from Ps. 63 Tony Barr

Flute

Descant / Duet

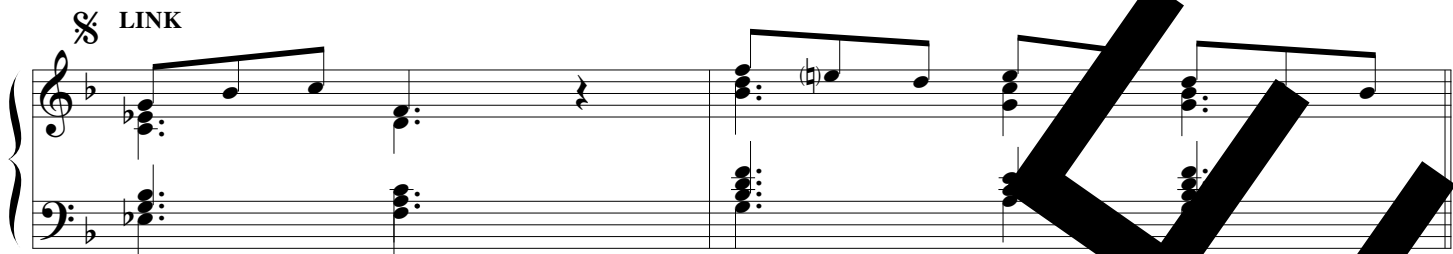
Psalmist (Cantor) / Assmibly

1st time only Psalmist (Cantor) at the start

I thank you, my God, I long to see your face.

Fmaj7 Gm7+2 Ebmaj7 Dm Cm7

LINK



REFRAIN

Flute on selected Refrains



Descant on selected Refrains



I thirst for you, my God; I long to see your face.



I thirst for you, my I long to see your face.



1.

to vv 1+3

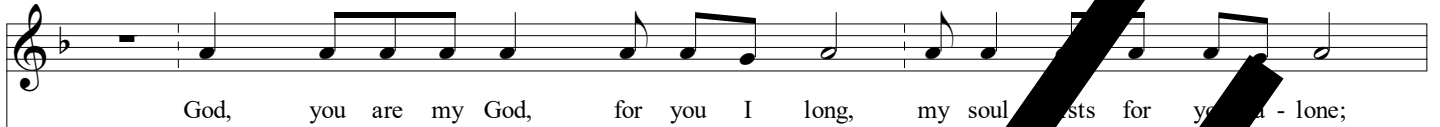
2.

vv 2+4

3. CODA



VERSE 1 Psalmist A (Cantor) *at the ambo*




God, you are my God, for you I long, my soul thirsts for you - lone;

VERSE 3 Psalmist A (Cantor) *at the ambo*



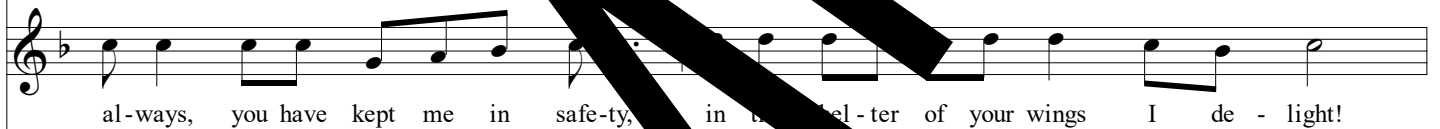
I re-memb-er you as I lie on my bed, all night my thoughts to



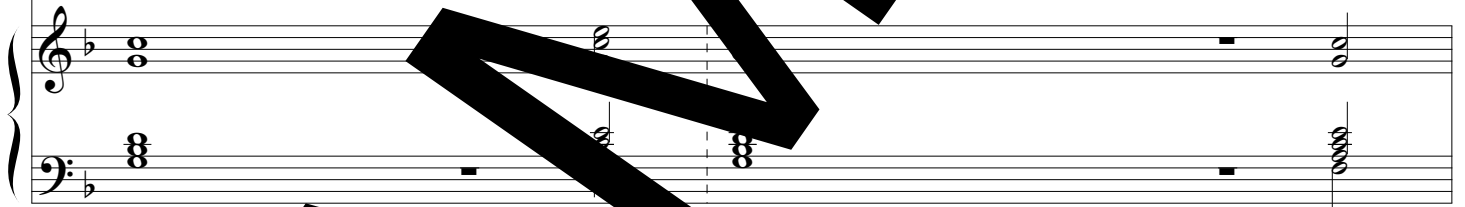
Piano accompaniment for Verse 3, featuring a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, showing chords and melodic lines.



