Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf

Motet

BWV 226

by J. S. Bach

Arranged for SATB-SATB Recorders

by Peter Billam

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Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf, BWV 226

Johann Sebastian Bach has bequeathed us six motets. They were first published in 1803 by Breitkopf u. Härtel in an edition by Schicht, the Thomaskantor at the time. The manuscripts of two of them survive, including that of *Der Geist hilft unser Schwachheit auf*, and its parts are marked *Motette bei Beerdigung des seel. Professoris und Rectoris Ernesti*, who died in October 1729. In the score a figured bass for organ is written out, and the first choir is to be supported by strings, and the second by oboes, *taille* (cor-anglais, roughly) and bassoon.

Several of the expressive motifs that Schweizer discusses make an appearance, for example the step-motif in *denn er vertritt* (e.g. in the alto at bar 178) and the Joy-motif of *Heiligen* (e.g. in the tenor at 180).

This edition makes the motet available for recorders. The words are mostly omitted, but the ends of phrases, where breaths would usually be taken, have been indicated with breath-marks. Some implied legato has been made explicit with slurs, though choirs do not always sing legato in extended passages on one vowel. In general, quavers joined by beams should be slurred together, according to the conventional notation of vocal music. In the first movement the quavers Bb-A-Bb occur frequently; there is an alternative fingering on the C-recorders which might be useful, using half the right ring-finger, and the A played with the middle finger. The Allabreve, in order to retain rhythmic vitality, needs clear articulation of its phrases.

