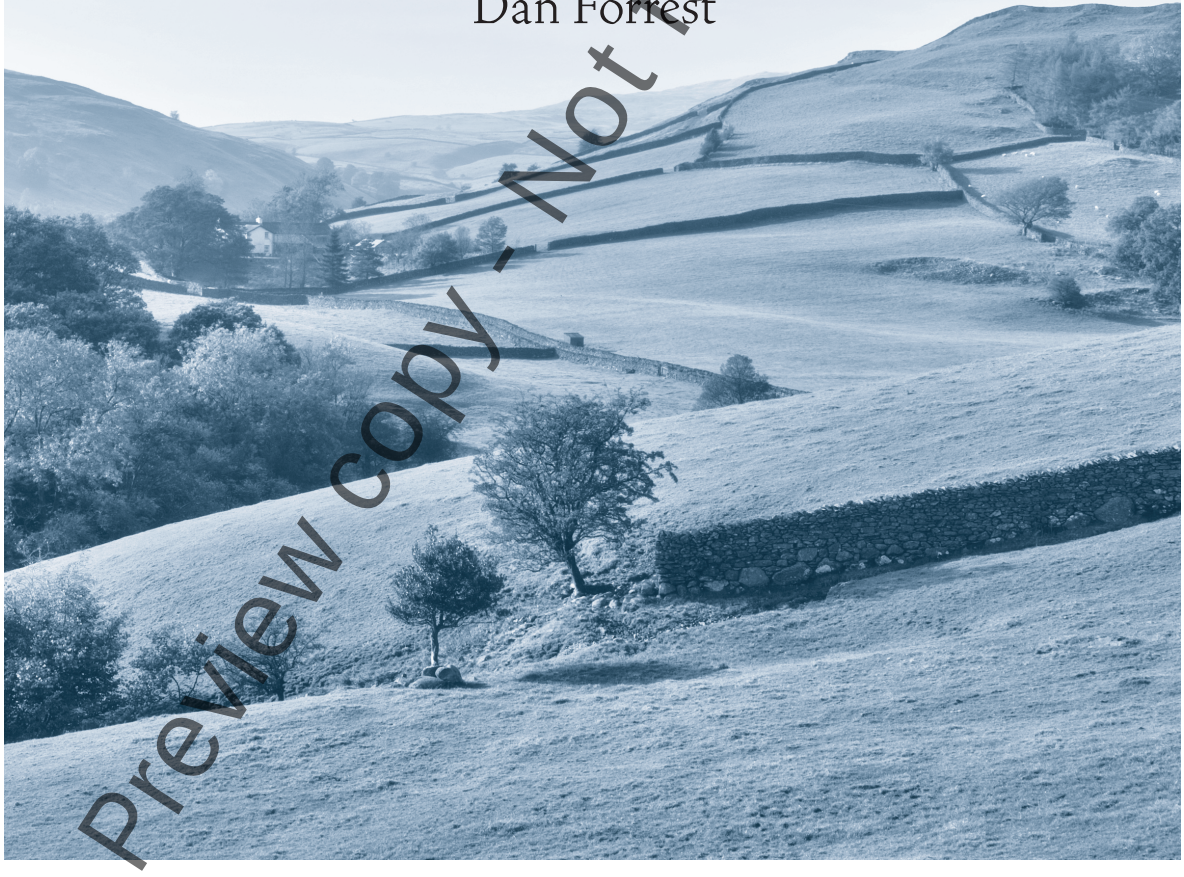
Hallelu Yah: Three Psalms of Praise

I. Psalm 148

II. Psalm 147

III. Psalm 150

Dan Forrest



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From the Composer

It was a joy to accept this commission honoring my former professor, longtime colleague, ardent supporter, and good friend, Dr. Warren Cook.

My inspiration for these settings came from seeing the common word "hallelujah" transliterated more clearly "hallelu Yah", i.e. "praise YHWH"; these two words are an imperative (praise!) and the object of that praise (Yah, or Yahweh, the reverential Hebrew name of God). This opened up possibilities for both communicated meanings and speech accents.

I was also inspired to add percussion to the choir and piano, partly from reading in I Chronicles that Asaph, the ancient Hebrew worship leader and author of many Psalms, played the cymbals, and partly because Psalm 150 lists as much or more percussion than any other instrument family.

The last five Psalms all begin and end with this phrase, "Hallelu Yah," and thus my settings of these three do the same.

The first movement sets portions of Psalm 148 about creation voicing God's praise, and weaves quotes of a related hymntune throughout. Movement 2 turns its focus to people raising their voices alongside nature (from Psalm 147), and hints at the Psalmist's harp in its accompaniment. The third and final movement sets Psalm 150 as a dance in compound meter, with its well-known list of instruments joining in praise along with "everything that has breath".

The three movements can be performed as one 10-minute work or individually.