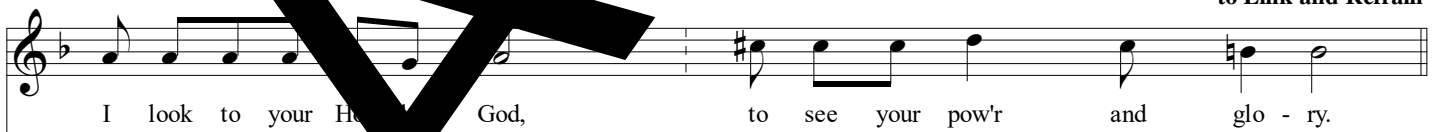
al-ways my heart pines for you like a parched, wea-ry land, crav-ing wa-ter.



al-ways, you have kept me in safe-ty, in the shel-ter of your wings I de-light!



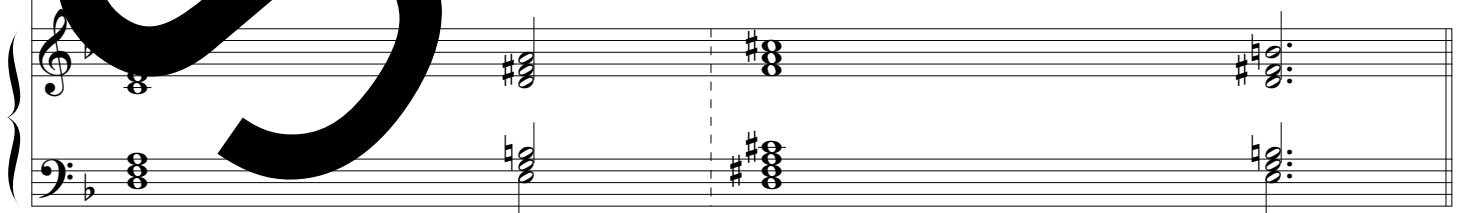
Piano accompaniment for Verse 3 continuation, featuring a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, showing chords and melodic lines.



I look to your Holy God, to see your pow'r and glo-ry.



I cling to your pro-tec-tion, your right hand shall guide and keep me.



Piano accompaniment for Verse 3 continuation, featuring a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, showing chords and melodic lines.

to Link and Refrain

VERSE 2 Duet

What are my days with-out your love? My lips make con-stant thank-giv-ing;

Psalmt (Cantor) B at the ambo

What are my days with-out your love? My lips make con-stant thank-giv-ing;

This block contains the musical notation for the first system of Verse 2. It features two vocal staves in a duet format, both in a B-flat major key signature. The lyrics are: "What are my days with-out your love? My lips make con-stant thank-giv-ing;". Below the vocal staves is a piano accompaniment consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and melodic lines.

VERSE 4 Duet

Let all who try to des-troy my life be wiped from the face of the earth.

Psalmt B (Cantor) at the ambo

Let all who try to des-troy my life be wiped from the face of the earth.

This block contains the musical notation for the second system of Verse 4. It features two vocal staves in a duet format, both in a B-flat major key signature. The lyrics are: "Let all who try to des-troy my life be wiped from the face of the earth.". Below the vocal staves is a piano accompaniment consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and melodic lines.

my life is a bless-ing to you, my hands raised in song to your name.

my life is a bless-ing to you, my hands raised in song to your name.

This block contains the musical notation for the third system of Verse 4. It features two vocal staves in a duet format, both in a B-flat major key signature. The lyrics are: "my life is a bless-ing to you, my hands raised in song to your name.". Below the vocal staves is a piano accompaniment consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and melodic lines.

Your wrath drives in-justice to flight, the proud tum-ble down to the dust.

Your wrath drives in-justice to flight, the proud tum-ble down to the dust.

This block contains the musical notation for the fourth system of Verse 4. It features two vocal staves in a duet format, both in a B-flat major key signature. The lyrics are: "Your wrath drives in-justice to flight, the proud tum-ble down to the dust.". Below the vocal staves is a piano accompaniment consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and melodic lines.

This block contains the musical notation for the fifth system of Verse 4. It features two vocal staves in a duet format, both in a B-flat major key signature. The lyrics are: "Your wrath drives in-justice to flight, the proud tum-ble down to the dust.". Below the vocal staves is a piano accompaniment consisting of two staves (treble and bass clef) with chords and melodic lines.

to link and Refrain

The musical score consists of five systems. The first four systems are vocal staves with lyrics. The fifth system is a piano accompaniment consisting of a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The lyrics are: 'You fill me with joy at your ban-quet, ev - 'ry breath that I take shall praise you.' and 'The just shall re-joyce in your pres-ence, on - ly the liv - ing shall give you glo - ry!'.

