

To the Douglass Memorial Chorus, Oberlin, OH

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

Thomas Hastings

R. Nathaniel Dett

edited by Marques L. A. Garrett

Larghetto, molto sostenuto (♩ = 60)

The musical score is written for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Piano. The tempo is **Larghetto, molto sostenuto** with a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The key signature has one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The Soprano part begins with a *mp* dynamic and includes first, second, third, and fourth endings. The Alto part also starts with *mp*. The Tenor part has an *mp* dynamic with an accent (>) on the first note. The Bass part has an *mp* dynamic. The Piano part is marked *mp* and includes first, second, third, and fourth endings. The lyrics are: "Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us" for Soprano; "Gent-ly, O gent - ly, gent-ly, O gent - ly, gent-ly, O gent - ly lead us," for Alto; "O gent - ly, O gent - ly, gent-ly, O gent - ly lead us." for Tenor; "O gent - ly, O gent - ly, lead us." for Bass; and the piano accompaniment follows the vocal lines.

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Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

mp

S
Pil - grims in this vale of

A
mp
Gent-ly, Lord, O gent-ly lead us Thru the tri - als yet de - creed us, Till our last great change ap - pears, our

T
mp
Thru the tri - als yet de - creed us, Till our last great

B
mp
Till our last great change ap -

Pno.

5 6 7

S
8 9 10 *mp* 11 12
tears. O gent-ly, O gent-ly lead us,

A
mp
last great change ap - pears. O gent-ly, O gent-ly, O gent-ly lead us,

T
mf marcato
change ap - pears. Thru the tri - als yet de - creed us,

B
mp
pears. Gent-ly, O gent-ly, gent-ly, O gent-ly, gent-ly, O gent-ly lead us,

Pno.

8 9 10 11 12

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

mp

S Thru the tri - als yet de - creed us, Till our last great change ap -

mp

A O Lord, gent - ly lead us, Thru the tri - als yet de - creed us, Till our last great change ap - pears, our

mf marcato

T Till our _____ last great change ap -

mp

B Till our last great change ap -

Pno.

mp

S pears. When temp - ta - tion's darts as - sail us,

mp

A last great change ap - pears. When temp - ta - tion's darts as - sail us,

mp

T pears, our change ap - pears. When temp - ta - tion's darts as - sail us,

mp

B pears. When temp - ta - tion's darts as - sail us,

Pno.

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

19 20 21 *mp*

S When in dev-ious paths we stray, Let Thy good-ness nev-er fail us,

A When in dev-ious, paths we stray, Let Thy good-ness

T 8 When in dev-ious, dev-ious paths we stray, Let Thy good-ness

B When in dev-ious paths we stray, Let Thy good-ness nev-er

Pno.

22 23 24

S Lead us in Thy per-fect way.

A nev-er fail us, Lead us in Thy per-fect way.

T 8 nev-er fail us, Lead us in Thy per-fect way.

B fail us, Lead us in Thy per-fect way.

Pno.

espress.

S 25 In the hour of pain and an - guish, 26 In the hour when 27

A *espress.*
In the hour of pain and an - guish, In the hour when

T *espress.*
8 In the hour of pain, of pain and an - guish, In the hour when

B *espress.*
In the hour of pain and an - guish, In the hour when

Pno. 25 26 27

mf

S 28 death draws near, 29 Suf - fer not our hearts to lan - guish, 30

A *mf*
death draws near, Suf - fer not our hearts to lan - guish,

T *mf*
8 death draws near, Suf - fer not our hearts, our hearts to lan - guish,

B *mf*
death, when death draws near, Suf - fer not our hearts to lan - guish,

Pno. 28 29 30

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

System 1:

Soprano (S): *f* 31 Suf - fer not our souls to fear. *mf* 33 And when mor - tal life is