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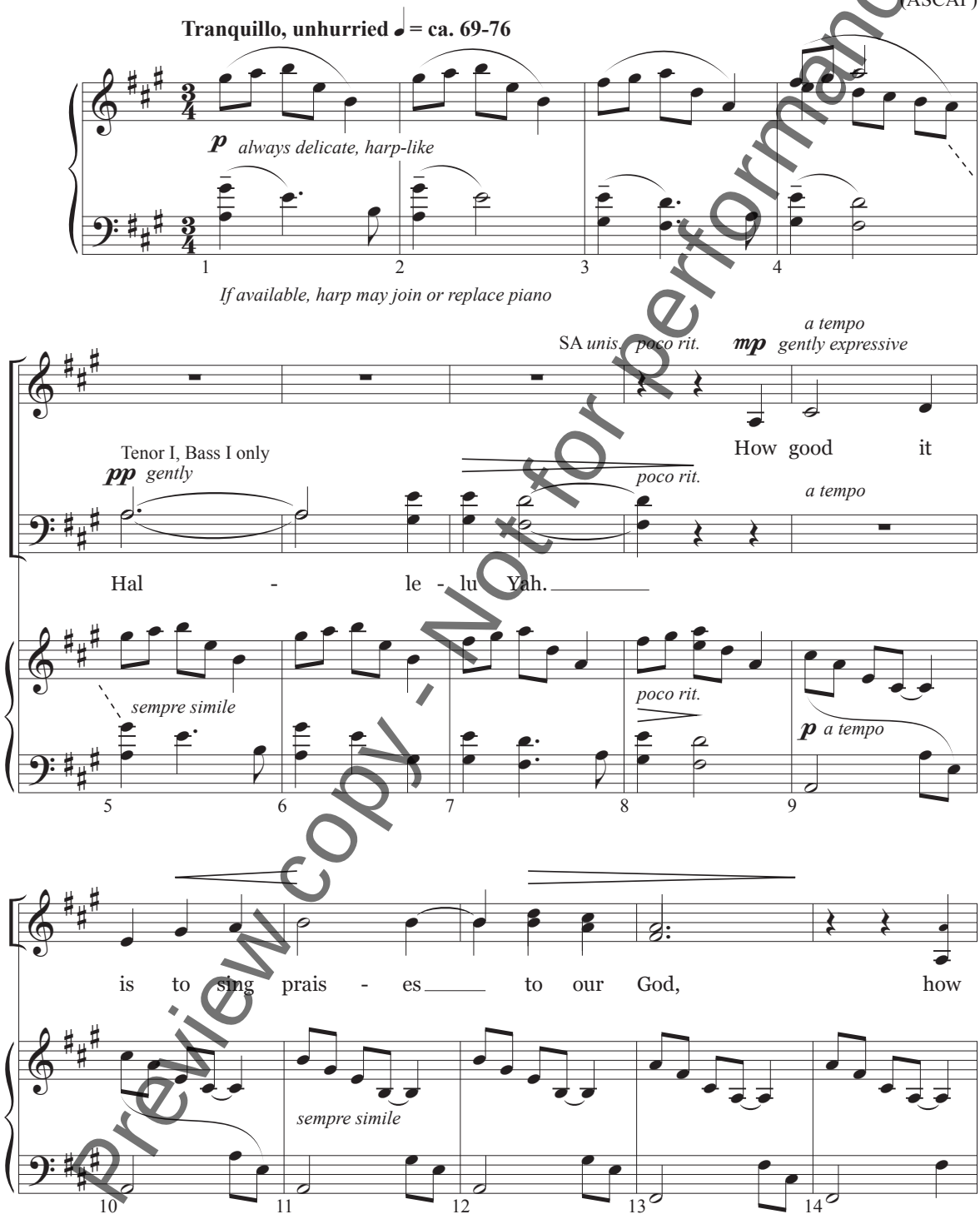
Commissioned by the Edward D. Anderson Choral Scholars Fund in celebration of the lifetime music ministry of Dr. Warren Cook, Founder and Artistic Director of Rivertree Singers, Greenville, South Carolina, and in recognition of Jean Cook, his lifelong collaborative pianist

Hallelu Yah: II. Psalm 147

For SATB Choir and Piano with optional percussion*

from Psalm 147

DAN FORREST
(ASCAP)



*Full score and percussion part (BP2286A) is available for purchase.

