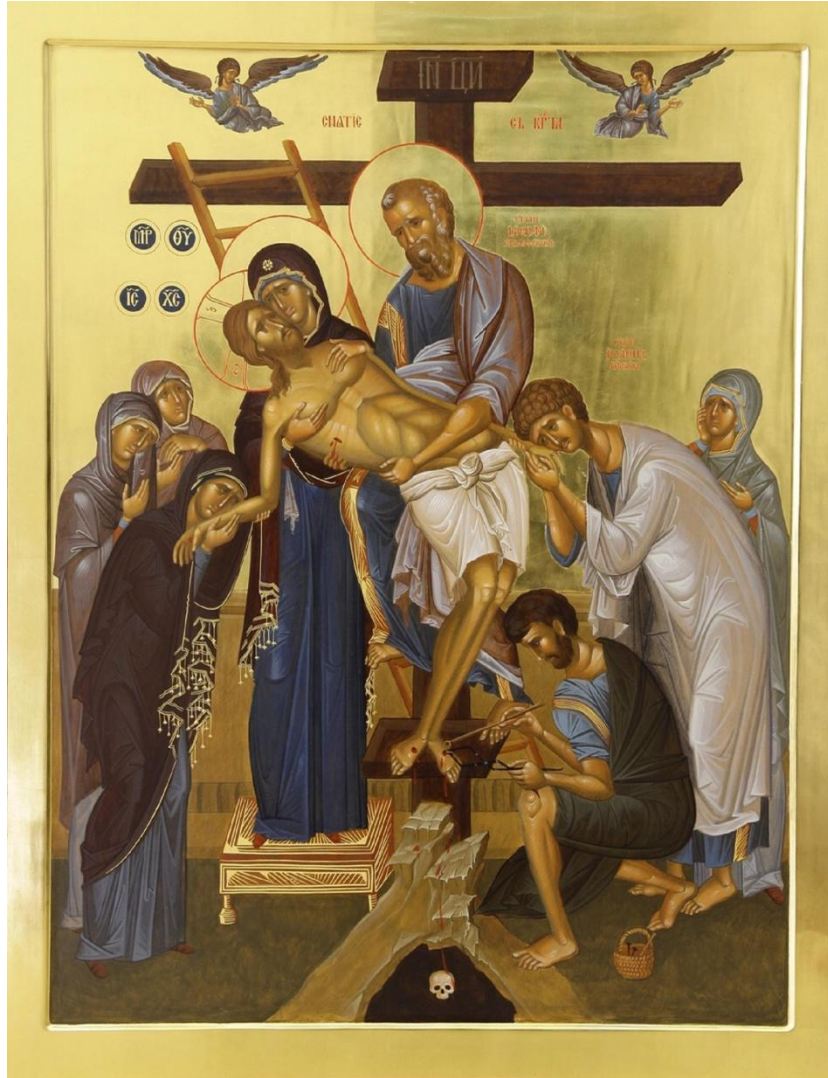


Paul Stetsenko



Service of Tenebrae

For 8 singers (SSAATTBB) with 3-octave handbells

Notes

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

This composition was written for a Holy Week service at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Alexandria, Virginia, where the composer was music director.

The vocal ensemble is two sopranos, two altos, two tenors, and two basses, all accompanied by 3-octave handbells (handchimes can be used instead, too). With each subsequent chorus, a singer drops out so that the last number is sung by a soprano solo. The opening number is a canon. It can be sung in various ways, from simple unison to 8-part canon.

Passion accounts from various Gospels may be read in between the numbers, and extinguishing candles may also supplement the liturgical action.

1. I will watch beside my Jesus; I will gladly submit myself to take up the Cross and to drink from the cup. He is ready to drink the cup wherein all the sins of the world are poured by the hands of the sinners.
2. Whither shall I flee from thy spirit, whither shall I leave thee, too?
Thou knowest my thoughts from afar, before a word is on my tongue.
Thou knowest me completely, O Lord my God.
3. I have denied Thee many times, but my soul longeth after Thee like a hart for water-brooks.
Teach me true allegiance, have mercy, my God, abide with me, O Christ.
4. Give me back my Jesus, take back the money, the wages of murder. I have sinned, my sins are coins in Judas' purse.
5. I strew Thy way, I sang the praises, resounding Hosannas to Thee; but then I cried, Crucify him!"
in all my breath, thirsty for Thy death to wash away my sins.
6. In Thy most bitter Passion, O Lord, is Thy victory. To mock Thy reign, O King, we made a crown of thorns; Thy scarlet kingly robe is a garment of mercy, covering our naked shame, a scepter reed is a shepherd staff to lead us to thy true light.
7. The guiltless does with the guilty. My sins are crucified with Thee, like thieves. 'Twas I, my Lord, my King who crucified Thee.
8. It is fulfilled, the end has come. Am I from death forever free? Thou bowest Thy head in silent "yes."

