



## **GATHER NOW THIS DAY, BE JOYFUL**

Responsorial Song from Psalm 95 for Sunday 23A  
Gathering Invitatory Psalm for Morning Prayer  
for Psalmist (Cantor), Assembly & Descant  
with Keyboard, Woodwinds & Guitar

**TONY BARR**

*If today you hear God's voice,  
harden not your heart.*

Gather now this day, be joyful,  
and acclaim in song the Rock, Who is our safety.  
Coming in thanksgiving and gladness,  
raise your voice in psalm and chant to One who calls us.

God is all strong, and powerful,  
and far greater than the gods of other nations.  
Who has shaped the earth, cast the oceans,  
and Who lifted up the dry land, forged the mountains.

Raise your hand and heart in worship,  
and bend low before the One who shaped and formed  
us.  
Holy the One who has called us,  
he is holy the shepherd king who guides us.

Listen to God's voice this day:  
do not harden your heart, as in the desert,  
where your people stopped and defied me;  
even when they saw my power, still they doubted me.

"Forty long years I endured them,  
as I watched them go astray and choosing false gods.  
Angry, I swore to destroy them:  
never shall they enter shabbat peace, denied to them!

### **A Brief Story About Psalm 95**

This psalm is a conflation of a hymn of praise (1+2) and a prophetic warning (3+4). Both hymns are believed to be post-Exilic, and thematically codependent. The psalm formed a processional rite of entrance into the Temple for Sabbath day worship. In praising the God of Sabbath came the warning of the dire outcome of apostasy. Sabbath is a celebration of the Seventh Day, of God's rest from creating. It was day of eschatological peace for all who remain faithful to Covenant. All who reneged on the requirements of Covenant, to work for the restoration of a Creation rendered imperfect, would be disbarred from the completion of God's creative plan.

In Christian tradition, the psalm is sung as an invitation to Morning Prayer, carrying both a welcome and a warning. All who gather for in worship are reminded of the biblical mandate, that there can be no praise without justice. To address the One Whom we call God (Who is beyond all names) is to assume the responsibility of working for a world order in which peace through justice would ensure the dignity of all Creation.

- *Tony Barr*

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*See page 2 for performance notes*

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**JM 633**

# Gather Now This Day, Be Joyful

*Responsorial Song from Psalm 95 for Sunday 23  
Gathering Invitatory Song for Morning Prayer*

Music & text from Ps. 95 Tony Barr

INTRO  $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 90$

Am Em7 A

1st time only: Psalmist (Cantor) *from the ambo*

If to - day you hear God's voice, do not harden not your heart.  
D Bm G Em7sus4 A

## Advice to Performers

If you have flute and woodwind, use them if not, don't.

This psalm is intended for Psalmist (Cantor) and Assembly and works well unaccompanied

A simple guitar will not only support the singing but will add rhythmic and harmonic ambiance

As with many of these psalms, there is a choral descant which may be omitted

If it is sung, it divides at the end for really high voices for sopranos who like to strut their stuff

The descant is pretty but is not necessary.

Assuming there is a piano present I have provided a simple, modular accompaniment

An accomplished player may wish to improvise within the rhythmic and harmonic structure, which is good

Other instruments may be added to good effect and children are always encouraged

Music belongs to everyone and never to the notes on the printed page

What is most important is not musical perfection but the energetic participation of the entire assembly.

Those who are not excluded from this.

**REFRAIN**

*Flute on selected Refrains*

Musical staff for Flute part, showing a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4.

*Oboe (or Clarinet transposed) on selected Refrains*

Musical staff for Oboe (or Clarinet transposed) part, showing a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4.

*Descant on selected Refrains*

Musical staff for Descant part, showing a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4.

If to - day you hear God's voice, har - d not your heart.

All

Musical staff for vocal part, showing a melodic line in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4, C4.

If to - day you hear God's voice, har - d not your heart.

D Bm G C F#m7sus4 A

Piano accompaniment for the refrain, showing chords and a bass line in treble and bass clefs with a key signature of two sharps. The chords are: D, Bm, G, C, F#m7sus4, A.

**SAMPLE**

Sunday 23A: The Lectionary verses are 1, 3, 4  
but the integrity of the Psalm, a conflation of two hymns,  
may be best respected by singing all 5 verses

VERSES

Flute on Verses 1, 3, 5

Oboe (Clarinet) on Verses 2, 4, 5

Psalmist (Cantor) from the ambo

1. Ga - ther now this day, be - ful, and ac -
2. God is all strong, and po - ful, and far
3. Raise your hand and heart in wo - ship, and bend
4. Lis - ten to God's day: do not
5. "For - ty long years en - d them, as I

D A F#m m

1. claim in song Rock, Who is our safe - ty.
2. than the gods of oth - er na - tions.
3. Now be - fore the One who shaped and formed us.
- har - den your heart, as in the des - ert,
- watched the go - stray and choos - ing false gods.

G D Em7 A

1. Com - ing in thanks - giv - ing and re - spon - siveness, raise your  
 2. Who has shaped the earth, cast the sea - ns, and Who  
 3. Ho - ly the One who has called us, he is  
 4. where your peo - ple stopped and de - fied me; ev - en  
 5. Ang - ry, I swore to de - stroy them: nev - er

D F#m Bm

*D.S.*

1. voice in psalm and chant to One who calls us.  
 2. up the dry land, forged the moun - tains.  
 3. Ho - ly the - herd king who guides us.  
 when they say peo - ple, still they doubt - ed me.  
 shall they en - shab - bat peace, de - nied to them!

Em Cmaj7 Em7 Asus4 A

*D.S.*

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REFRAIN ♩ = ca. 90

Descant on selected Refrains

Music & text from Ps. 95 Tony Barr

If to - day you hear God's voice, har - den not your heart  
 All  
 If to - day you hear God's voice, har - den not your heart

VERSES Psalmist (Cantor) from the ambo

1. Ga - ther now this day, be joy - ful, and ac -  
 2. God is all strong, and pow'r - ful, and far  
 3. Raise your hand and heart wor - ship, and bend  
 4. Lis - ten to God's voice this day: do not  
 5. "For - ty long ye I dured them, as I

1. claim in song the Rock, Who is safe - ty.  
 2. great - er than gods of na - tions.  
 3. low be - fore who shaped and formed us.  
 4. har - den your heart, the des - ert,  
 5. watched them go a - way and choos - ing false gods.

1. Com - ing in thank - ing and glad - ness, raise your  
 2. Who has shaped the earth, cast the o - ceans, and Who  
 3. Ho - ly the One who has called us, he is  
 4. where your peo - ple stopped and de - fied me; ev - en  
 5. A - gain he swore to de - stroy them: nev - er

voice psalm and chant to One who calls us.  
 2. led up the dry land, forged the moun - tains.  
 3. no - ly the shep - herd king who guides us.  
 4. when they saw my pow'r, still they doubt - ed me.  
 5. shall - ter shab - bat peace, de - nied to them!