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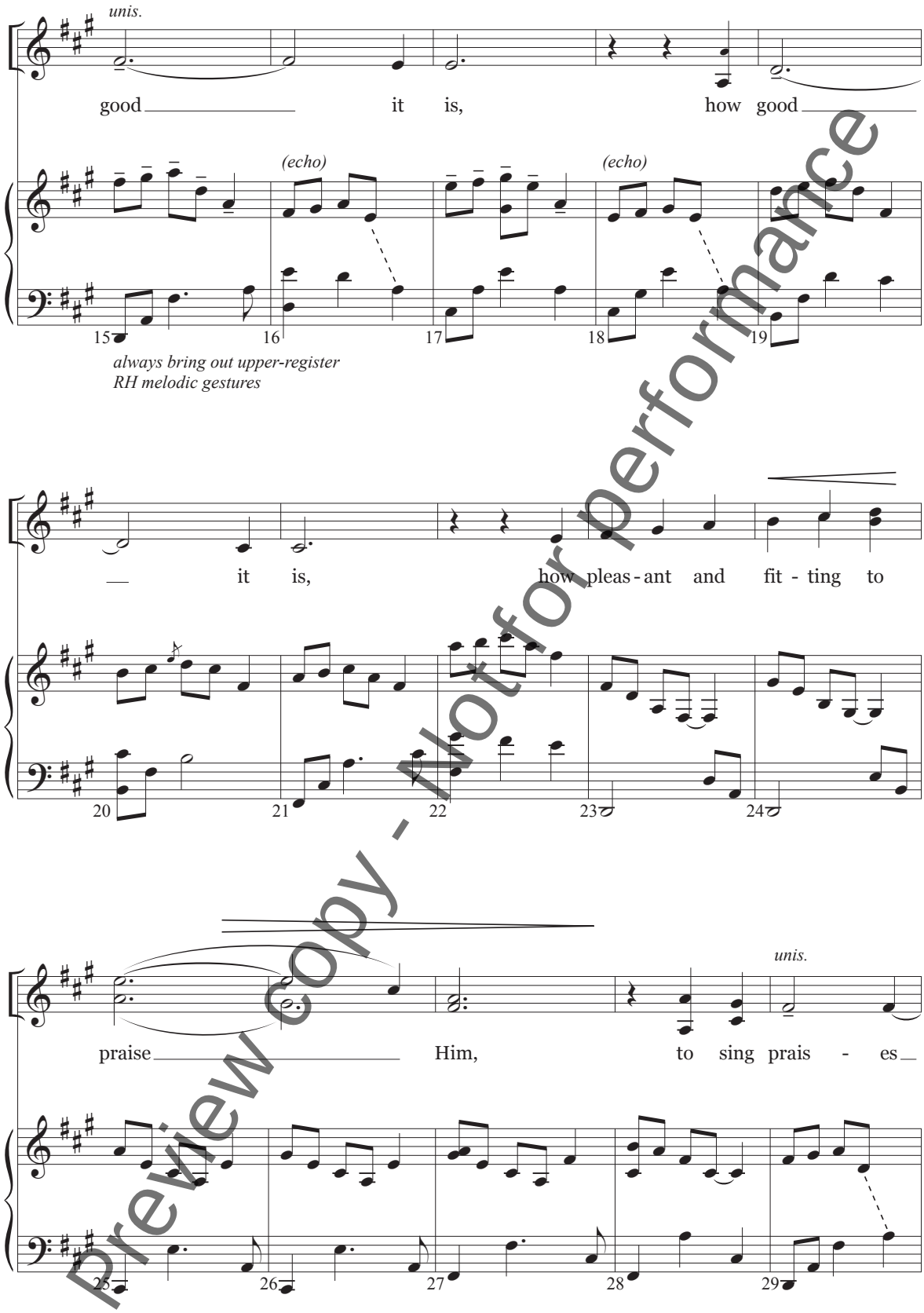

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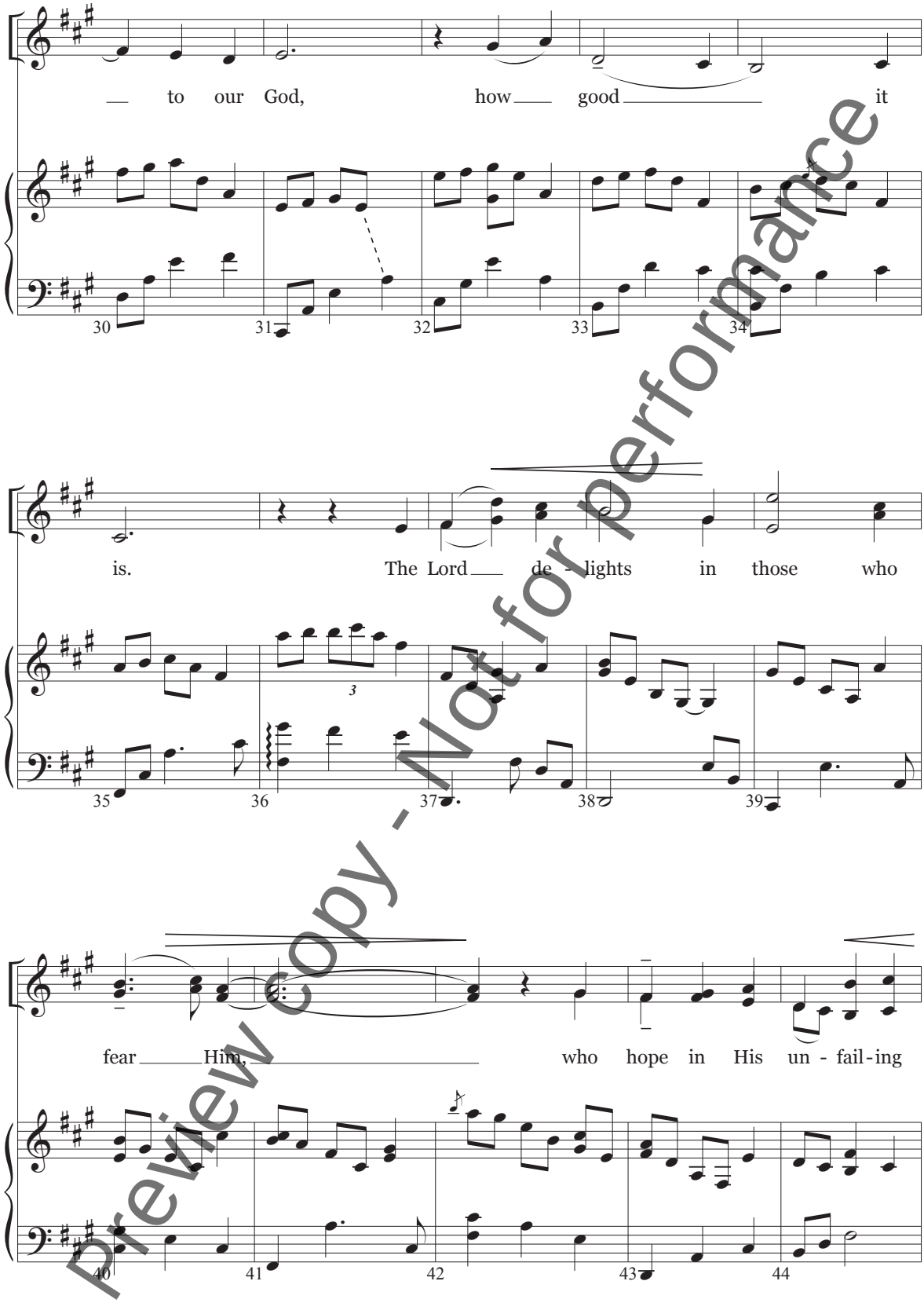