The First Candle is extinguished

pp

A piano introduction in C major, 4/4 time. The right hand features a series of chords and arpeggiated figures, while the left hand provides a simple harmonic accompaniment. The piece begins with a piano (*pp*) dynamic.

Canon 1

I will

The first line of the canon, starting with a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The key signature changes to B-flat major. The vocal line begins with the words "I will".

2 3 4 5

watch be-side my Je - sus; I will glad - ly sub-mit my - self to

The second line of the canon, continuing the vocal line with piano accompaniment. The key signature remains B-flat major.

6 7 8

take up the Cross and to drink from the cup. He is

The third line of the canon, continuing the vocal line with piano accompaniment.

read - y to drink the cup where-in all the sins of the

The fourth line of the canon, continuing the vocal line with piano accompaniment.

world are poured by the hands of the sin - ners.

The fifth and final line of the canon, concluding the vocal line with piano accompaniment.

Piano accompaniment for the first system, measures 1-2. The music is in common time (C) and begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a series of chords and a melodic line, while the left hand provides a steady bass line.

Piano accompaniment for the second system, measures 3-4. The music continues with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand has a triplet of chords in the first measure, followed by a melodic line. The left hand continues with a steady bass line.

Soprano I & II
Alto I & II
Tenor I & II
Bass I

6 *f* Whith - er shall I flee from thy
6 *f* Whith - er shall I flee from thy
8 *f* Whith - er shall I flee from thy
6 *f* Whith - er shall I flee from thy

Vocal staves for Soprano I & II, Alto I & II, Tenor I & II, and Bass I. Each staff begins with a measure rest (indicated by a dash) and then enters with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The lyrics are "Whith - er shall I flee from thy".

Piano accompaniment for the third system, measures 5-6. The music continues with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a series of chords and a melodic line, while the left hand provides a steady bass line.

9

Sopr I & II
spir - it, whit - er shall I leave thee, too? Thou

Alto I & II
spir - it, whit - er shall I leave thee, too? Thou

Ten I & II
8
9 spir - it, whit - er shall I leave too? Thou

Bass I
spir - it, whit - er shall I leave thee, too? Thou

12

Sopr I & II
know - est my thoughts from a - far, be - fore a word is on my

Alto I & II
know - est my thoughts from a - far, be - fore a word is on my

Ten I & II
8
12 know - est my thoughts from a - far, be - fore a word is on my

Bass I
12 know - est my thoughts from a - far, be - fore a word is on my

15 *p*

Sopr I & II
tongue. Thou know - est me com - plete - ly, com - plete - ly, O Lord my

Alto I & II
tongue. Thou know - est me com - plete - ly, com - plete - ly, O Lord my

Ten I & II
8
tongue. Thou know - est me com - plete - ly, Lord my

Bass I
15 *p*
tongue. Thou know - est me com - plete - ly, O

18 *pp*

Sopr I & II
God, Lord my God.

Alto I & II
pp
God, Lord my God.

Ten I & II
8
God, my God.

Bass I
18 *pp*
Lord my God,

18 *pp* *ppp*

The Third Candle is extinguished

Piano introduction in C major, 4/4 time. The right hand features a series of chords and a melodic line, while the left hand provides a simple harmonic accompaniment. A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is present.

Soprano I & II: I have de -

Alto I & II: I have de - nied Thee man - y

Tenors I & II: I have de - nied Thee man - y times, but my

First system of vocal and piano accompaniment. It includes staves for Soprano I & II, Alto I & II, Tenors I & II, and the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "I have de -", "I have de - nied Thee man - y", and "I have de - nied Thee man - y times, but my". A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is present.

Soprano I & II: nied Thee man - y times, but my soul long-est af-ter

Alto I & II: times, but my soul long-est af-ter Thee like a hart for

Tenors I & II: soul long-est af-ter Thee like a hart for wa - ter - brooks.

Second system of vocal and piano accompaniment. It includes staves for Soprano I & II, Alto I & II, Tenors I & II, and the piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "nied Thee man - y times, but my soul long-est af-ter", "times, but my soul long-est af-ter Thee like a hart for", and "soul long-est af-ter Thee like a hart for wa - ter - brooks.". A piano (*p*) dynamic marking is present.

