

Program Notes

In the Lenten season, we are often made aware of our need to be more Christ-like in every aspect of our lives. We journey toward the Cross, having done our best to fill our lives anew with Christ-like behaviors toward others and ourselves as we contemplate sacrifice, humility, and suffering.

This arrangement of “Be Thou My Vision” is intended to emphasize the Celtic style associated with the origin of this Celtic hymn, complete with instruments commonly included in Celtic instrumental ensembles (cello, flute/recorder, guitar, mandolin or “C” stringed instrument), etc. Substitutions may be made, depending on available performance resources. Use some or all of the suggested instruments.

Choral groups will want to sing this arrangement with very little vibrato, straight tones becoming more evident at the ends of phrases for clarity (cadences, etc.). Listen to Celtic ensembles to get the performance style of grace notes and other techniques “in the ear.”

Enjoy optional congregational participation in the last verse. We should always be able to hear the melody wherever it appears.

In the interest of time, the Celtic style/presentation, the general placement of anthems in worship services, the original lyrics have been modified and condensed:

Be thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
naught be all else to me, save that thou art.
Thou my best thought by day or by night,
waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my Wisdom, and thou my true Word,
I ever with thee, and thou with me, Lord;
thou and thou only, first in my heart,
high King of heaven, my Treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, my victory won,
may I reach heaven’s joys, O bright heav’n’s Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Available Editions

SATB Choir Score, Order No. MSM-50-1171

Full Score, Order No. MSM-50-1171A

Reproducible Instrumental Parts (Flute/C Instrument, Hammered Dulcimer/Mandolin, Guitar/Harp, Cello, Piano, Organ), Order No. MSM-50-1171B

Reproducible part for Congregation is available on page 11 of this publication and as a free download at www.morningstarmusic.com Search for the product number 50-1171 and find the link under Complimentary Downloads in the More Information tab.

for Dr. Steve Wells, Senior Pastor, South Main Baptist Church, Houston, Texas

Be Thou My Vision

SATB, Congregation, and Piano,
with opt. Celtic Instruments, Cello, and Organ

Traditional Irish;
tr. Mary E. Byrne,
vers. Eleanor H. Hull

Arranged by
Earlene Rentz

Moderately, sustained ♩ = ca. 72

Piano*

6

10

14

Text: Traditional Irish; tr. Mary E. Byrne (1880–1931), in 1905, vers. Eleanor H. Hull (1860–1935) in 1912 (PD).

Tune: *SLANE*, Irish folk melody (PD).

Music: Earlene Rentz (ASCAP), newly arranged, and copyright © 2024 Birnamwood Publications.

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18 *mp*

S
A

Be thou my Vi - sion, O Lord of my heart;

T
B

22

naught be all else to me, save that thou art. Thou my best -

Tenor *mp*

Thou, my

27 by day or by night, _____

thought by day or night, _____ wak - ing or sleep - ing, thy _____

+Bass

thought by day or night, _____ *mp* Wak - ing or sleep - ing,

32

pres - ence my light.

my light.

This system contains measures 32 through 36. It features a vocal duet with Soprano and Alto parts, a Tenor part, and a Bass part. The Soprano and Alto parts have lyrics: "pres - ence my light." and "my light." respectively. The piano accompaniment consists of a right hand with eighth-note patterns and a left hand with a steady eighth-note bass line. A large diagonal watermark "Copyright is illegal only" is visible across the page.

37

S Be thou my Wis - dom and

A Be thou my Wis - dom, and thou my true

T Be thou my Wis - dom, thou my true

B Be thou my Wis - dom and

This system contains measures 37 through 41. It features four vocal parts: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The lyrics for each part are: S: "Be thou my Wis - dom and"; A: "Be thou my Wis - dom, and thou my true"; T: "Be thou my Wis - dom, thou my true"; B: "Be thou my Wis - dom and". The piano accompaniment continues with eighth-note patterns in both hands. A large diagonal watermark "Copyright is illegal only" is visible across the page.

41 *mf*

Word, I ev - er with thee, and thou with me, Lord;

Word, I ev - er with thee, and thou with me, Lord;

Word, I ev - er with thee, thou with me, Lord;

Word, I ev - er with thee, thou with me, Lord;

mf

46 *mp*

thou and_ thou_ on - ly, first in my heart, —

mp *mp*

thou and_ thou_ on - ly, first in my heart, — high King of

mp *mp*

thou on - ly, first in my heart, — high King of

mp

thou on - ly, first in my heart, —

p *mp*

51 *mp* *mf* *mp*

high King of heav - en thou art.

mf *mp*

heav - en, my Treas - ure thou art.

mf *mp*

heav - en, my Treas - ure thou art.

mp *mf* *mp*

high King of heav - en thou art.

55 *poco rit.*

mf

60 *(rit.)* *a tempo*

f

65 *rit.*

70 $\text{♩} = 72-76$

f

S High King of heav - en, High King of

+Congregation*

A High King of heav-en, my vic - to - ry won, may I reach

T High King of heav - en, may I reach

B High King of heav - en, may I reach

$\text{♩} = 72-76$

f

75 *unis.*

heav - en, bright Sun! Heart

heav - en's joys, O bright heav'n's Sun! Heart of my

unis.

heav - en's, bright Sun! Heart

heav - en's, bright Sun! Heart

79

of my own heart, still be my
own heart, what - ev - er be - fall, still be my
of my own heart, still be my
of my own heart, still be my

mp

mp

mp

mp

mp

83

vi - sion, Ru - ler of all.
vi - sion, O Ru - ler of all.
vi - sion, Ru - ler of all.
vi - sion, Ru - ler of all.

Gradually slowing to the end

87 *f* *mp*

Heart of _____ my own heart, _____ still be my

f *mp*

Heart of _____ my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall, _____ still be my

f *mp*

8 Heart of _____ my own _____ heart, _____ still be my

f *mp*

Heart of my own heart, _____ still be my

Gradually slowing to the end

f *mp*

92 *molto rit.* *p*

Vi - sion, Ru - ler of all.

p

Vi - sion, O _____ Ru - ler of all.

p

8 Vi - sion, Ru - ler of all.

p

Vi - sion, Ru - ler of all.

molto rit. *dim.* *p dim.* *pp*

8^{vb}

*Piano plays first chord only as dotted half note when instruments are accompanying.