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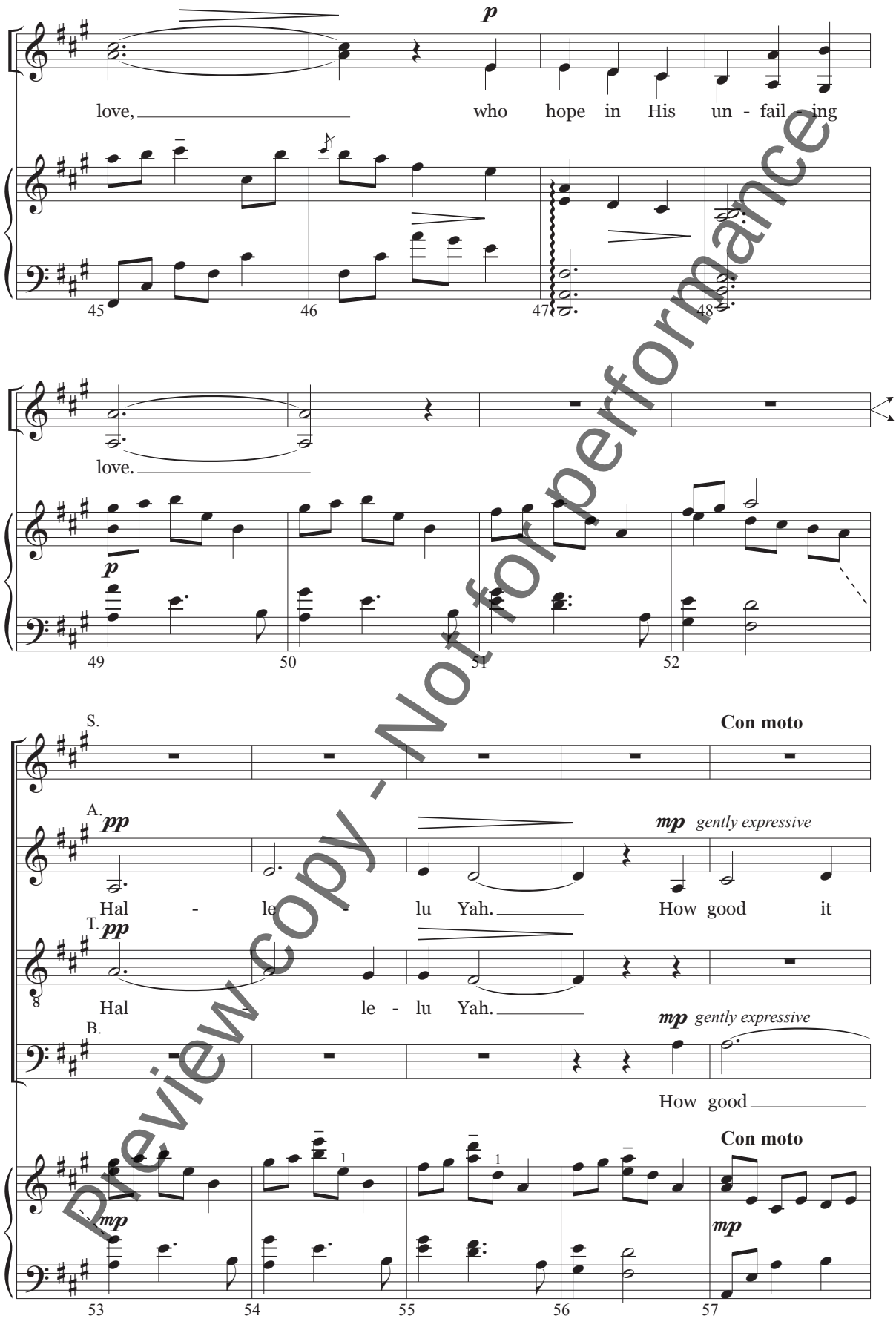