Alto (A): *f* Suf - fer not our souls to fear. *mf* And when mor - tal

Tenor (T): *f* Suf - fer not our souls to fear. *mf* And when mor - tal

Bass (B): *f* Suf - fer not our souls to fear. *mf* And when mor - tal

Piano (Pno.): 31 32 33

System 2:

Soprano (S): 34 end - ed, 35 Bid us in Thine arms to rest, 36

Alto (A): life is end - ed, Bid us in Thine arms to rest,

Tenor (T): life, when mor - tal life is end - ed, Bid us in Thine arms to rest,

Bass (B): life is end - ed, Bid us in Thine arms, Thine arms to rest,

Piano (Pno.): 34 35 36

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

37 38 39 *f poco largamente*

S Till by an - gel bands at - tend - ed, We a - wake a -

A Till by an - gel bands at - tend - ed, We a - wake a -

T 8 Till by an - gel bands, by an - gel bands at - tend - ed, We a - wake a -

B Till by an - gel bands at - tend - ed, We a - wake a -

Pno.

40 41 *a tempo* *p espress.* 42 *poco rit.*

S mong the blest. Gent - ly lead us, Lord,

A mong the blest. *a tempo* *p espress.* *poco rit.* Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us,

T 8 mong the blest. *a tempo* *p espress.* *poco rit.* Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us,

B mong the blest. *a tempo* *p espress.* *poco rit.* Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us,

Pno.

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

43 *a tempo* 44 *poco rit.* 45 *a tempo*

S
Gent - ly lead us, Lord, Gent - ly, Lord O gent - ly lead us

A
a tempo *poco rit.* *a tempo*
Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us,

T
a tempo *poco rit.* *a tempo*
Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us, Gent - ly, Lord, O

B
a tempo *poco rit.* *a tempo*
Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us,

Pno.
a tempo *poco rit.* *a tempo*

46 47 48

S
in this vale of tears, Till our change ap - pears.

A
Gent - ly lead us, Lord, Thru the tri - als yet de - creed us, Till our change ap - pears.

T
gent - ly lead us, Gent - ly, Lord, O lead us,

B
Gent - ly, O Lord, Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly, gent - ly lead us,

Pno.
46 47 48

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

allargando *f* *a tempo* *mp*

S
Gent - ly lead us, Lord, Gent - ly, Lord, O

A
allargando *f* *mp a tempo*
Gent - ly lead us, Lord, Gent - ly, O gent - ly, gent - ly, O gent - ly,

T
allargando *f* *a tempo* *mp*
Gent - ly lead us, Lord, O gent - ly, O gent - ly,

B
allargando *f* *a tempo* *mp*
Gent - ly lead us, Lord, O

Pno.
allargando *a tempo*

mp

S
gent - ly lead us Pil - grims

A
mp
gent - ly, O gent - ly lead us, Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us

T
gent - ly, O gent - ly lead us.

B
gent - ly, O gent - ly, lead us.

Pno.
mp

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

56 57 58

S in this vale of tears.

A Thru the tri-als yet de-creed us, Till our last great change ap-pears, our last great change ap-pears.

T *mp* Thru the tri-als yet de-creed us, Till our last great change ap-pears.

B Till our last great change ap-pears.

Pno.

59 60 61 62

S O gently, O gently lead us,

A *mp* O gently, O gently, O gently lead us,

T *mf marcato* Thru the tri-als yet de-creed us,

B *mp* Gently, O gently, gently, O gently, gently, O gently lead us,

Pno.