SAMPLE

God, You Are My God, For You I Long

Responsorial Song from Psalm 63 for Sunday 22

REFRAIN ♩ = ca. 60

Descant on selected Refrains

music & text from Ps. 63 Tony Barr

I thirst for you, my God; I long to see your face

All
I thirst for you, my God; I long to see your face

VERSE 1 Psalmist A (Cantor) *at the ambo*

God, you are my God, for you I long, my soul thirsts for you a-lone;

VERSE 3 Psalmist A (Cantor) *at the ambo*

I re-mem-ber you as I lie on my bed, all night my thoughts turn to you,
al-ways my heart pinns you, like a parched, wea-ry land, crav-ing wa-ter.
al-ways, you are in safe-ty, in the shel-ter of your wings I de-light!

to Link and Refrain

I long to see your pow'r and glo-ry.
I long to you for pro-tec-tion, your right hand shall guide and keep me.

VERSE 2 Duet

What are my days with-out your love? My lips make con-stant thank-giv-ing;
 Psalmist (Cantor) B *at the ambo*

VERSE 4 Duet

Let all who try to des-troy my life be wip-ed from the face of the earth.
 Psalmist B (Cantor) *at the ambo*

Let all who try to des-troy my life be wip-ed from the face of the earth.

VERSE 2 Duet

my life is a bless-ing to you, my hands raised in song to your name.
 my life is a bless-ing to you, my hands raised in song to your name.

VERSE 4 Duet

Your pow'r drives in - jus-tice to the proud tum-ble down to the dust.
 Your pow'r drives in - jus-tice to the proud tum-ble down to the dust.

Your pow'r drives in - jus-tice to the proud tum-ble down to the dust.

VERSE 2 Duet

to Link and Refrain

You fill me with joy at your ban-quet, ev-'ry breath that I take shall praise you.
 You fill me with joy at your ban-quet, ev-'ry breath that I take shall praise you.

VERSE 4 Duet

The just shall re-joice in your pres-ence, on-ly the liv-ing shall give you glo-ry!
 The just shall re-joice in your pres-ence, on-ly the liv-ing shall give you glo-ry!

The just shall re-joice in your pres-ence, on-ly the liv-ing shall give you glo-ry!

About Psalm 63 - A Lamentation in Exile.

Literary Origins

Psalm 63, a post-Exilic text, is composed of much older elements. Tradition claims it is a song of David, dating the oldest elements of the epic to around BC 1,000. Yet it is not found in the Davidic collection of psalms (which refers to God as Yahweh, the ever close and loving Lord) in the Northern collection (where god is Elohim, a distant and remote God of the Powers). This suggests that an earlier song from the Southern tradition was adapted at a later stage for use in the Northern shrine around 700-800 BC.

Many text references suggest a major post-exilic adaptation, when liturgical perceptions were greatly altered. There are at least six distinct references to the temple and its associated images or activities.

- v. 2a I look to your Holy Place: a phrase with strong liturgical connotations (see Psalm 134).
- v. 2b to see your power and glory: acknowledging the temple as God's living presence on earth.
- v. 3 my lips make constant thanksgiving: in Psalm. 51, ritual purification of the mouth preceded all proclamations of praise
- v. 4 my hands raised in song to your name: the prescribed attitude in public prayer (Lev 9:22, Sir 50:20).
- v. 5 every breath that I take shall praise you: a phrase active in the liturgical assembly where praise was a corporate event
- v. 7 in the shelter of your wings I take delight being in the temple is a sure sign of God's protection see Palms. 91, 121

This is essentially a liturgical song. Long after the fall of the Temple, when the Jews met only in Synagogue, this psalm of longing for God's presence retains its earliest associations with temple worship. Over the centuries, it has become a powerful one-piece for all who longed for the restoration of Israel to its former glory, where temple liturgies would once again flourish in the sight of God and the eyes of the nations.

It is part lamentation, part hymn of praise. Lamentation falls into four sections.

- phase one The psalmist expresses misery and despair: life has turned sour.
- phase two These turn to grief at being banished by God
- phase three A consultation with a fellow pilgrim-Obed restores trust in an ever-faithful God
- phase four Encouraged by the psalmist he praises God with joy

The surviving text of Ps. 63 seems to have lost phases two and three, and the final hymn of praise eclipses sections three and four. The elements of phase one and four are jumbled up, failing to provide a cohesive whole. This has led scholars to suggest re-ordering the verses: 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 4, 5, 3, 9, 10, 11c, 11a, 11b.