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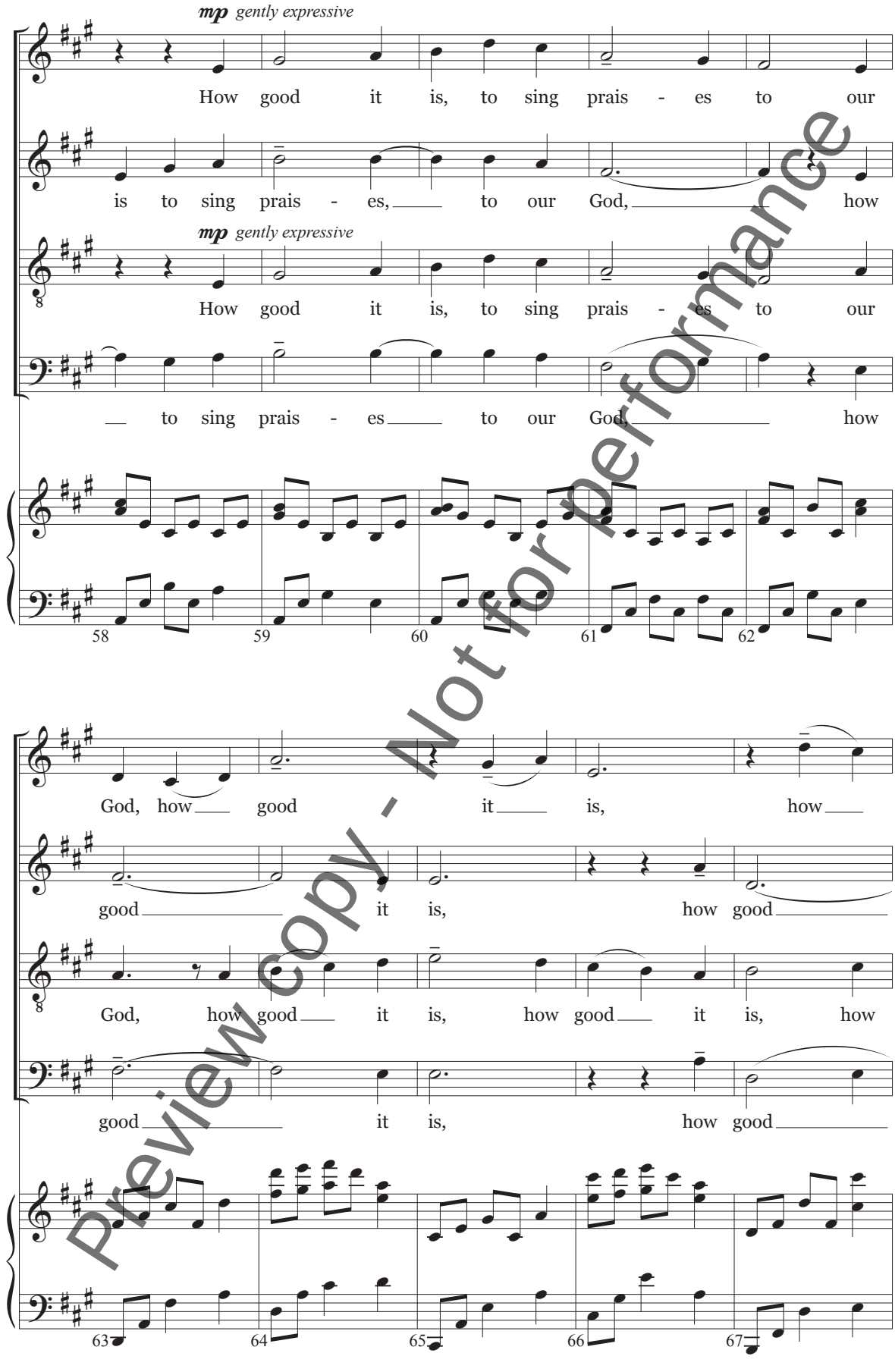

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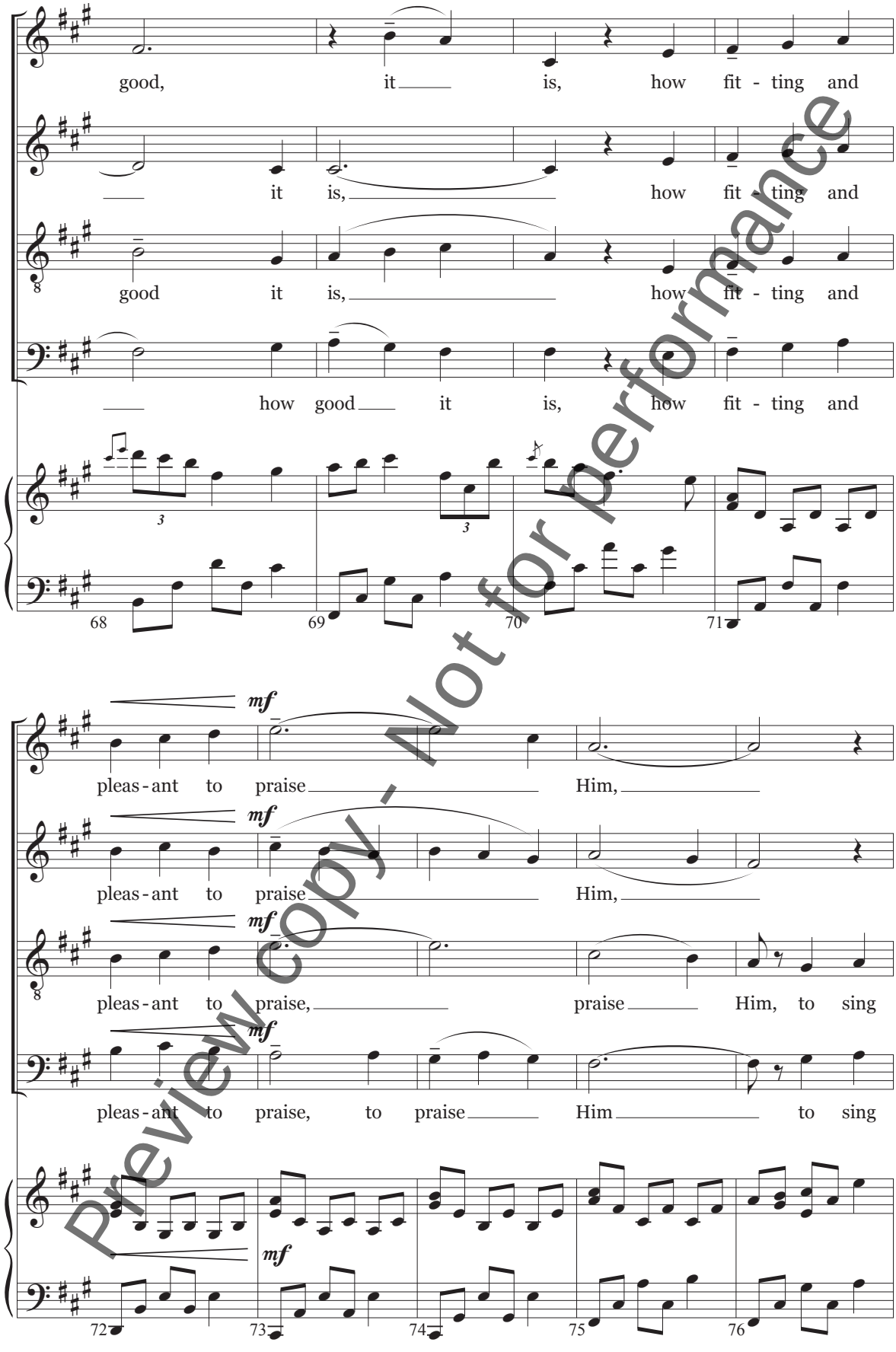

