

BriLee Music

the Voice of Choral Music

A PSALM OF LIFE

SATB, accompanied

Based on
A PSALM OF LIFE
 (What the Heart of the Young Man
 Said to the Psalmist)

Written by American Poet
 HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Words and Music by
 LYNN SHAW BAILEY

**BriLee Music
 Part-by-Part** 
 Free MP3 rehearsal and accompaniments
 GO to: www.BriLeeMusic.com

Range:



Time: Approx. 2:30

*Difficulty: Moderate

Performance Notes

The great American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) coined the phrase “footprints on the sands of time” in “A Psalm of Life” (1839). This poem challenges the readers to live determined lives of dignity, action and greatness. Longfellow advises us to live in such a way that others see the footprints we leave behind and are encouraged to go forward. He admonishes us to “act in the living Present” and “be a hero in the strife!”

The poem is subtitled *What the Heart of the Young Man Said to the Psalmist*. Published when Longfellow was 32, it was included in his first collection of poems entitled *Voices of the Night*. I was particularly drawn to these words:

“Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time.”

Did you notice that we can choose to take responsibility for making our own lives sublime. “Sublime” may be a word you don’t hear very often, but it is a wonderful adjective describing someone or something that is noble, majestic and not to be excelled. It is someone of grand and lofty ideas, expression or manner...someone or something that inspires awe due to some elevated quality such as beauty, grandeur or excellence.

Great people leave their mark on others. Who do you consider great? First, consider this word of caution. Just because someone is famous or popular doesn’t mean they are great. No matter your age or place in life, you can be great by doing your best, overcoming obstacles and making a real difference in the life of someone else. That’s what true greatness is really all about.

I encourage you to read the entire poem and discuss it with your teacher, family and friends. Learn more about Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and his writings. Then go out and be great! Inspire others and be a hero in strife. Walk on and leave YOUR footprints on the sands of time...

Soli Deo Gloria...

Lynn Shaw Bailey (2010)

*In honor and memory of Brian R. Busch (1940-2007), founder of BriLee Music,
who made his life sublime.*

A PSALM OF LIFE

(Walk On)

SATB, accompanied

Based on A PSALM OF LIFE

Written by HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

Words and Music by

LYNN SHAW BAILEY (ASCAP)

Broadly with expression (♩ = ca. 76)

The piano introduction is in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic. The right hand features a series of chords and eighth-note patterns, while the left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

The vocal and piano accompaniment section begins at measure 4. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) enter with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and a unison melody. The lyrics are: "Lives of hon - or, lives of glo- ry...". The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern in the left hand and chordal accompaniment in the right hand.

Measures 7-9 of the musical score. The vocal line (treble clef) and piano accompaniment (grand staff) are shown. The lyrics are: "Lives of love for hu - man - kind, once de - part - ed". The piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand.

Lives of love for hu - man - kind, once de - part - ed

Lives of love for hu - man - kind, once de - part - ed

Measures 10-12 of the musical score. The vocal line (treble clef) and piano accompaniment (grand staff) are shown. The lyrics are: "leave be - fore us foot-prints on the sands of time." The piano part continues with a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand.

leave be - fore us foot-prints on the sands of time.

Measures 13-15 of the musical score. The vocal line (treble clef) and piano accompaniment (grand staff) are shown. The lyrics are: "Walk on, leave your". The piano part continues with a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand.

Walk on, leave your

16

foot - prints... Walk on, leave your foot-prints on the

This system contains measures 16 and 17. The vocal line (treble clef) has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. Measure 16: "foot - prints..." (half note), "Walk on," (half note). Measure 17: "leave your foot-prints on the" (half note). The piano accompaniment (grand staff) features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand.

18

sands of time. Walk on, though you're wea ry.— Walk

This system contains measures 18, 19, and 20. Measure 18: "sands of time. Walk on," (half note). Measure 19: "though you're wea ry.—" (half note). Measure 20: "Walk" (half note). The piano accompaniment continues with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the left hand and chords in the right hand.

21

on, leave your foot-prints on the sand. Walk on, leave your foot-prints on the

This system contains measures 21, 22, and 23. Measure 21: "on, leave your foot-prints on the sand." (half note). Measure 22: "Walk on, leave your foot-prints on the" (half note). Measure 23: (half note). The piano accompaniment features a more complex chordal structure in the right hand, with the left hand maintaining its eighth-note bass line.

sand. _____ Lives of great - ness all re - mind us

we can make our lives sub - lime, and de - part - ing

lives sub - lime, and de - part - ing

leave be - hind us foot - prints on the sands of time. Walk

f

p

33

on, leave your foot- prints, Walk on, leave your foot-prints on the

walk_ on, walk_ on,

36

sands of time. Walk on, though you're wea- ry.— Walk

walk_ on, walk_ on,

39

on, leave your foot-prints on the sand. Walk on, leave your

sands of_ time. *decresc.*

decresc.

mp

foot - prints on the sands _____ of time. Walk

mp

of Walk on, walk

mp

rit.

on!

rit.

on!

rit.

p

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