

# DOWN TO THE RIVER TO PRAY

SSA Voices *a cappella*

Appalachian Song  
Arranged by Debra Morton

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**Ranges:**



Language: English  
Use: General/Festival  
Time: Approx. 2:30  
\*Difficulty: Moderate

## Notes

I've always felt that this folk song begs to be a processional. In my mind's eye, I can see a line of white-robed penitents going to the river to be baptized. Perhaps we "go down to the river" to remember our own experience as we pray for ourselves and others.

Keep it simple. The processional idea would work well. Try to avoid a "legit" choral sound, striving, instead, for a more forward—even nasal—placement, more in keeping with folk music: music of the people.

Enjoy!

— Debra Morton

## About the Arranger

Debra Morton has been an accompanist and vocal coach for over thirty-five years. After earning her degree in Piano Performance from Baylor University, she went on to work at Disney World, then in New York City and New England before coming home to the Rio Grande Valley where she is currently a staff accompanist for McAllen ISD. She enjoys painting, cooking, and her four grandchildren!

## 3

**Unhurried**  
*p* unis.


*p* ums.

1. As I went down to the riv-er to pray stu-dy-ing a-bout that good ol' way and



who shall wear the star - ry crown, good Lord, show me the way.

5 *p*



Oh sis - ters let's go down, \_ Let's go down, come on down, \_ Oh, sis - ters let's go down, \_

down to the riv - er to pray. As I went down to the riv - er to pray

The first staff of music is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It begins with a 6/4 time signature. After two measures of whole rests, the third measure starts with a mezzo-forte (\*mp) dynamic marking. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by an eighth note A4, and a quarter note Bb4. The time signature changes to 3/4 for the next two measures, which contain eighth notes G4-A4 and Bb4-G4 respectively. The staff concludes with a 4/4 time signature and a final quarter note G4.

\* Balance two parts equally through m. 16.

stu - dy - ing a - bout that good ol' way and who shall wear the robe and crown, good

Lord, show me the way. Oh, *mf* broth - ers let's go down, -

Lord, show me the way. Oh brothers let's go down, \_

14

let's go down, come on down, \_ Oh, broth - ers let's go down, \_

let's go down, come on down, \_ Oh, broth - ers let's go down, \_

16

**Soprano 1**  
*mp*

down to the riv - er to pray. down to the riv - er to pray

**Soprano 2**  
*mp*

down to the riv - er to pray. As I went down to the riv - er to pray

**Alto**  
*mp*

As I went down to the riv - er to pray

18

stu - dy - ing a - bout that good ol' way and who shall wear the star - ry crown, \_ good

stu - dy - ing a - bout that good ol' way and who shall wear the star - ry crown, \_ good

stu - dy - ing a - bout that good ol' way and who shall wear the star - ry crown, \_ good

20

Lord, show me the way. Oh, fath - ers let's go down, \_

Lord, show me the way. Oh, fath - ers let's go down, \_

Lord, show me the way. Oh fath - ers let's go down, \_

22

let's go down, come on down, \_ Oh, fath - ers let's go down, \_

let's go down, come on down, \_ Oh, fath - ers let's go down, \_

let's go down, come on down, \_ Oh, fath - ers let's go down, \_

24

down to the riv - er to pray. down to the riv - er to pray

down to the riv - er to pray. As I went down to the riv - er to pray

down to the riv - er to pray. As I went down to the riv - er to pray

26

stu - dy - ing a - bout that good ol' way and who shall wear the star - ry crown, \_ good

stu - dy - ing a - bout that good ol' way and who shall wear the star - ry crown, \_ good

stu - dy - ing a - bout that good ol' way and who shall wear the star - ry crown, \_ good

28

Lord, show me the way. Oh, moth - ers let's go down, \_

Lord, show me the way. Oh, moth - ers let's go down, \_

Lord, show me the way. Oh moth - ers let's go down, \_

30

Let's go down, don-cha wan-na go down, \_\_\_\_ Oh, moth-ers let's go down,

Let's go down, don-cha wan-na go down, \_\_\_\_ Oh, moth-ers let's go down,

Let's go down, don-cha wan-na go down, \_\_\_\_ Oh, moth-ers let's go down,

32

Down to the riv-er to pray. As I went

Down to the riv-er to pray.

Down to the riv-er to pray

*mp opt. solo*

33

down to the riv-er to pray stu-dy-ing a-bout that good ol' way and

35

who shall wear the star-ry crown, \_\_\_\_ Lord, show me the way.

show me the way.

show me the way.

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