

# Psalm 139

*Domine, probasti*

In honor of Missy Daniel, and in thanksgiving  
for her devoted support of music at Christ Church

Chris Biemesderfer (b.1958)

## Unison

*mf* 1) O Lord, thou hast searched me out, and known me.

Thou knowest my down-sitting,  
and mine uprising; )  
thou understandest my THOUGHTS long be - fore.

2) Thou art about my path, and a - bout my bed;

and art ac - quainted with all my ways.

Psalm 139

**SATB**

3) For lo, there is not a word in my tongue,

but thou, O Lord, knowest it al - to - gether.

4) Thou hast beset me be - hind and be - fore,

and laid thine hand up - on me.

Psalm 139

**SATB**

*2nd half of chant*

5) Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me;

I cannot at - TAIN unto it.

Psalm 139

**TB**

*mp* 6) Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit?

or whither shall I go then from thy presence?

7) If I climb up into heaven, thou art there;

if I go down to hell, thou art THERE also.

## Psalm 139

**SA**

SA

8) If I take the wings of the morning,

The musical score is written for a single melodic line on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo/mood is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The lyrics are "8) If I take the wings of the morning,". The melody consists of a single line of music. The first measure contains the lyrics "8) If I take the" and the second measure contains "wings of". The third measure contains "the" and the fourth measure contains "morning,". The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style with a mix of eighth and quarter notes.

and remain in the utter - most parts of the sea;

9) Even there also shall thy hand lead me,

The musical score is written for two voices, Soprano and Bass, in a single system. The Soprano part is on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The Bass part is on a bass clef staff with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The music is in 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "9) Even there also shall thy hand lead me,". The Soprano part has a whole note chord (F4, C5) for the first measure, a half note (F4) for the second, a half note (C5) for the third, and a whole note chord (F4, C5) for the fourth. The Bass part has a whole note chord (B3, F4) for the first measure, a half note (B3) for the second, a half note (F4) for the third, and a whole note chord (B3, F#4) for the fourth.

and thy right hand shall hold me.

Psalm 139

**SATB**

*mf* 10) If I say, Peradventure the darkness shall cover me;

then shall my night be turned to day.

11) Yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee, ) but the night is as clear as the day;

the darkness and light to thee are both a - like.

Psalm 139

**SATB**

*New chant*

*mf* 12) For my reins are thine;

thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

13) I will give thanks unto thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made:

marv'lous are thy works, ) and that my soul knoweth right well.

Psalm 139

**SA**

14) My bones are not hid from thee,

This system contains measures 14 through 17. The vocal parts are Soprano (SA) and Alto. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature is 8/8. The lyrics are: "14) My bones are not hid from thee,". The music features a simple harmonic setting with a steady bass line and moving vocal lines.

though I be made secretly, and fashioned be - neath in the earth.

This system contains measures 18 through 21. The lyrics are: "though I be made secretly, and fashioned be - neath in the earth." The musical notation continues the previous system, with the vocal parts maintaining the same harmonic structure.

**TB**

15) Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being im - perfect;

This system contains measures 22 through 25. The vocal parts are Tenor (TB) and Bass. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The time signature is 8/8. The lyrics are: "15) Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being im - perfect;". The music continues with the same harmonic setting.

and in thy book were all my mem - bers written;

This system contains measures 26 through 29. The lyrics are: "and in thy book were all my mem - bers written;". The musical notation concludes the previous system, with the vocal parts maintaining the same harmonic structure.



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**Unison** 2nd half of chant

16) Which day by day were fashioned,

when as YET there was none of them.

Psalm 139

**SATB**

17) How dear are thy counsels unto me, O God;

This system of the musical score for SATB choir begins with a treble and bass staff in D major (two sharps). The time signature is 8/8. The lyrics are "17) How dear are thy counsels unto me, O God;". The melody for the soprano part starts on a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a whole note B4. The bass part provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords.

O how GREAT is the sum of them!

The second system continues the melody. The lyrics are "O how GREAT is the sum of them!". The soprano part has a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a whole note B4. The bass part continues with harmonic accompaniment.

18) If I tell them, they are more in number than the sand:

The third system begins with a new line of lyrics: "18) If I tell them, they are more in number than the sand:". The soprano part has a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a whole note B4. The bass part continues with harmonic accompaniment.

when I wake up, I am present with thee.

The fourth system continues the melody. The lyrics are "when I wake up, I am present with thee.". The soprano part has a whole note G4, followed by a half note A4, and then a whole note B4. The bass part continues with harmonic accompaniment.

Psalm 139

**SA**

19) Wilt thou not slay the wicked, O God?

The musical score for the Soprano and Alto (SA) voices consists of four measures. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8. The melody is written on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "19) Wilt thou not slay the wicked, O God?".

Depart from me, ye blood - thirsty men.

The musical score for the Soprano and Alto (SA) voices continues with four more measures. The melody is on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "Depart from me, ye blood - thirsty men.".

**TB**

20) For they speak un - righteously a - gainst thee;

The musical score for the Tenor and Bass (TB) voices consists of four measures. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8. The melody is written on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "20) For they speak un - righteously a - gainst thee;".

and thine enemies take thy Name in vain.

The musical score for the Tenor and Bass (TB) voices continues with four more measures. The melody is on a treble clef staff, and the bass line is on a bass clef staff. The lyrics are: "and thine enemies take thy Name in vain.".

Psalm 139

**SATB**

*p* 21) Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee?

and am not I grieved with those that rise up a - gainst thee?

22) Yea, I hate them right sore;

even as though they were mine enemies.

Psalm 139

**Unison**

*mf* 23) Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart;

prove me, and ex - amine my thoughts.

24) Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me;

and lead me in the WAY ev - er - lasting.

Psalm 139

**SATB**

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,

and to the Ho - ly Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ev - er shall be,

world without end. ) A - - men.