9

Sopr I & II *f*
Thee like a hart for wa-ter-brooks. Teach me true al - le-giance, have

Alto I & II *f* *f*
wa - ter - brooks. Teach me true al - le - giance, have mer - cy, have

Ten I & II *f*
Teach me true al - le - giance, have mer - cy, have

12

Sopr I & II *p* *pp*
mer - cy, my God, a - bide with me, O Christ.

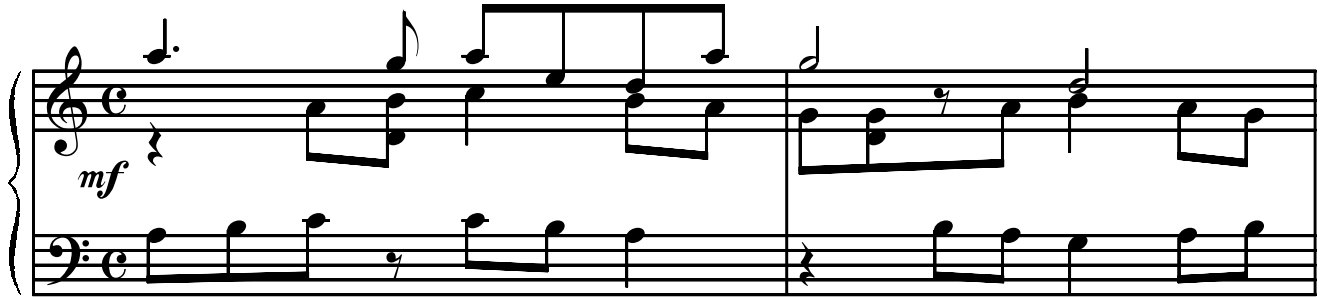
Alto I & II *p* *pp*
mer - cy, my God, a - bide with me, O Christ.

Ten I & II *p* *pp*
mer - cy, my God, a - bide with me, O Christ.

15

pp

The Fourth Candle is extinguished



mf

Piano introduction in C major, 4/4 time. The right hand features a melodic line with a dotted quarter note followed by eighth notes, and a triplet of eighth notes. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment of quarter notes.



p

Soprano I: Give me back my Je - sus, take back the

Soprano II: Give me back my Je - sus,

Alto I: Give me back my Je - sus, take back the mon - ey, the wag - es of

Alto II: Give me back my Je - sus, take back the mon - ey, the

Tenor I: Give me back my Je - sus, take back the mon - ey, the wag - es of mur - der.

p

Piano accompaniment for the vocalists, featuring a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand and a steady accompaniment in the left hand.

6 *crescendo*

Sopr I
mon - ey, the wag - es of mur - - - - - der.

Sopr II
take back the mon - ey, the wag - es of mur - der.

Alto I
mur - der. I have sinned, my sins are man - y

Alto II
wag - es of mur - der. I have sinned, my

Ten I
8 I have sinned, my sins are man - y coins in

6 *crescendo*

8 *f*

Sopr I
I have sinned, my sins are coins in Ju - das' purse.

Sopr II
8 *f*
I have sinned, my sins are man - y coins in Ju - das' purse.

Alto I
f
coins in Ju - das' purse, in Ju - das' purse.

Alto II
f
sins are man - y coins in Ju - - - das' purse.

Ten I
8 *f*
Ju - das' purse, in Ju - - - das' purse.