The thrilling, jubilant eight-voice counterpoint of the first movement gradually merges to four-voice counterpoint during the course of the motet. The basses unite in bars 132, the tenors in bar 134, the altos in 136 and the the sopranos finally in the Allabreve, bar 146. This complicates the distribution of Parts:

Soprano and Alto of choir 1 need pages 19-24, 25-27
Tenor and Bass of choir 1 need pages 19-24, 34-36
Soprano and Alto of choir 2 need pages 28-33, 25-27
Tenor and Bass of choir 2 need pages 28-33, 34-36

Peter J Billam
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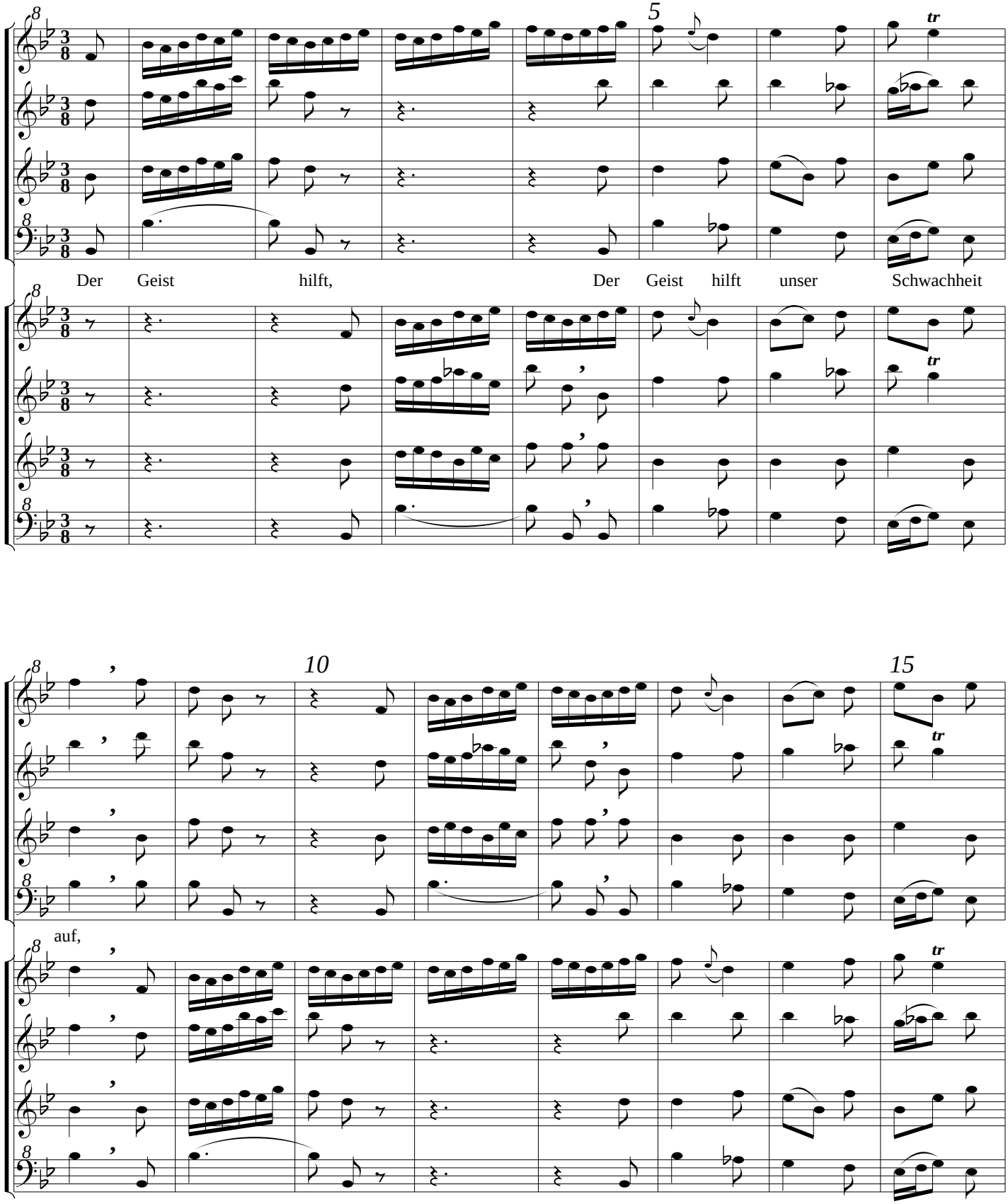
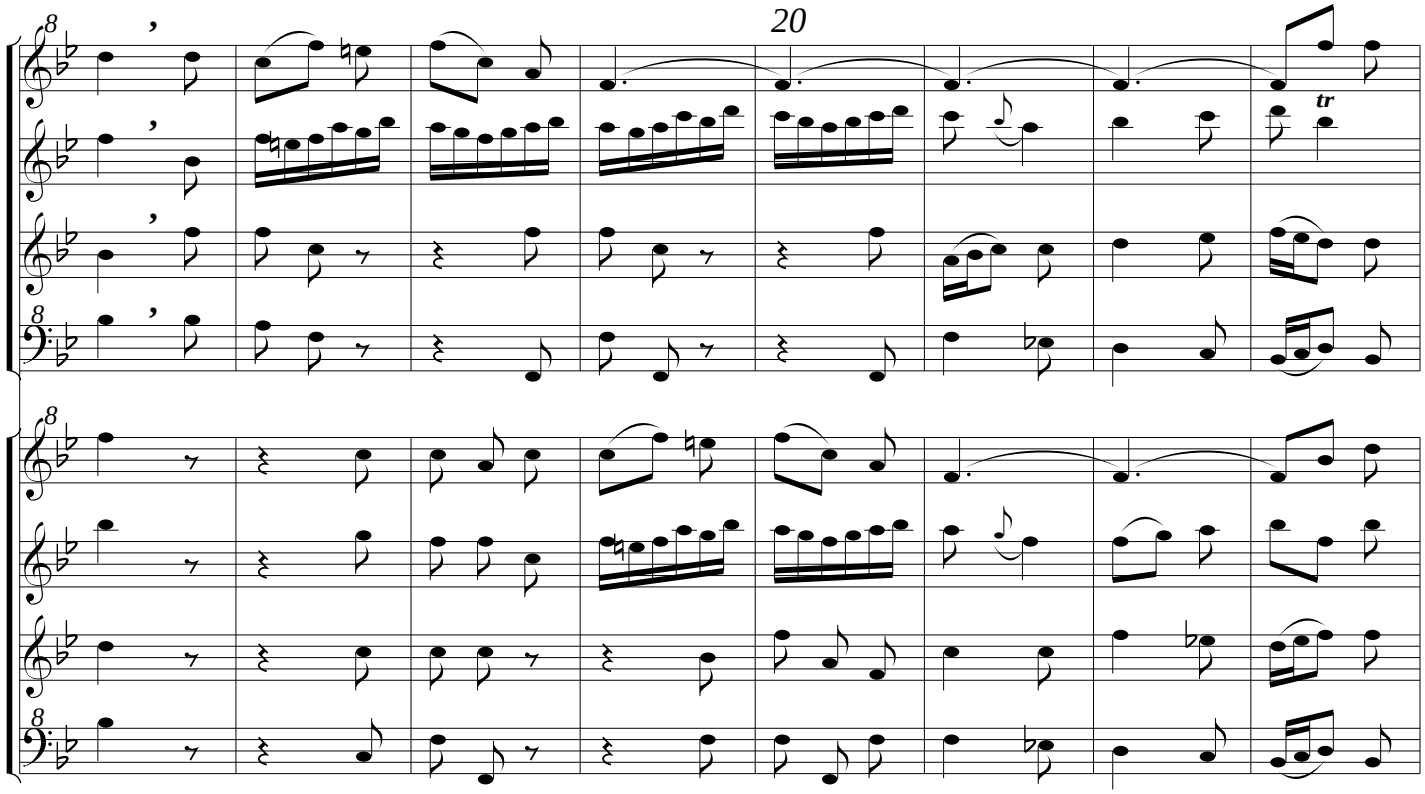
Motet: Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf

1. Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf

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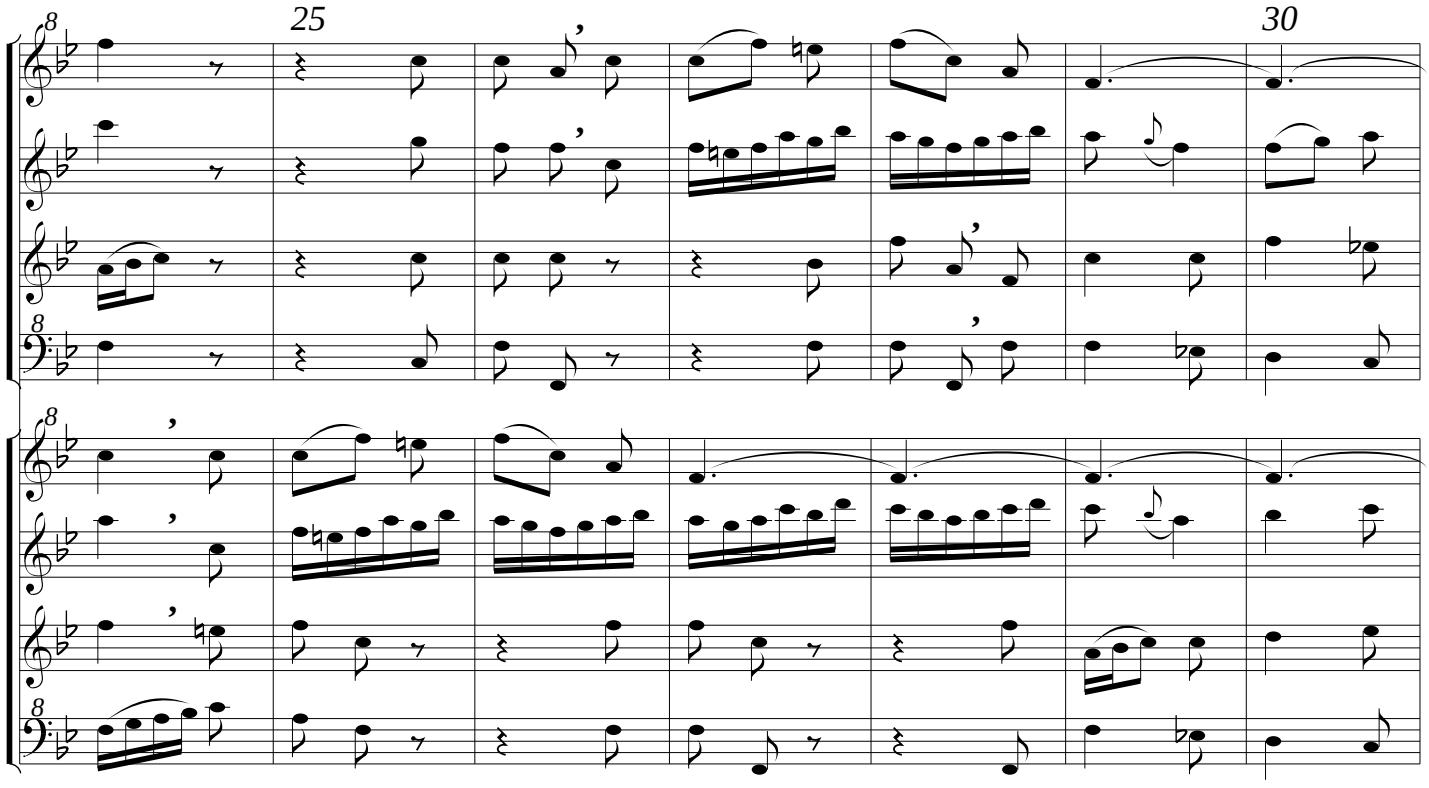
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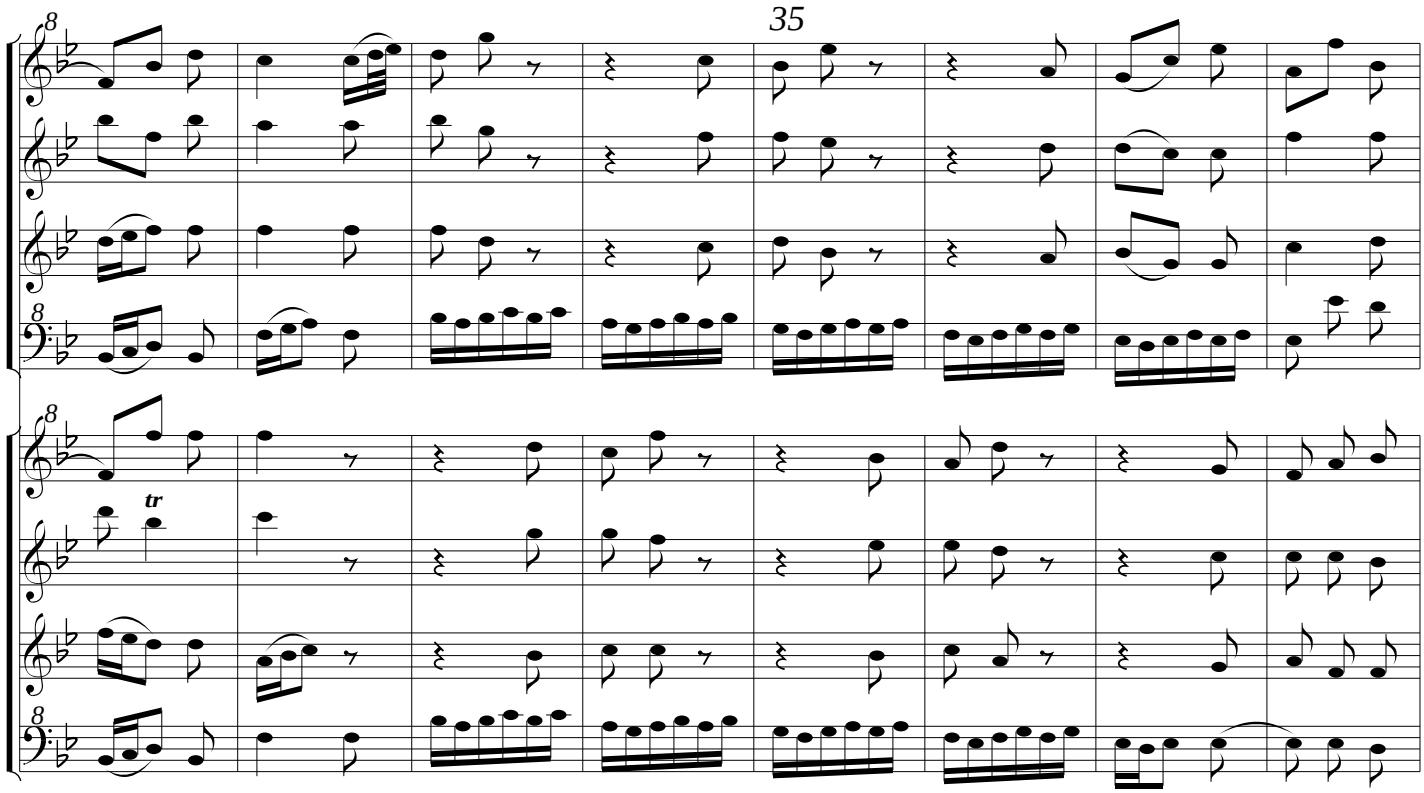
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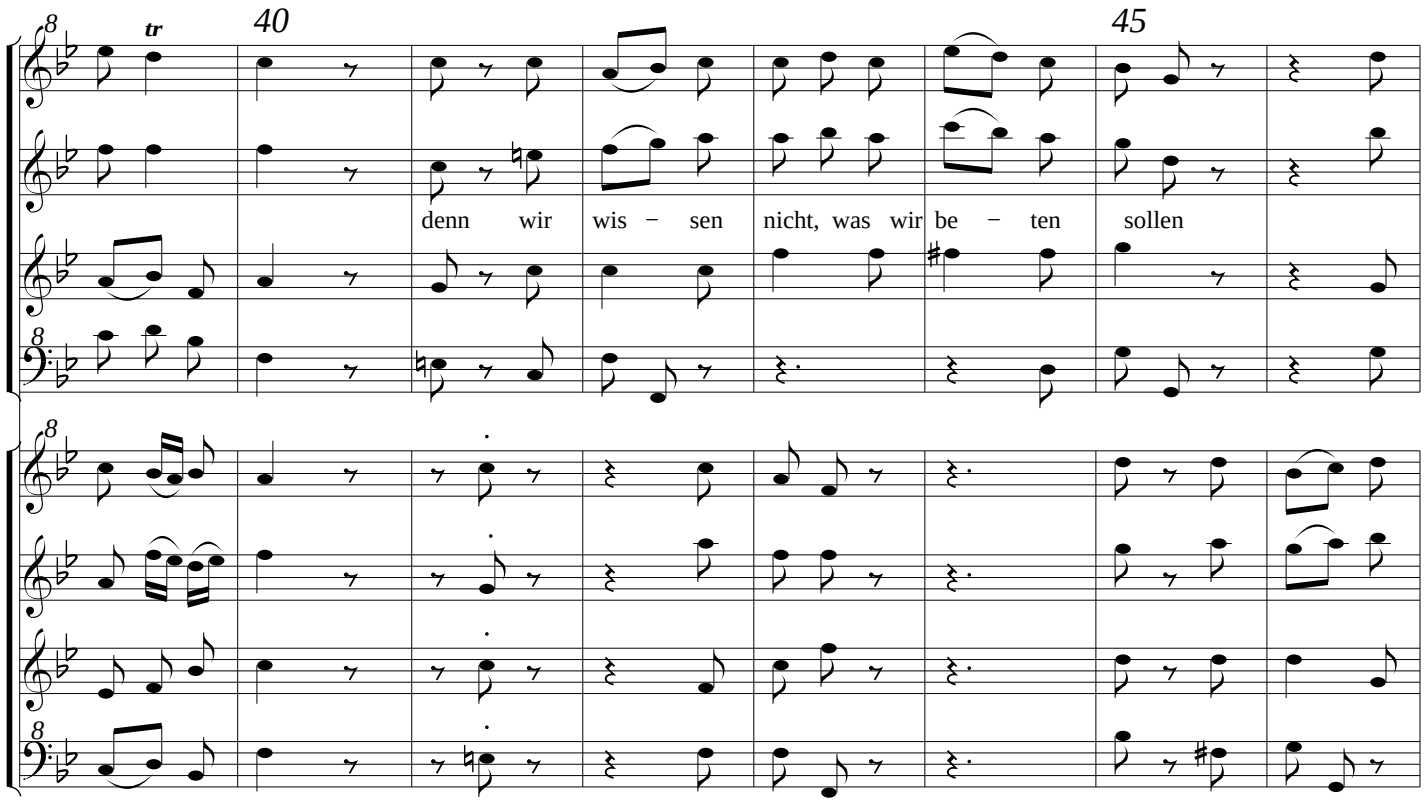
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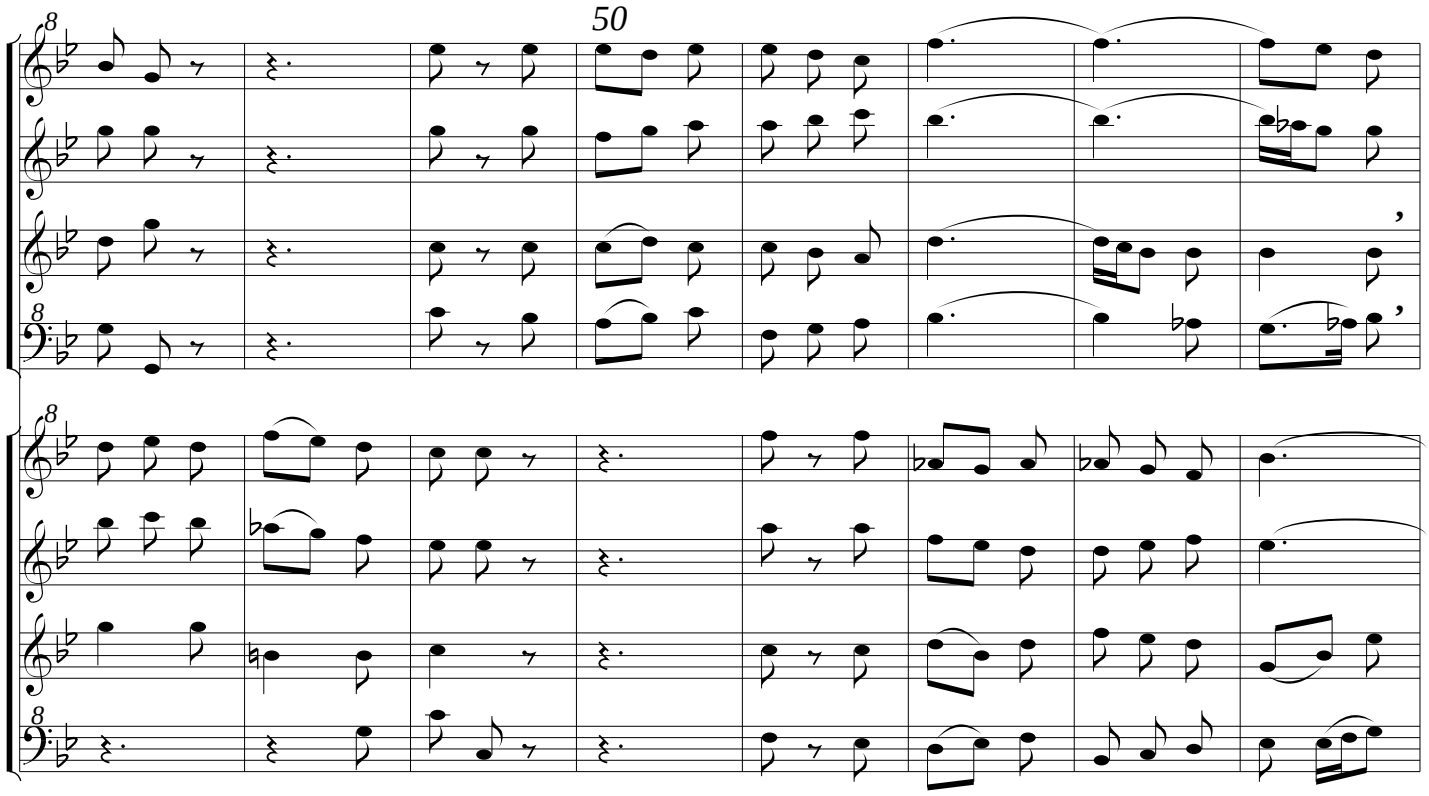
