

Foreword

In his introduction to Psalms in *The Message*, Eugene Peterson says that the psalms teach us how to pray, how to give voice to our most basic human emotions; thankfulness, anger, loneliness, grief and frustration. In this collection we have paired a musical reflection on each psalm with a brief prayer or meditation on that psalm.

If the Psalm Meditation is played as a prelude or offertory the meditation prayer could be read aloud before the music is played, or printed in the bulletin to be read or prayed silently during the playing of the music. The Psalm Meditation could be presented with words, music, and dance; a reader might read the meditation/prayer first, and a dancer would interpret the music as it is played.

~ John Carter and Mary Kay Beall

Psalm Meditations for Piano
John Carter

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Editors: Norma Aamodt-Nelson, Mark Weiler
Engraver: Vaimar Music Engraving

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences—Permanence of Paper for Printed Materials, ANSI Z329.48-1984.

Printed in the U.S.A.
ISBN 978-1-4514-6262-3

17 16 15 14 13 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

for Harvey Scholl

Psalm 8

John Carter

O God, your name is awesome!
 Your power is amazing!
 Your creation is wonderful . . . beyond understanding.
 When I think about who you are
 and what you have done
 and how small I am,
 I wonder why you love me
 and yet I know you do.
 I know you love and care for all of us.
 O God, you are an awesome God!

~ Mary Kay Beall

Majestic with marked rhythm

The musical score is written in 4/4 time and consists of three systems. The first system is marked *ff* and *r.h.* (right hand), featuring a majestic, marked rhythm with chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand. The second system is marked *sub. mp* and *cresc.* (crescendo), with a more melodic line in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The third system continues the melodic line in the right hand and chords in the left hand, ending with a *ff* dynamic.

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Psalm 13

John Carter

*Where are you when I need you, Lord?
Are you hiding from me?
Have you forgotten me?
I long to hear your voice
and be reassured that you are with me.*

*Even when I feel abandoned and frustrated,
I continue to trust in you
because I know you love me,
and that assurance is my strength and song!*

~ Mary Kay Beall

Moderately slow, languid

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with a *mf* dynamic marking. The second system includes a *f* dynamic marking and a grace note marked with an asterisk (*). The score features a mix of eighth and quarter notes in the right hand, and block chords and single notes in the left hand. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

* slide thumb off grace note

This composition is based on a double harmonic scale: the second and sixth degrees are lowered on what is basically a major scale. It is sometimes known as an Arabic or Byzantine scale.

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in memory of Ray Allen

Psalm 23

John Carter

When I am in need, God promises to fulfill my needs.
 When I am unsettled, God promises to restore me.
 When I am frightened, God promises protection and comfort.
 When I am in need of food or healing, God promises to provide more than I ask.
 When I cry out for mercy, God promises forgiveness.
 In life and in death, God promises to be present with me through it all.

~ Mary Kay Beall

Quietly and sustained

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and includes a triplet of eighth notes in the treble. The second system continues the accompaniment with similar rhythmic patterns. The third system features a fortissimo (f) dynamic followed by a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic, with a triplet of eighth notes in the treble. The bass line consists of a steady accompaniment of chords and eighth notes.

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in memory of Dorothy Churchill and Forrest Goodenough

Psalm 47

John Carter

*Remember God and be joyful.
Remember how God has been victorious in the past.
Remember who God is and what God has done.
Remember and sing God's praise.*

~ Mary Kay Beall

Spirited with marked rhythm

The musical score for Psalm 47 is written for piano in 5/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The first system begins with a forte (f) dynamic. The second system includes mezzo-piano (mp) and forte (f) markings. The third system continues with the forte (f) dynamic. The fourth system starts with mezzo-piano (mp) and includes a forte (f) marking. The music is characterized by a spirited and marked rhythm, with various articulations and dynamics throughout.

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*for Mary Kay Beall***Psalm 51**

John Carter

*Forgive me, Lord.
 Wash me and make me clean.
 Change my heart.
 Draw me close to you.
 Restore my joy.
 Touch my lips and I will sing your praise.*

~ Mary Kay Beall

Moderately with assurance

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. It consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The third system includes a triplet in the right hand. The score is written for piano and includes a variety of musical notations such as chords, eighth notes, and rests.

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for Bill Shorney
Psalm 84

John Carter

*When I enter your sanctuary,
 your presence there
 makes it beautiful
 and I cannot keep from singing.*

*When I am in your sanctuary,
 I know I have found my true home.*

*Your presence is my light and my protection.
 I know that you will shower me with good things
 if I will only trust you.*

~ Mary Kay Beall

Lyricaly

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three systems of music. The first system starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system continues the piece. The third system includes a ritardando (*rit.*) marking followed by a return to the original tempo (*a tempo*). The score features a mix of chords and melodic lines in both the treble and bass staves.

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for Ron and Donna Solove

Psalm 121

John Carter

*Sometimes I need help
and I need to remember on whom to call.
God is my helper.
God is always awake to hear my call.
God knows when I walk out the door
and when I come home,
and God's protection will keep me safe forever.*

~ Mary Kay Beall

Moderate tempo, lyrically and sustained

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time, featuring a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is divided into three systems of four measures each. The first system begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system continues the piece. The third system includes dynamic markings of mezzo-forte (*mf*) and crescendo (*cresc.*). The piece concludes with a sustained bass line in the final measure.

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Psalm 130

John Carter

*When I have hit bottom and am out of options,
I cry out to God.
God is always there for me
to listen,
to help,
and to forgive.
I am learning every day to wait on God.*

~ Mary Kay Beall

Slow and sombre

The musical score is written for piano in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with a *mf* dynamic and includes a *rit.* marking. The second system features a *mp* dynamic followed by a *mf* dynamic. The third system starts with a *rit.* marking and concludes with an *a tempo* marking. The score uses a grand staff with treble and bass clefs, and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

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in memory of John Ness Beck

Psalm 137

John Carter

*I am homesick and heartsick.
I feel like I'm in a strange new land
and home is all I can think about.
How can I sing or feel joy in this unfamiliar place?
I will never be at peace until I can feel I am at home.*

~ Mary Kay Beall

Moderately slow, sustained

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time. It consists of three systems of music. The first system begins with a *mf* dynamic and the instruction "Moderately slow, sustained". The second system includes a *poco rit.* marking. The third system is marked *a tempo*. The bass line features a consistent eighth-note accompaniment, often starting with a piano (*p.*) dynamic. The treble clef contains the main melodic and harmonic lines, including some chords with a fermata.

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Psalm 150

John Carter

*Here in God's house, I am blessed.
I cannot contain my joy!
I want to praise God for all God has done.
So today, let my voice be joined by other voices
and by trumpets and tambourines
and strings and pipes and cymbals,
and let all of the sounds of praise
be an offering to a great and wonderful God.*

~ Mary Kay Beall

Moderately fast with marked rhythm

ff

poco rit. dim.

mf a tempo

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