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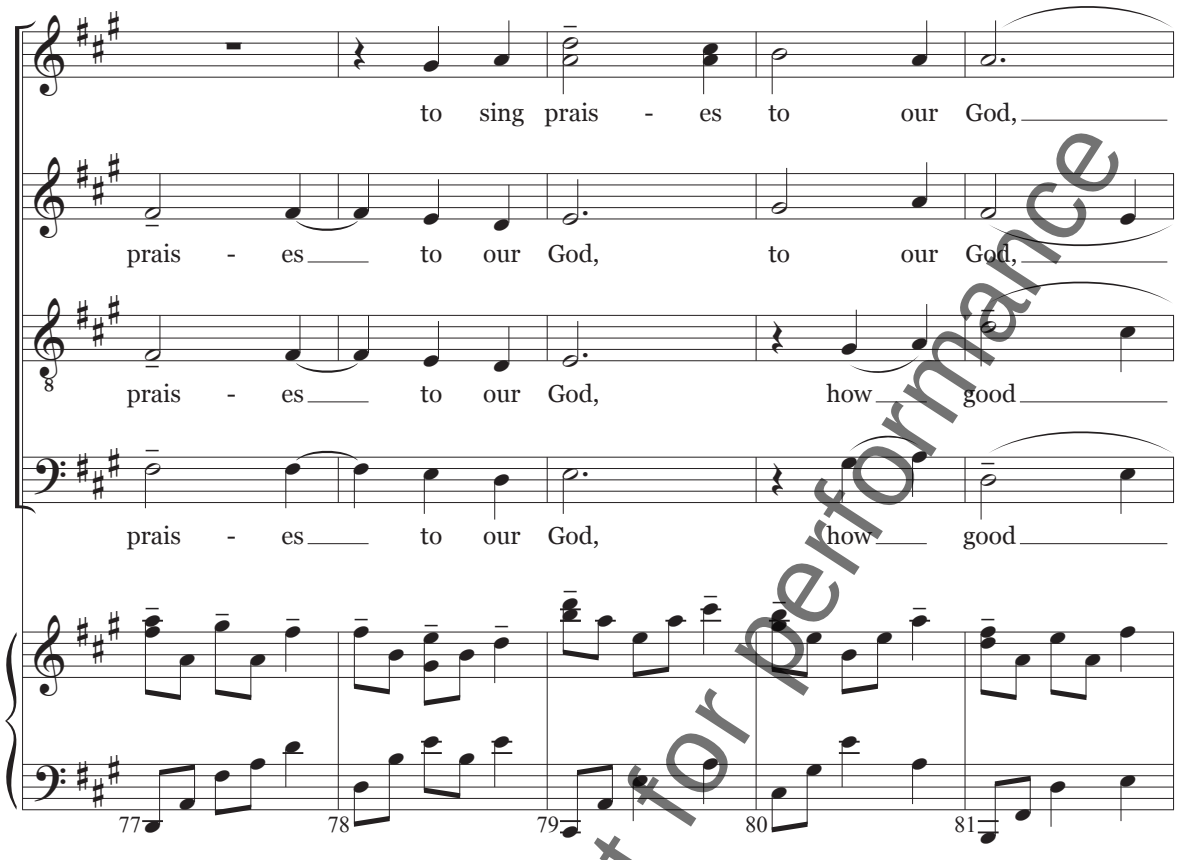