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

63 *mp* *poco rit. e marcato* *f* *a tempo*

S Thru the tri - als yet de - creed us, Till our —

A *mp* *poco rit. e marcato* *f* *a tempo*
O Lord, gent - ly lead us, Thru the tri - als yet de - creed us, Till our —

T *mf* *poco rit. e marcato* *a tempo f*
Till our — last, our last great change, ap -

B *poco rit. e marcato* *f* *a tempo*
Till our last change, our

Pno. *poco rit.* *a tempo*

66 67 68 69 *rit.* 70

S last — great change ap - pears, Till our last great change ap -

A last — great change ap - pears, Till our last great change ap -

T pears, our change ap - pears, Till our last great change ap -

B last — great change ap - pears, Till our last great change ap -

Pno. *rit.*

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

Solo
71 *mp a tempo dolcissimo* Gent - ly lead us, Lord, _____ 72 73 74 *mp* A - men, 75

S
a tempo _____ A - men, Gently lead us, *p calmato*

A
a tempo _____ A - men, Gently lead us, *p calmato*

T
a tempo _____ A - men, Gently lead us, *p calmato*

B
a tempo _____ A - men, A - _____ *p calmato*

Pno.
71 72 73 74 75 *a tempo*

Detailed description: This page of a musical score is for the hymn 'Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us'. It features six staves: Solo, Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Piano (Pno.). The Solo part begins at measure 71 with a melody in G major, marked *mp a tempo dolcissimo*. The vocal parts (S, A, T, B) enter at measure 72 with the lyrics 'A - men, Gently lead us,'. Their parts are marked *p calmato*. The piano accompaniment (Pno.) consists of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, marked *a tempo*. Measure numbers 71 through 75 are indicated at the top of the score.

The musical score is for the hymn "Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us". It consists of six staves: Solo, Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Piano (Pno.). The Solo part begins at measure 76 with a *rit.* marking and a hairpin crescendo leading to measure 77, where the tempo returns to *a tempo*. The lyrics for the Solo part are "Gent - ly, Gent - ly, Lord, O gent - ly lead us,". The Soprano part begins at measure 77 with a *rit.* marking and a hairpin crescendo leading to measure 78, where the tempo returns to *a tempo*. The lyrics for the Soprano part are "Lord. A - men,". The Alto part begins at measure 77 with a *rit.* marking and a hairpin crescendo leading to measure 78, where the tempo returns to *a tempo*. The lyrics for the Alto part are "Lord. A - - - - - men,". The Tenor part begins at measure 77 with a *rit.* marking and a hairpin crescendo leading to measure 78, where the tempo returns to *a tempo*. The lyrics for the Tenor part are "Lord. A - - - - - men,". The Bass part begins at measure 77 with a *rit.* marking and a hairpin crescendo leading to measure 78, where the tempo returns to *a tempo*. The lyrics for the Bass part are "- - - - - men, A - - - - - men, A -". The Piano part begins at measure 76 with a *rit.* marking and a hairpin crescendo leading to measure 77, where the tempo returns to *a tempo*. The piano accompaniment features chords in the right hand and bass lines in the left hand, with a triplet of eighth notes in measure 79.

Gently, Lord, O Gently Lead Us

The musical score is arranged in five systems. The first system contains the Solo part, and the second through fifth systems contain the vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass). The piano accompaniment (Pno.) is shown in a grand staff at the bottom. The tempo is marked *molto allarg.* and the dynamics include *pp*. The lyrics are "A - men, A - - - - men." with various rests and phrasing marks. Measure numbers 80, 81, 82, and 83 are indicated above the vocal staves.

Solo
80 *molto allarg.* A - men, 81 A - - - - men. 82 83 *pp*

S
molto allarg. A - men, A - - - - men. *pp*

A
molto allarg. A - - men, A - men, A - men. *pp*

T
molto allarg. 8 A - - men, A - men, A - men. *pp*

B
molto allarg. men, A - men, A - men, A - men. *pp*

Pno.
80 *molto allarg.* 81 82 83

R. Nathaniel Dett (1882–1943) was a Black nationalistic composer, educator, conductor, pianist, essayist, and poet who helped to change the impressions people had about Black music during the early twentieth century. His most notable work is the anthem *Listen to the Lambs* based on the spiritual of the same name. His magnum opus is the oratorio *The Ordering of Moses* with its use of the spiritual *Go Down, Moses* as a fugal theme. Known mostly for the use of Black folk music in his choral music, his stunning piano works and vocal solos rival some of the best classical works of his time.