David is in exile, in the wilderness. He is fleeing from Saul (1 Sam 23:14, 1 Sam 24:2) or maybe from Absalom (2 Sam 15:14-24). Two contrasting images sum up Israel's existence: desert and temple. The psalm title, reflecting 1 Sam 22-24, conjures up the image of a King or other important temple figure cut off from the temple. For the temple was his life. Without temple activity (liturgy), God could be neither praised nor named; and without God, there could be no covenant relationship, no meaningful existence. What else is life, other than praising God daily in the temple? To be cut off from the assembly is to lose one's roots, to die. In this psalm we see the effects of exclusion from the liturgy: the psalmist is so homesick and so consumed with zeal for the house of the Lord (Ps. 69:9) that he can no longer live in isolation from it. This song of longing becomes a magnet to draw future generations towards the temple.

The Music Setting

All who seek God's face sing of this in the liturgical assembly. We proclaim a God of the Living who requires that we be made acceptable through a commitment to justice, achieving the harmonic reordering of society. To sing is the breath and share the air so that our proclamation may offer such hope of liberation.

- Tony Barr

While calling for chant notation, I have superimposed regular notation, to highlight the accentuation of the text, which singers seem to prefer. Even verses called for a duet, between high and low voices. They also modulate down by a full tone for variety, color, and to animate attentiveness. The accompaniment is based on

A Liturgical Text

v. 1 **God, you are my God** This is the cry of someone for whom God was once close at hand, the God who walked hand in hand with Adam in the garden. But the title here addresses a remote, disinterested God of the desert and open spaces. Perhaps this is a call of longing to return to former times, when a united nation enjoyed the protection of a God who was more personally present at hand.

v. 1 **For you I long** The verb literally means to turn to in time of trouble. Its origins were in the word for dawn and probably meant I look for the safety of the light of dawn, as seen in Ps. 130 by the night-watch people awaiting the dawn. Dawn also means enlightenment and fulfillment.

v. 1 **My soul thirsts for you** This recalls Ps. 42-43, where the deer is the symbol of the intense longing, heartache, of the psalmist for God. The psalm later describes the soul as a parched, weary land, craving water.

v. 2 **My eyes turn to your Holy Place** This echoes the text of Is. 63 describing the theophany (appearance of God) which accompanied the prophet's journey through the wilderness. The verb turn towards also means to receive prophetic visions. It suggests the psalmist was already in God, or wishing to see God, through the cultic acts, signs and institutions of the temple liturgy.

v. 2 **To see your power and glory** A liturgical mode for the use of the Ark of the Covenant, in which God's presence resided (1 Sam 4:21, Ps. 24:7, Ps. 132:1-5).

v. 3 **What is my life without your love** Any life without being able to acclaim God's covenant in liturgy is worse than death itself. To be alive and not able to share in God's steadfast love is far more terrifying than physical death.

v. 3 **My lips are constant...my whole life in blessing you...my hands raised as I sing your name.** These gestures refer to the temple activities of corporate prayer. Only in community can Covenant be recalled and celebrated. Only in the assembly can God be named, only in the song of the believers.

v. 5 **You fill me from your banquet** This recalls the messianic banquet of Ps. 23. It is the vision of Ps. 72 of a creation restored by a person who had returned faithful to the Covenant. Their reward, according to Ps. 95, would be to enjoy God's abundance and God's rest.

v. 6 **I remember you as I lie on my bed** This is not sleep-time but the watches of the night, the hours for keeping vigils in remembrance of the Lord's day. In earlier times, night was to be feared because of the beasts which prowled in the darkness and the host of enemies associated with the moon (see Pss. 91 & 121).

v. 8 **Your right hand will show me protection.** Ps. 118 sings of God's redeeming power, symbolized in the outstretched right hand. It is a symbol of victory to all who hoped in the Lord.

Let no one try to destroy my life. In the images which follow, the psalmist appears to be speaking the mind of God. All who pursue injustice will reap the fruits of their labors. Injustice is the undoing of creation. In the Restoration, everything that contributed to the Fall would be wiped away. Not one, single, creature would remain in existence.

Let the just shall be happy. Originally, the text says then will the king rejoice in God. The king in Israel's consciousness was a remainder of the God who lived in the midst of Israel. The king represented not only God as source of all justice, but also the nation of those who had been chosen to be just in God. The King represented the justice of God on earth, and all who abode by Covenant share in this responsibility.