40
45
denn wir wis − sen nicht, was wir be − ten sollen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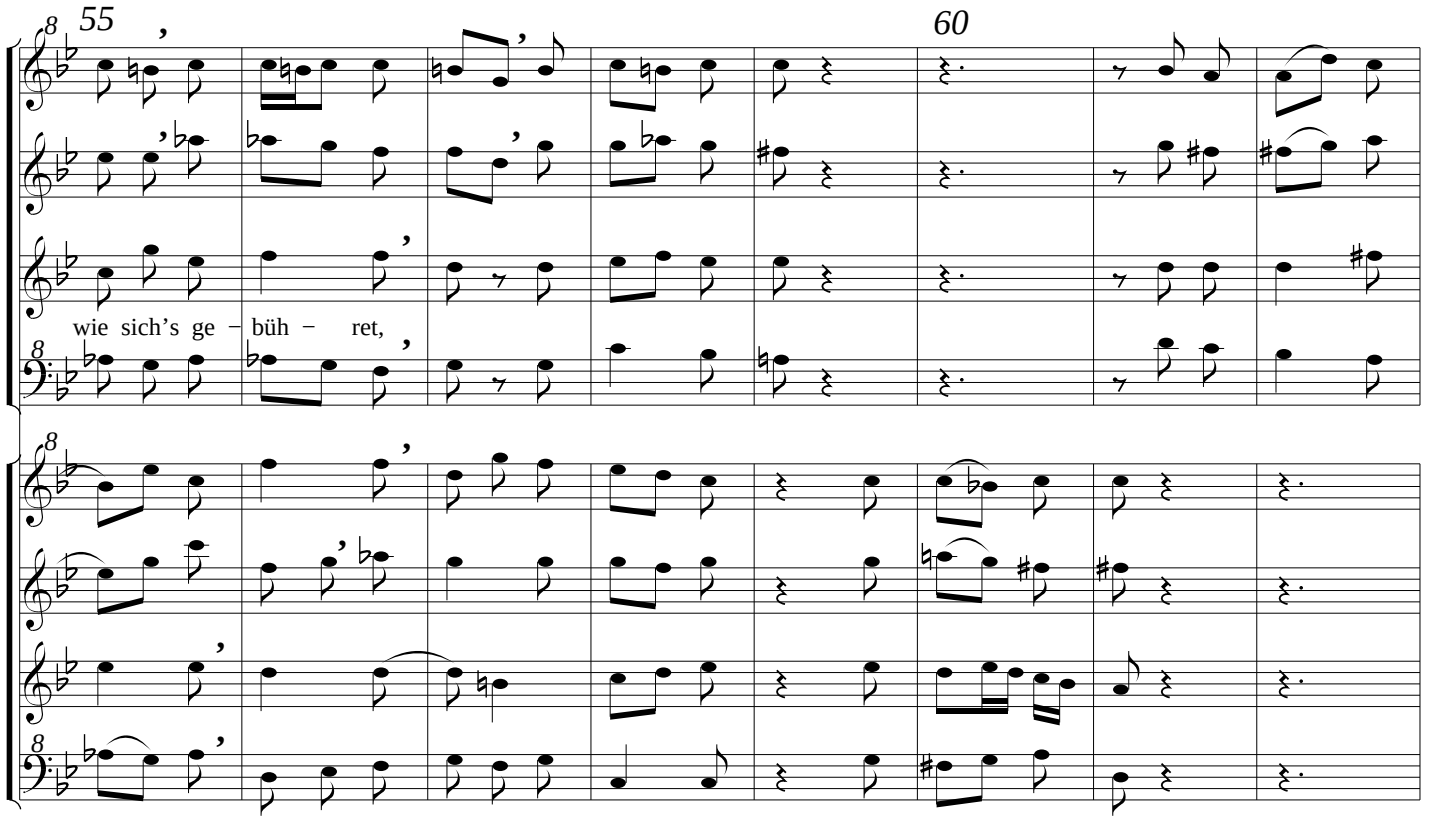
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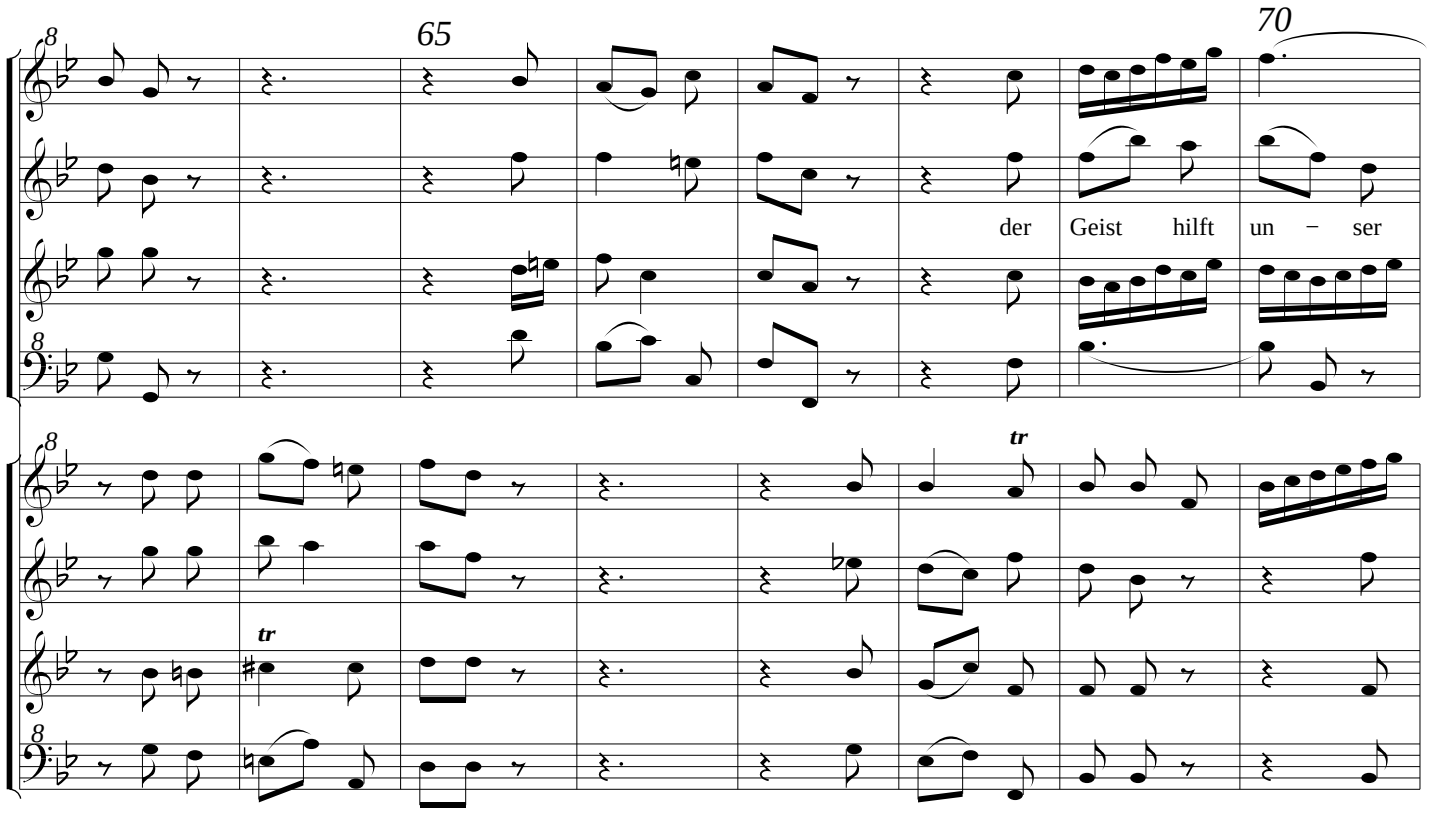
wie sich's ge – büh – ret,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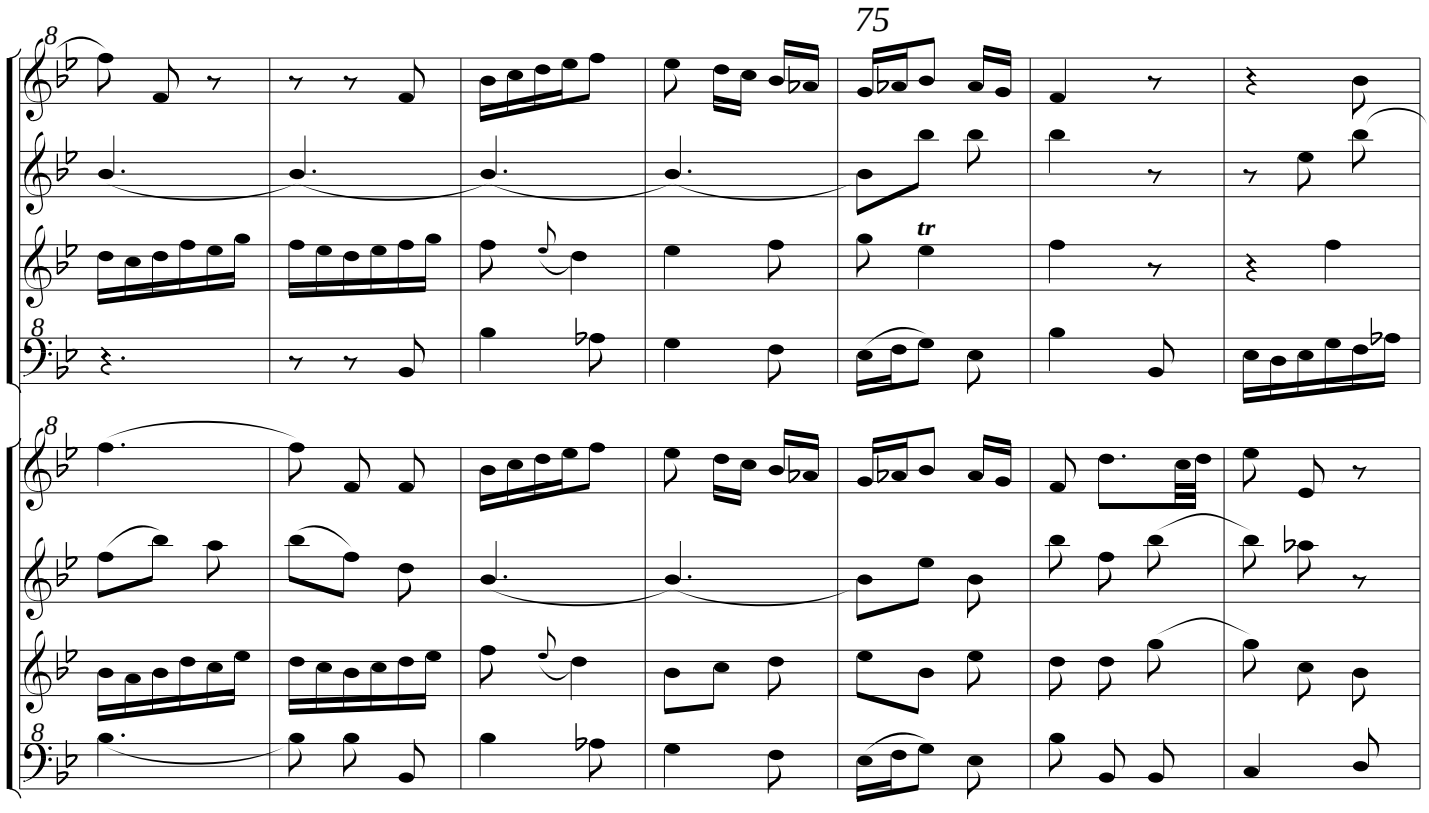
der Geist hilft un − ser
tr
tr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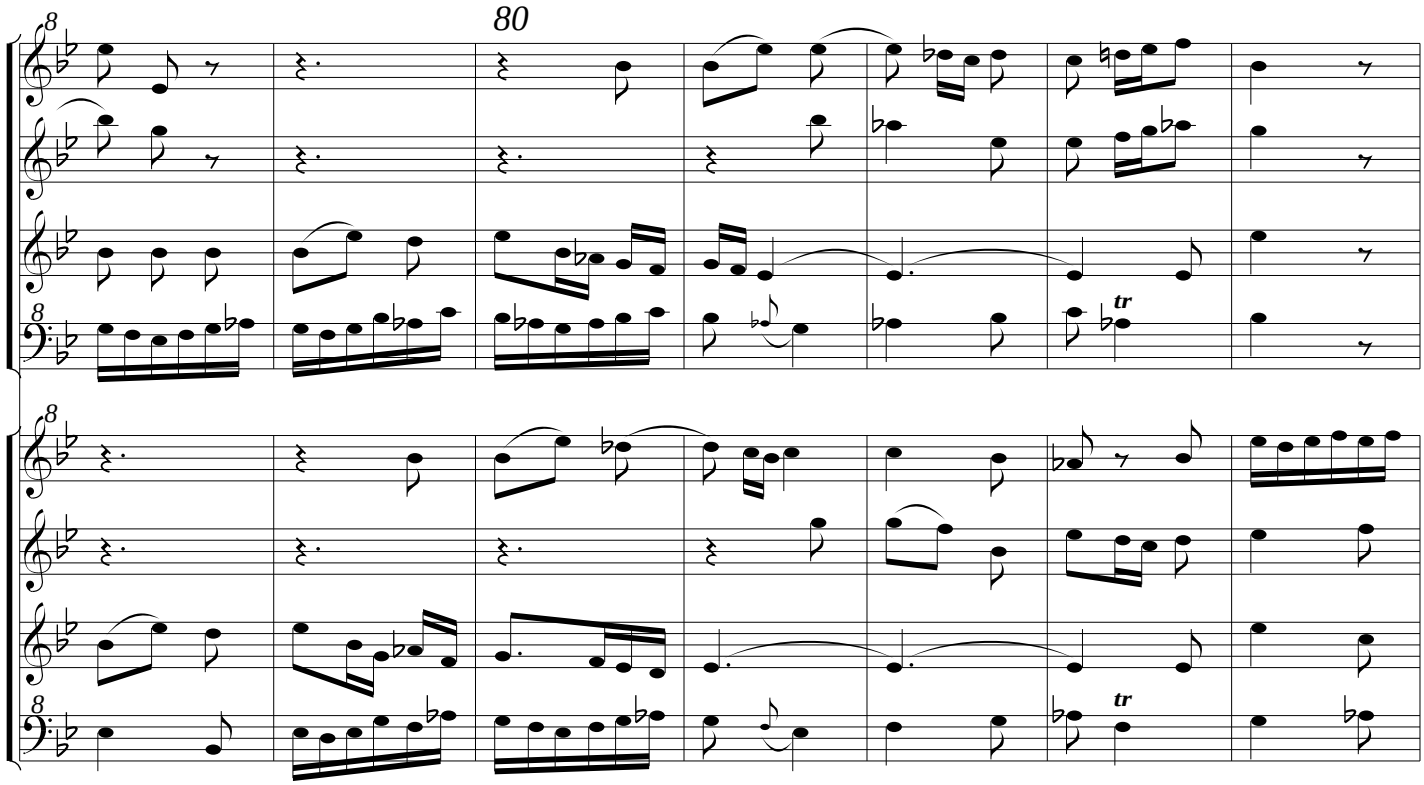
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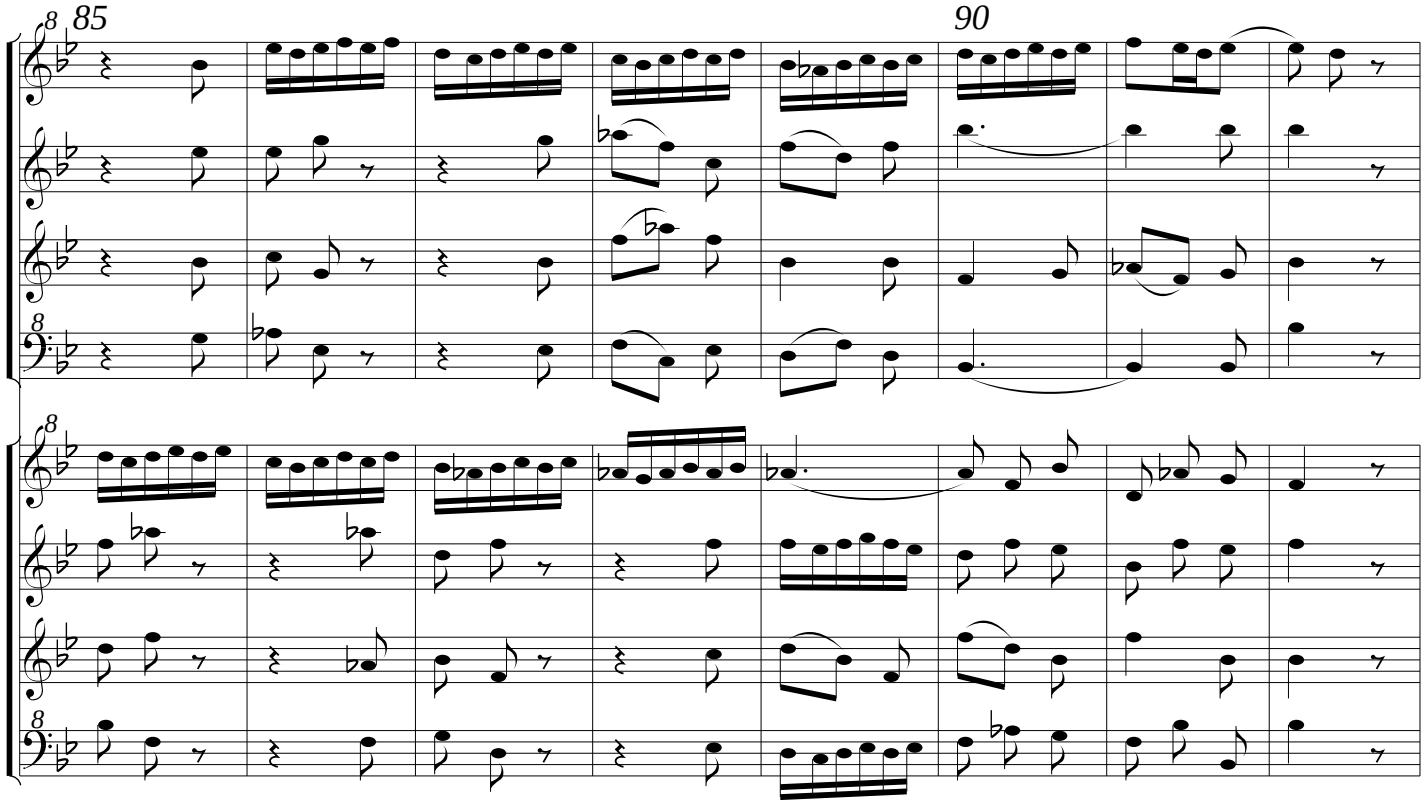