Dett intentionally used Black folk music as the source material for anthems and motets. His intention was not to improve the music. He simply wanted to find other ways to preserve the music and create songs for use in worship services. These songs remain true to the character of the folk songs either through repeated use of the folk song melodies, motivic development based on the rhythms and melodic contour, added polyphony, or the use of characteristic idioms such as call and response, syncopation, and pentatonic scales.

Marques L. A. Garrett (he/him/his), editor, is an Assistant Professor of Music in Choral Activities at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the Glenn Korff School of Music. Before completing the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Music Education (Choral Conducting) at Florida State University, he was the Director of Choral Activities at Cheyney University of Pennsylvania. He is an accomplished vocalist and composer with his works published with Mark Foster, GIA Publications, Walton Music, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, Hinshaw Music, G. Schirmer, and Beckenhurst Press and performed by festival/honor choirs, all-state choirs, and professional and university choirs such as Seraphic Fire and the Oakwood University Aeolians. Recent commissions and premieres include the University of New Hampshire, Seraphic Fire, Westminster Choir College, and the American Choral Directors Association. He regularly serves as a choral clinician and guest conductor for festival and honor choirs throughout the country.

Original Publication Information

Publisher: John Church Company, 1924

Music: "Dig My Grave Long an' Narrow" from *Bahama Songs and Stories* published by American Folk Lore Society

Text: Thomas Hastings



Dig my grave long an' nar - row, Make my cof - fin long and strong. Bright
an - gels to my feet, Bright an - gels to my head, Bright an - gels to car - ry me when I die.
Oh! mi lit - tle soul goin' shine, shine, Oh! mi lit - tle soul goin' shine like a stahr,
Oh! mi lit - tle soul goin' shine like a stahr, good Lawd, I'm bound to 'evin at rest.

Instrumentation

SATB choir, Soprano Solo

Edition Notes

Abbreviations: A – Alto, B – Bass, S – Soprano, T – Tenor

suggested tempo marking in parentheses

- | | | |
|-------|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 4 | STB | changed final punctuation |
| | S | added no breath mark |
| 5 | SA | added dynamic |
| 6 | T | added dynamic |
| 7 | B | added dynamic |
| 8 | SB | changed tied half notes to whole note |
| 9 | T | changed 'più marcato' to 'marcato' |
| 11-12 | ATB | added hairpin |
| 15 | B | added dynamic |

16	SB	changed tied half notes to whole note
20	S	changed tied half notes to whole note
20-21	AT	eliminated cross voicing
21	TB	switched dynamic to mezzo piano
32	A	changed pitch to match piano reduction and m. 40
39		changed 'poco allargamente' to 'poco largamente'
42		changed 'più rit.' to 'poco rit.'
43		changed 'più cresc.' to hairpin
44		changed 'più rit.' to 'poco rit.'
	T	removed slur
48	TB	removed slur
49		changed articulations to accented staccato
50		changed tied half notes to whole note, eliminated 'rit.'
51		changed 'Tempo I' to 'a tempo'
	S	added hairpin
	T	added dynamic and accent
51-54	A	added hairpin
52	B	added dynamic
52-54	ST	added hairpin
54		changed final punctuation
	S	added no breath mark
	TB	changed pitches to match m. 4
55	SA	added dynamic
56	T	added dynamic
	B	added dynamic
57-58	ATB	added hairpins
58	SB	changed tied half notes to whole note
59	A	added accent
	T	added 'marcato'
61-62		added hairpin
64	B	removed tenuto
65	AT	added dynamic
		added 'a tempo'

- 66 T removed dynamic
- 66-68 AT eliminated cross voicing
- 68-69 B altered text to fit SAT
- 74 SATB changed tied half notes to whole note
- 78 Solo corrected rhythm
- 79 SATB changed tied notes to dotted half note
- 80-83 eliminated 'e sempre diminuendo'
- 81 Solo, S removed slur