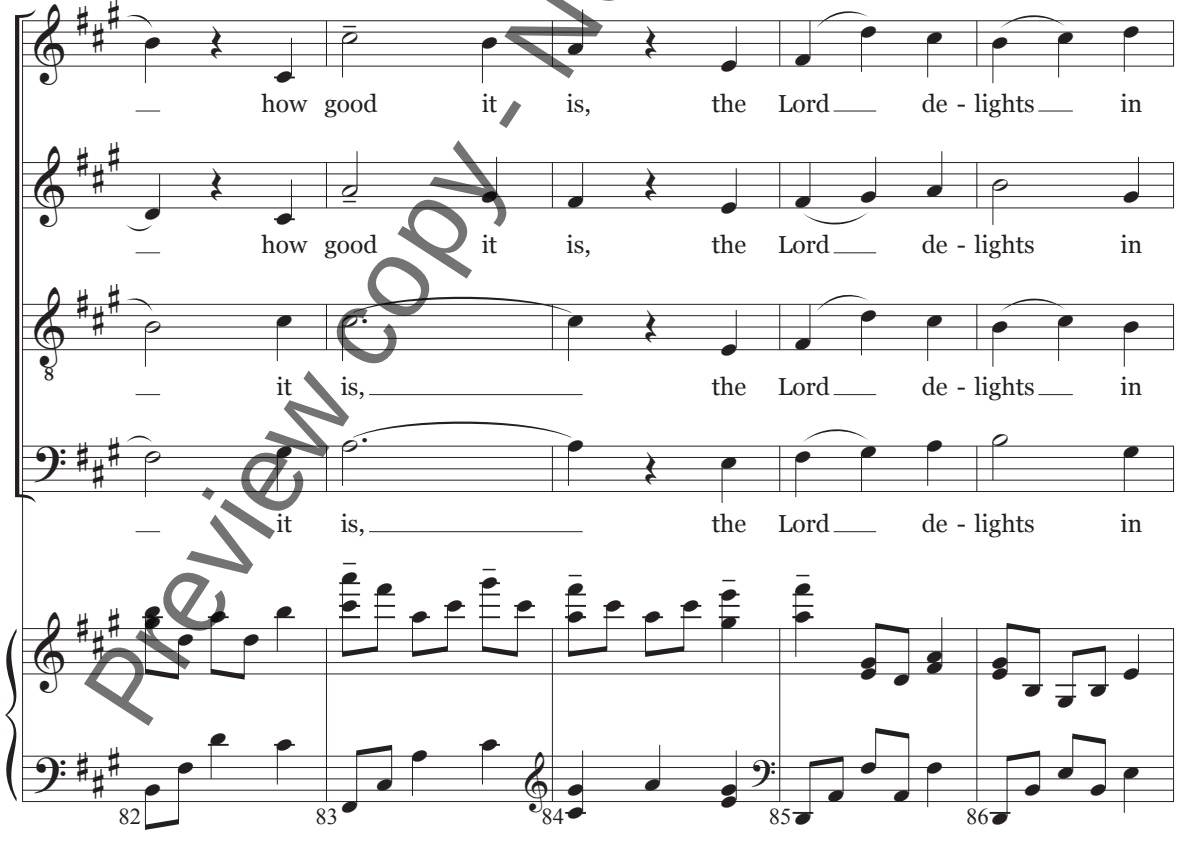

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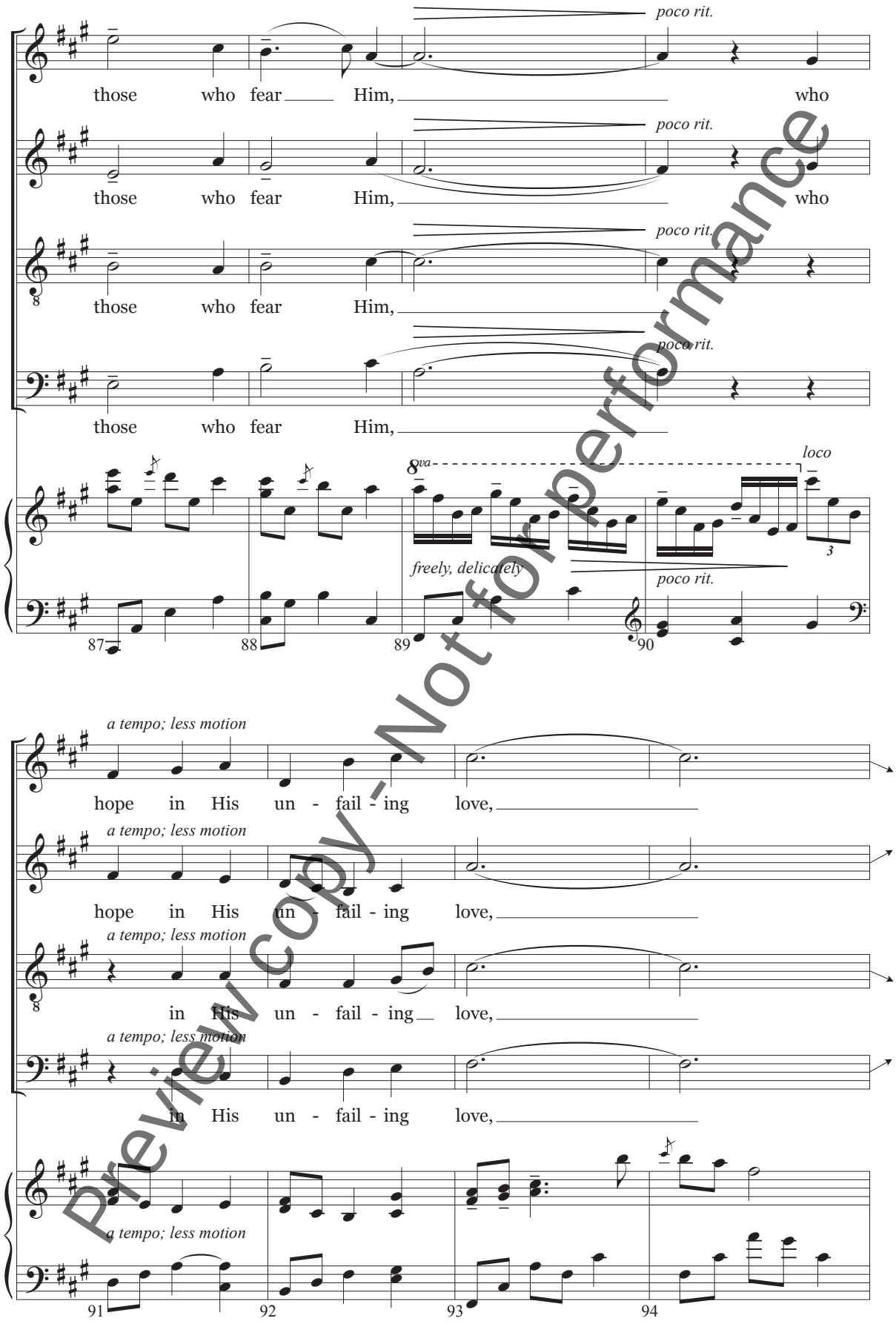