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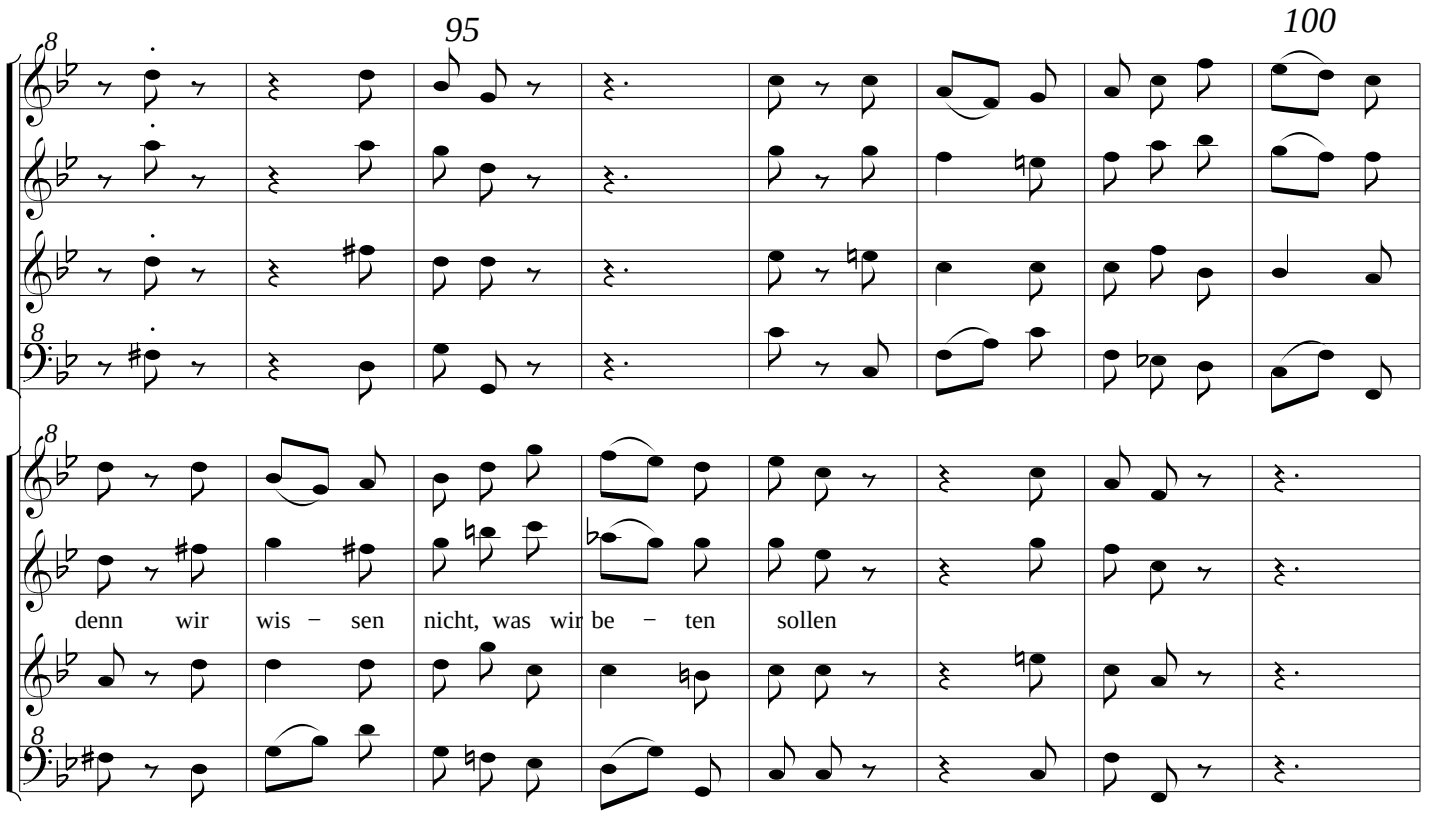
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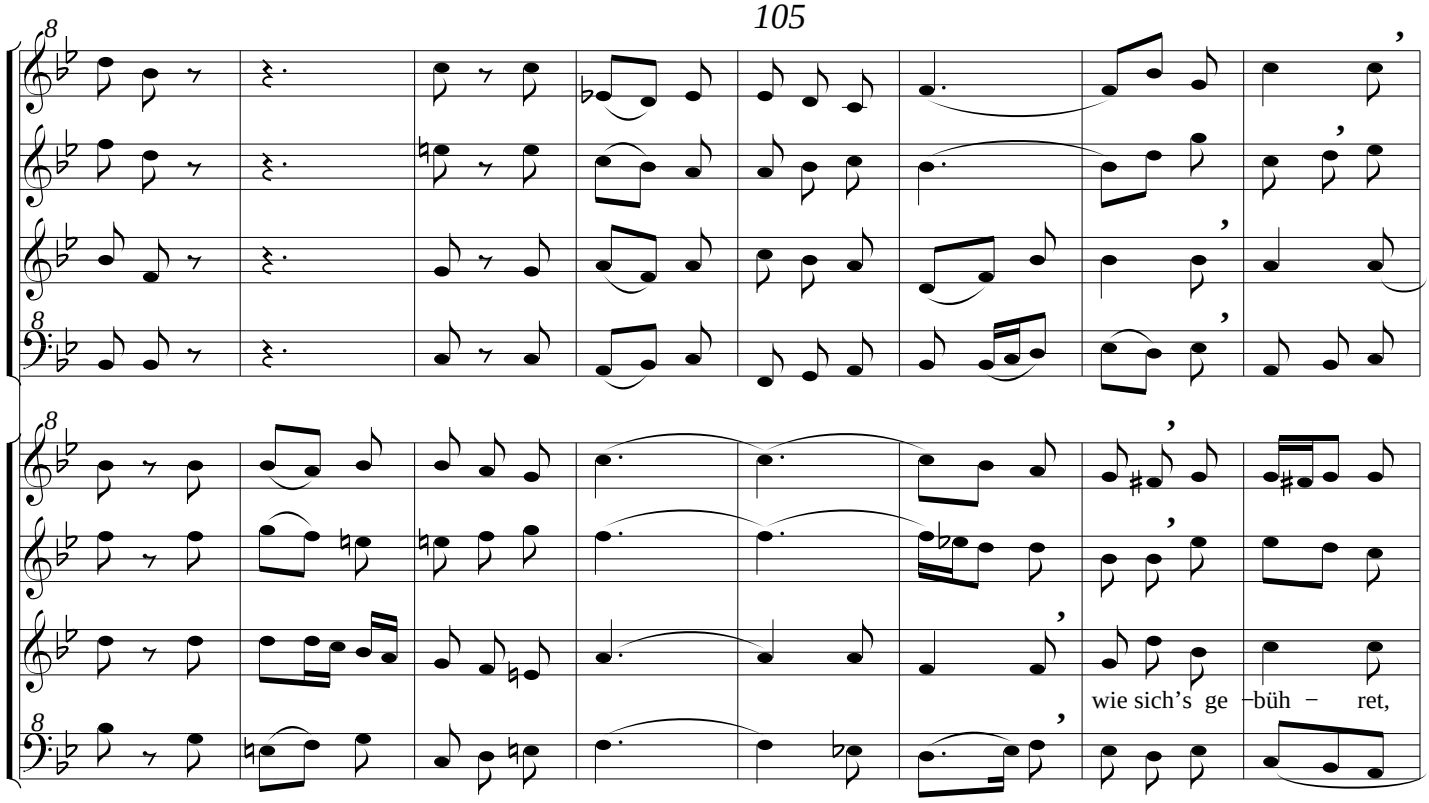
denn wir wis − sen nicht, was wir be − ten sollen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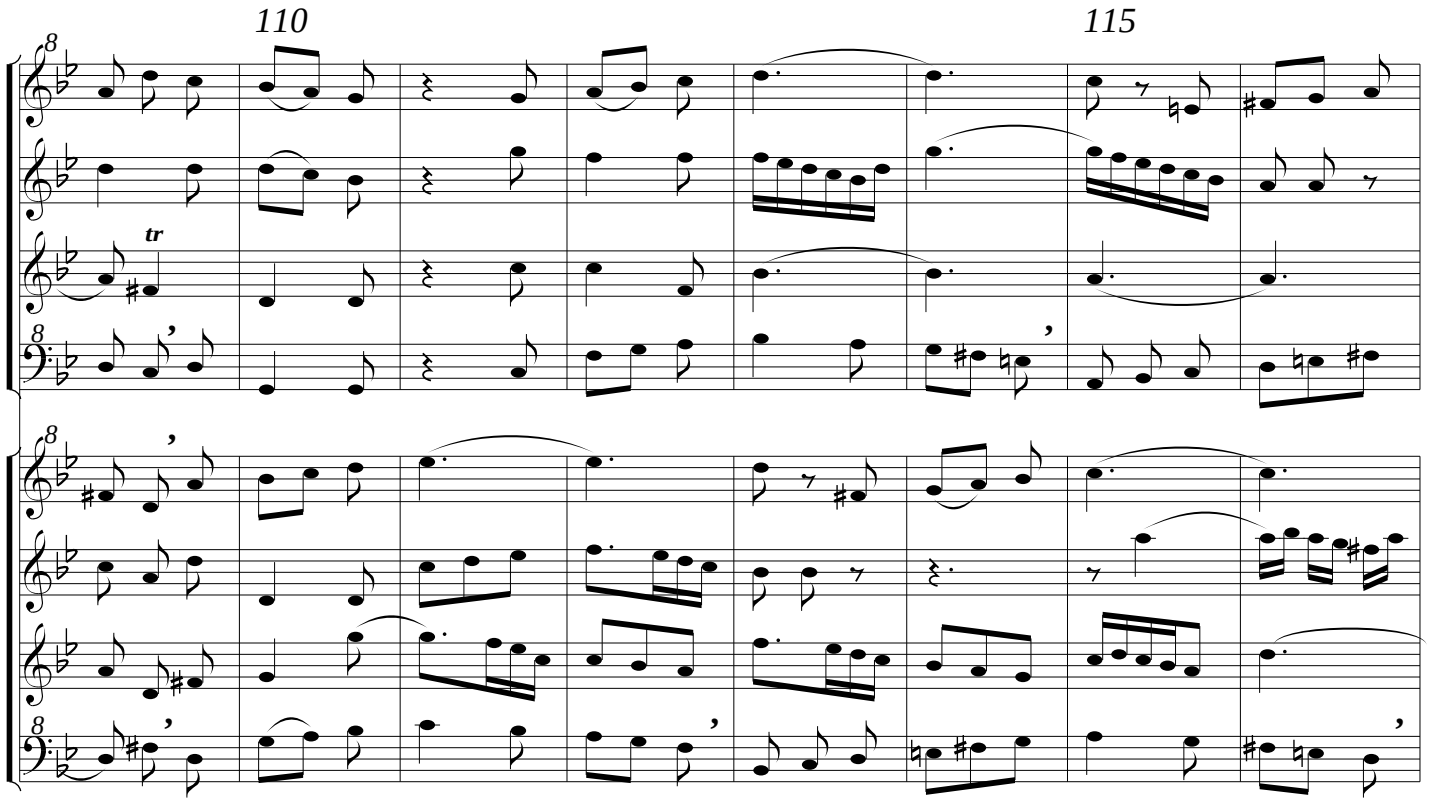
wie sich's ge − büh − ret,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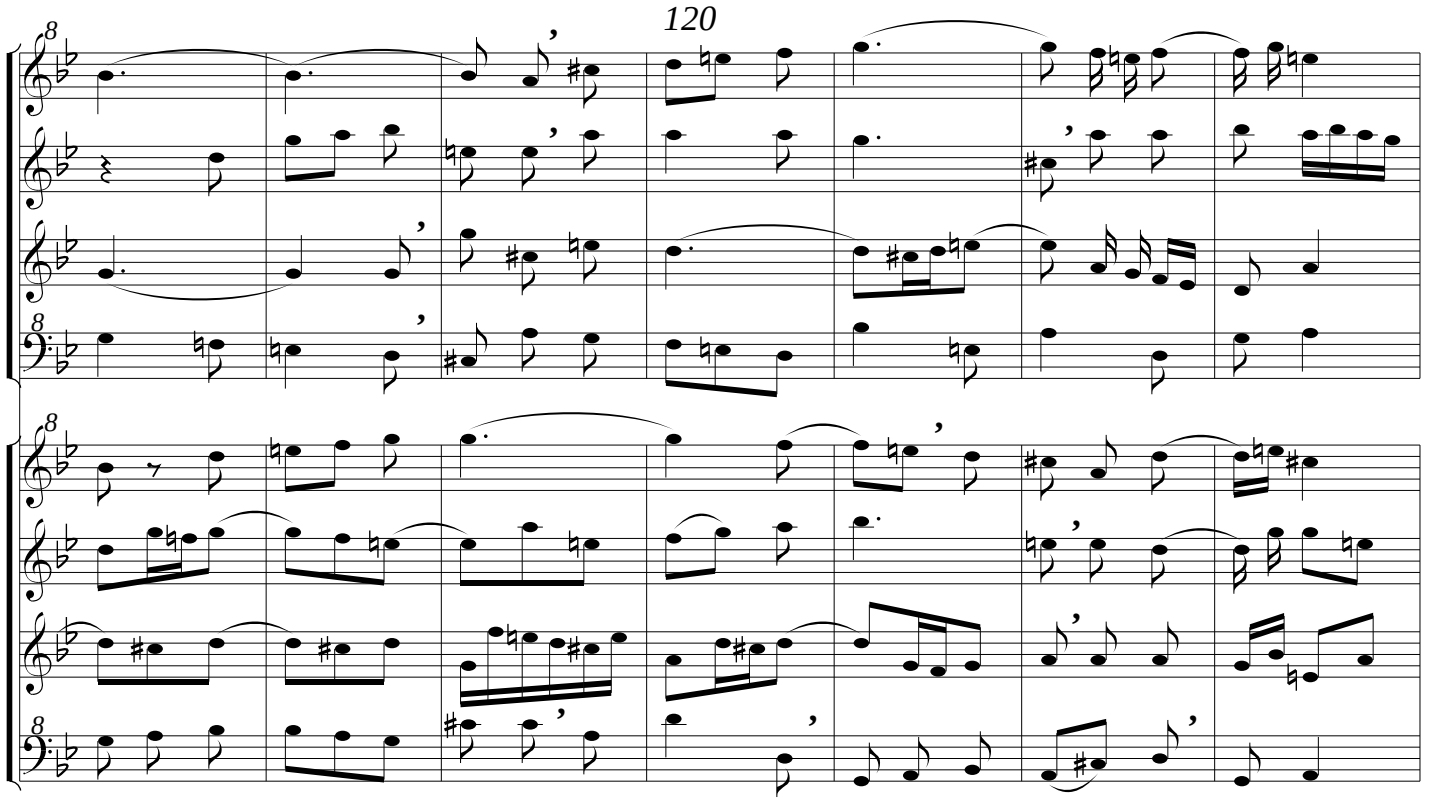
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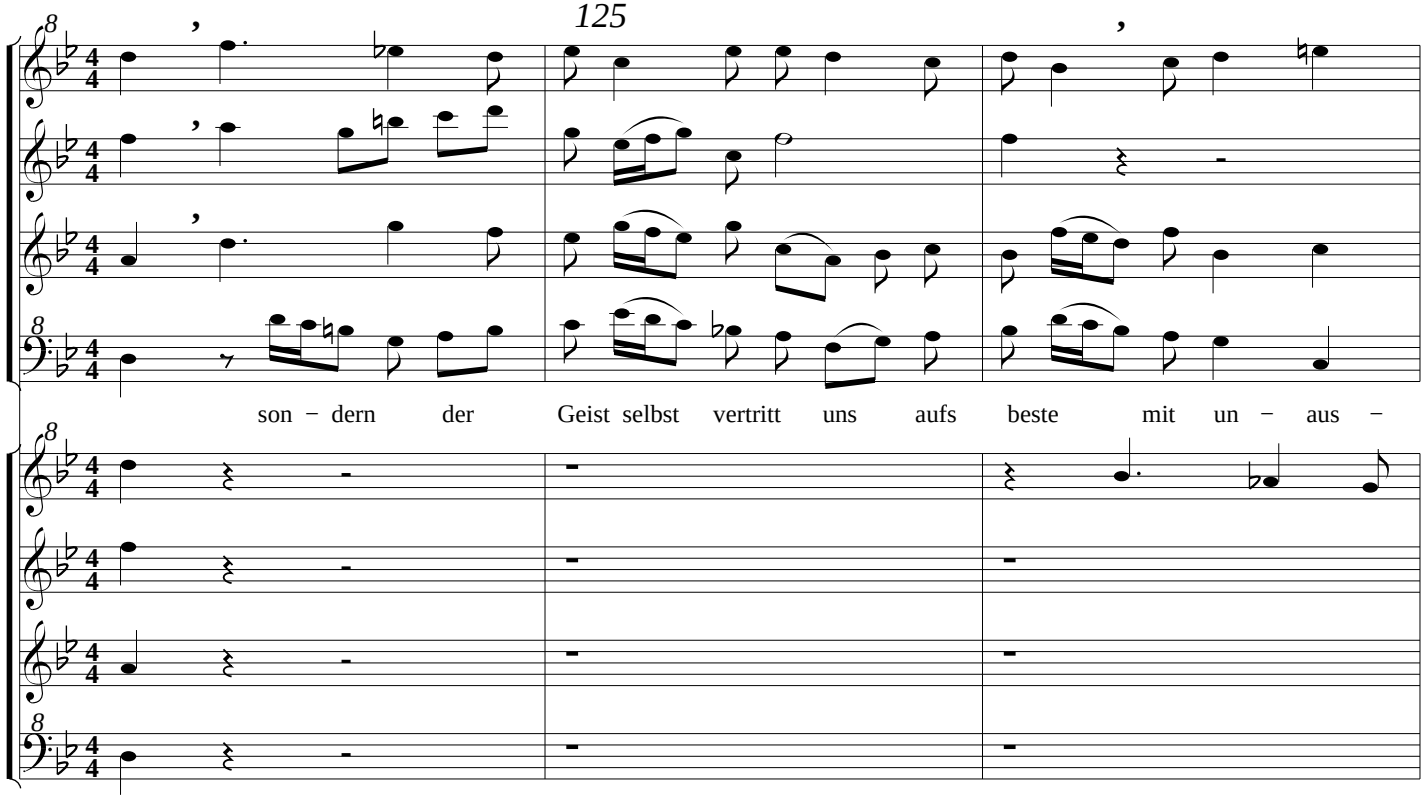