8 *f*

The Fifth Candle is extinguished

Soprano I

Alto I

p

I strew thy

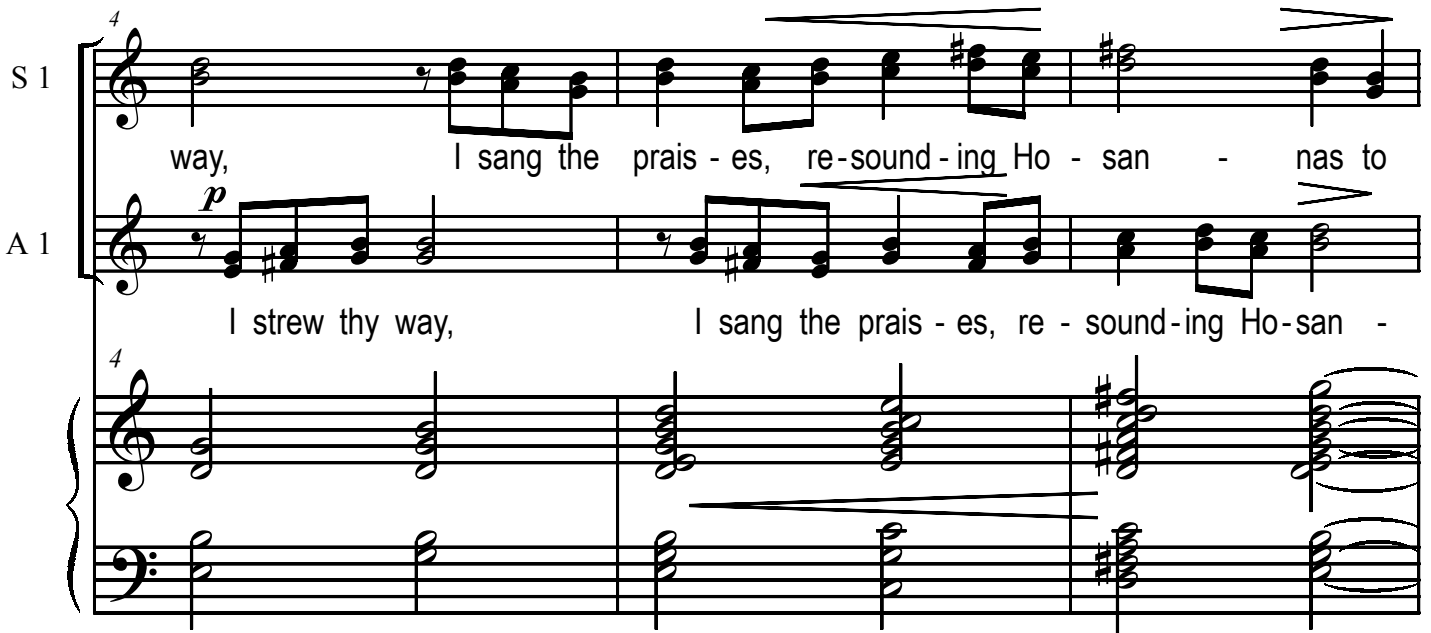


S 1

A 1

way, I sang the prais - es, re-sound - ing Ho - san - nas to

I strew thy way, I sang the prais - es, re - sound - ing Ho-san -



7 *f*

S 1
thee... but then I cried, "Cru-ci-fy him!" in all my

A 1
nas to thee... but then I cried, "Cru-ci-fy him!"

10

S 1
breath, thirst - y for thy death to wash a -

A 1
in all my breath, thirst - y for thy death to

12 *p*

S 1
way my sins.

A 1
wash a - way my sins.

12 *p* *ppp*

The Sixth Candle is extinguished

Soprano I *p*
In thy most bit - ter Pass - ion, O Lord, is thy

Soprano II *p*
In thy most bit - ter

Alto

Piano *p*

S ³
vic - to-ry. To mock thy reign, O King, we made a

S
Pass-ion, O Lord, is thy vic - to-ry. To mock thy

A *p*
In thy most bit - ter Pass-ion, O Lord, is thy

Piano ³

5

S crown of thorns; thy scar - let king - ly robe is a

S reign, O King, we made a crown of thorns; thy

A vic - to - ry. To mock thy reign, O King, we made a

7

S gar - ment of mer - cy, cov - er - ing our na - ked shame, a

S scar - let king - ly robe is a gar - ment of mer - cy,

A crown of thorns; thy scar - let king - ly robe is a

9

S scep - ter reed is a shep - herd staff to

S cov - er - ing our na - ked shame, a scep - ter reed is a

A gar - ment of mer - cy, cov - er - ing our na - ked shame, a

9

11

S lead us to thy true light.

S shep-herd staff to lead us to thy true light.

A scep - ter reed is a shep-herd staff to lead us to thy true light.

11

The Seventh Candle is extinguished

Soprano I

Soprano II

p

S

The guilt-less dies with the guilt-y. My sins are cru-ci-fied with

S

The guilt-less dies with the guilt-y. My

8

S thee, like thieves. 'Twas I, my Lord, my King, who cru-ci-

S sins are cru-ci-fied with thee, like thieves. 'Twas I, my Lord, my

11

S fied thee.

S King, who cru-ci-fied thee.

11

15

S

S

15

The Christ Candle is extinguished

Soprano I

sempre pp

S

4 *p*

It is ful-filled, the end has come. Am I

S

8 3 3

from death for-ev - er free? Thou bow - est thy head... thou

11

S

bow - est thy head in si - lent "Yes."

11

ppp

14

S

It is ful - filled...

14

ppp chime tree