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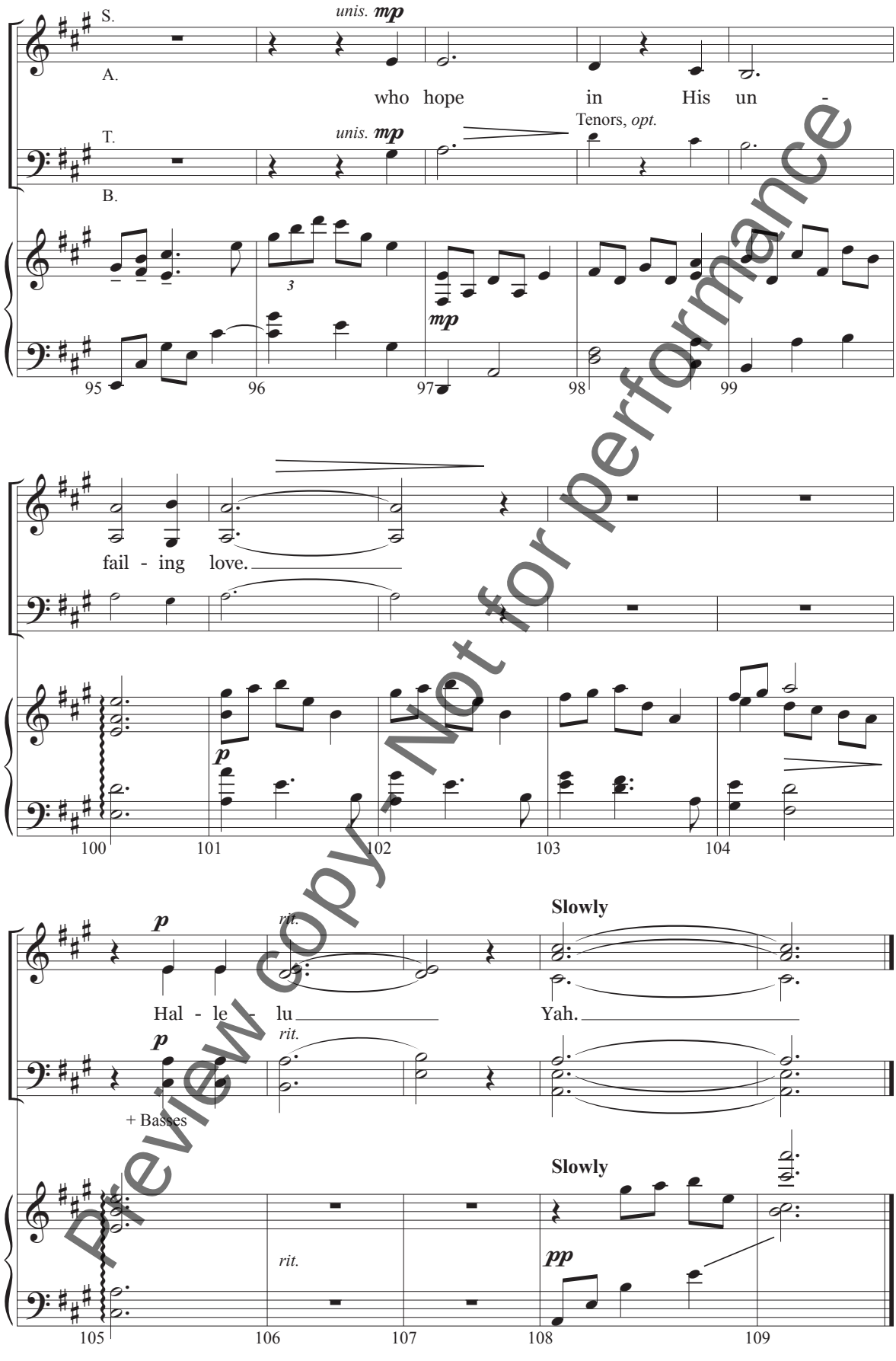

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