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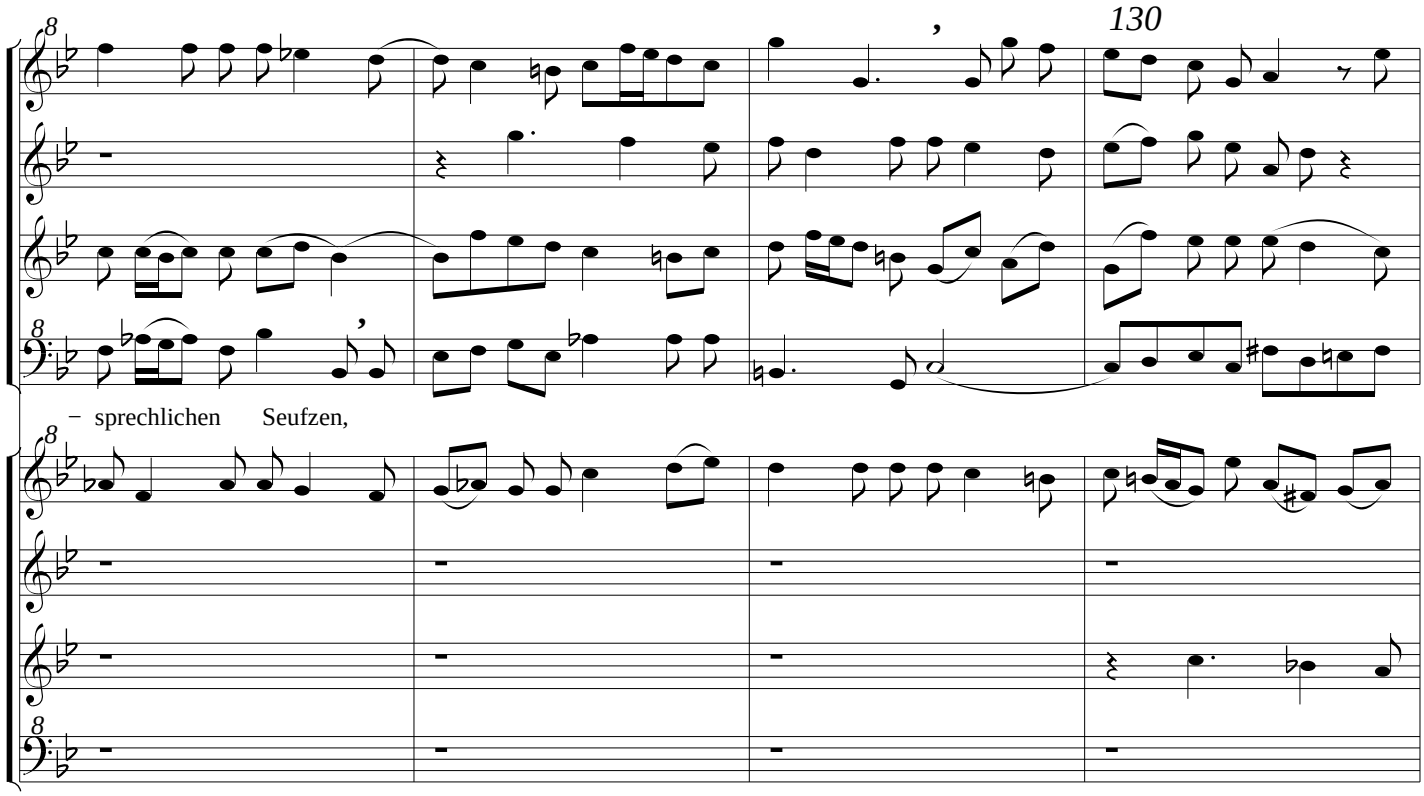
son − dern der Geist selbst vertritt uns aufs beste mit un − aus −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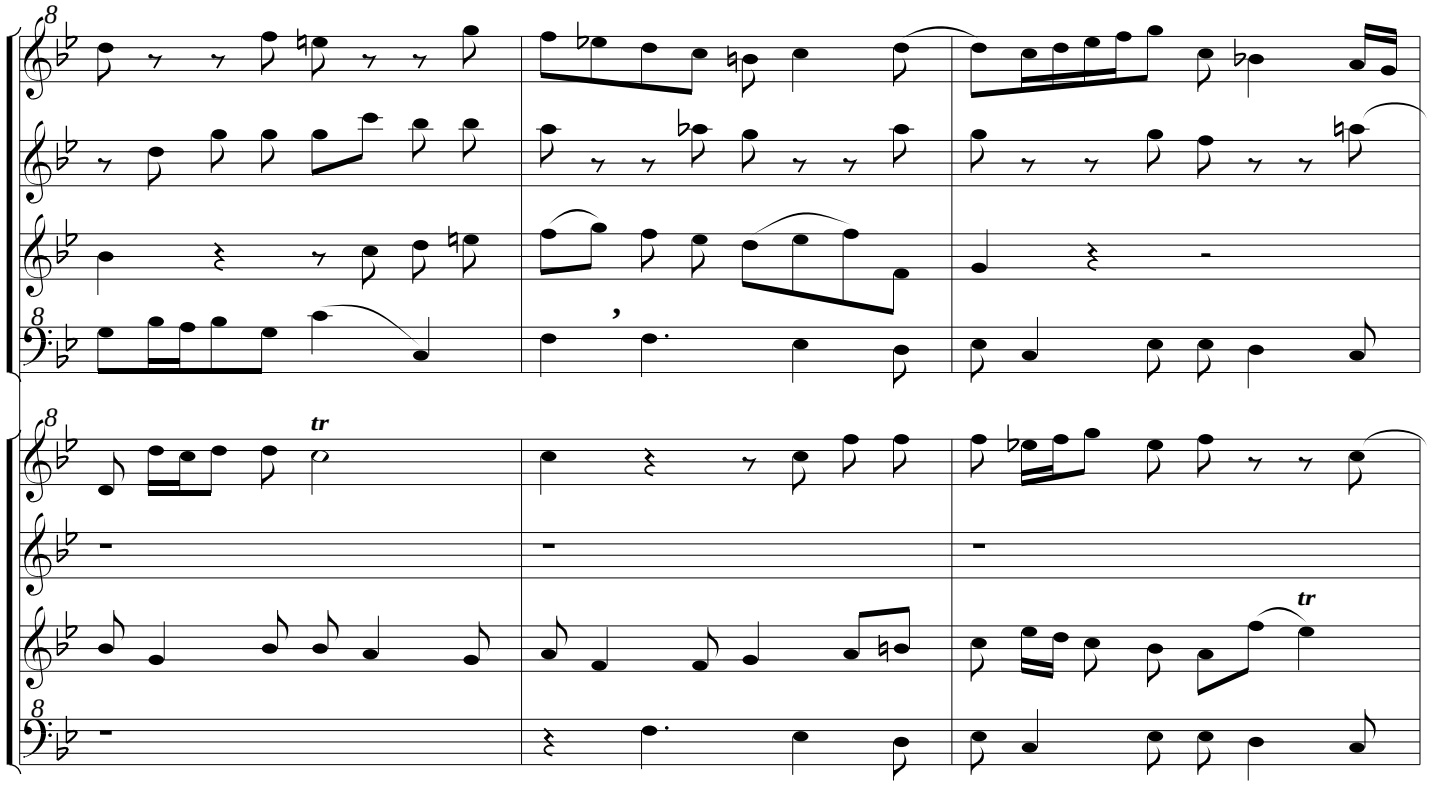
− sprechlichen Seufzen,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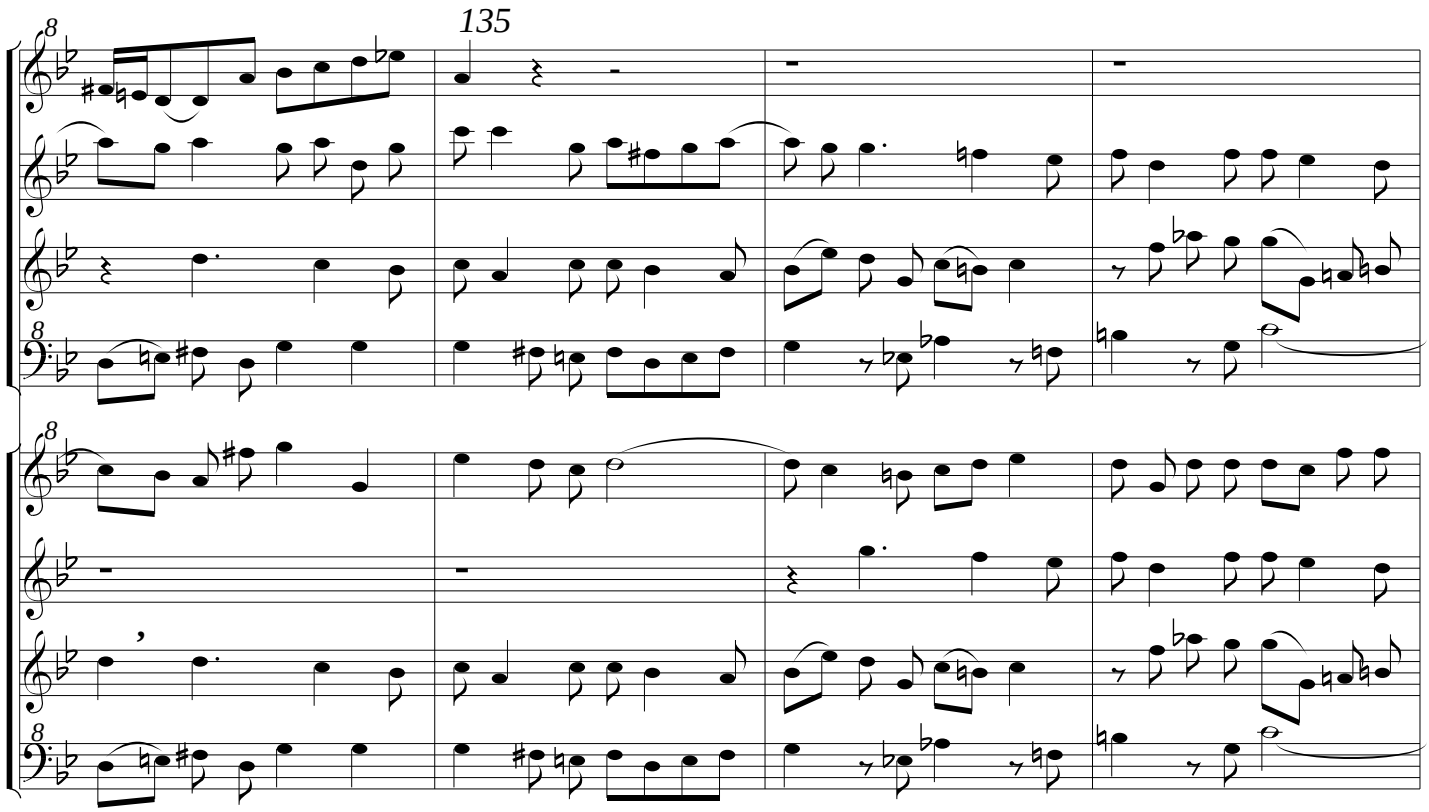
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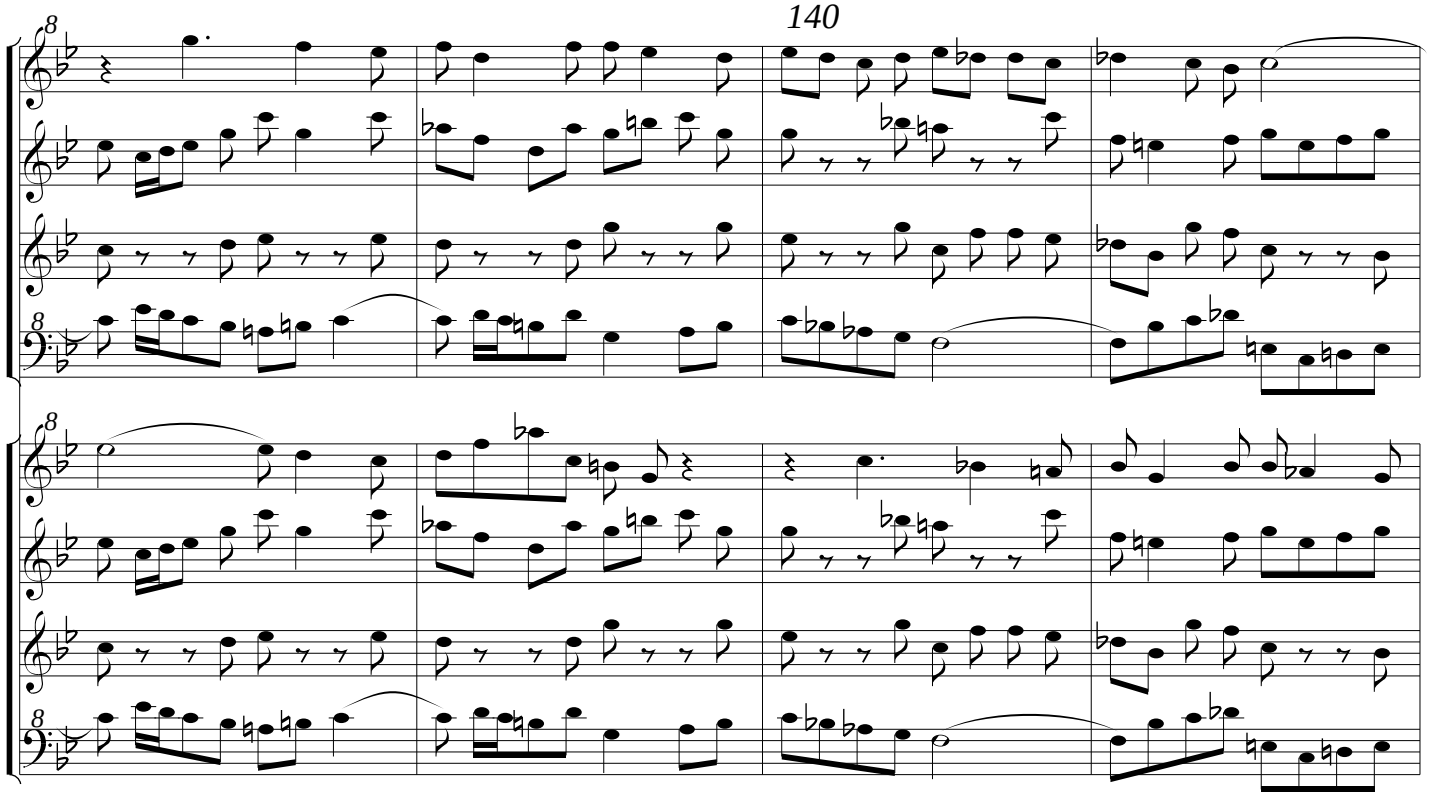
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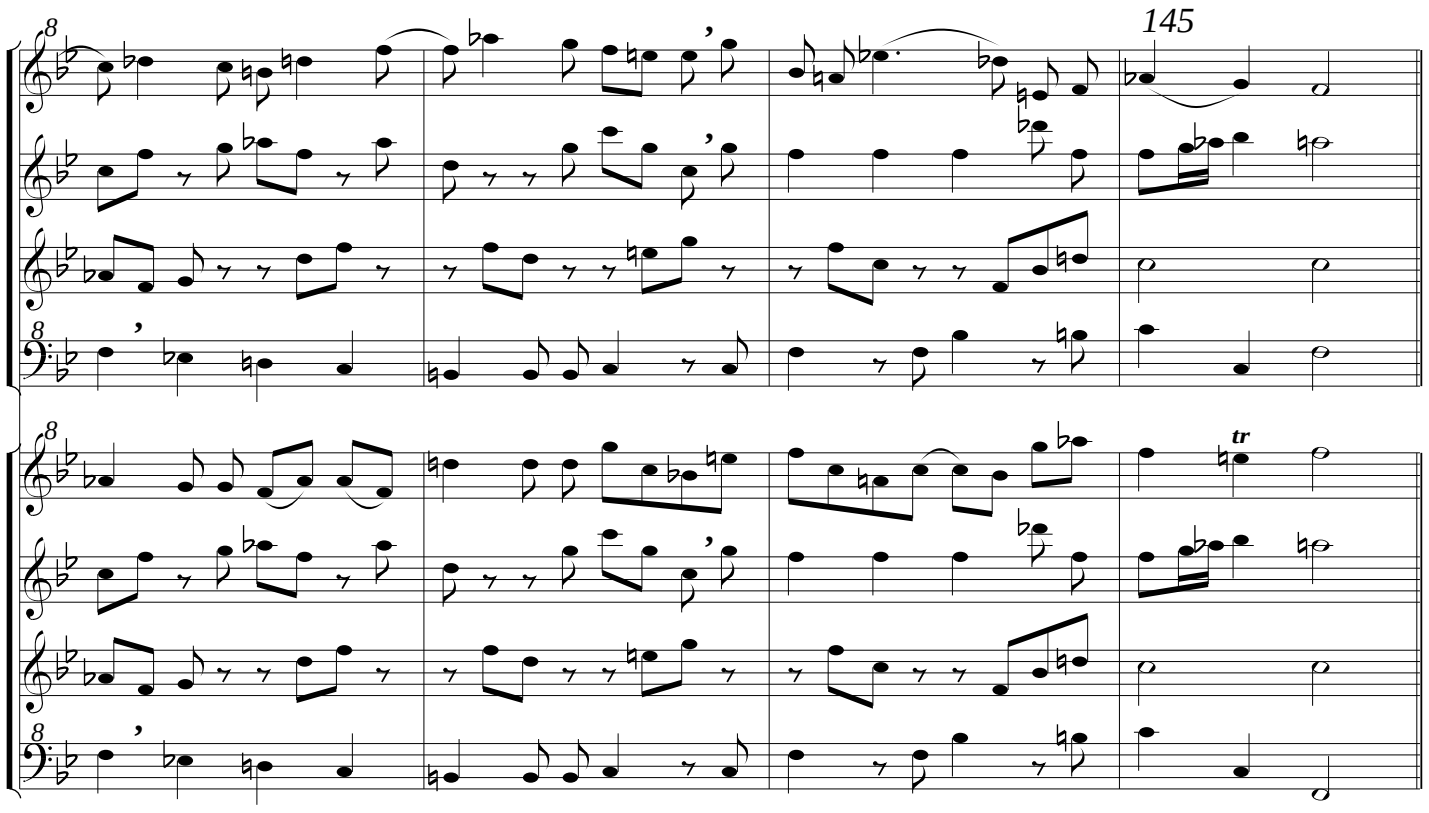
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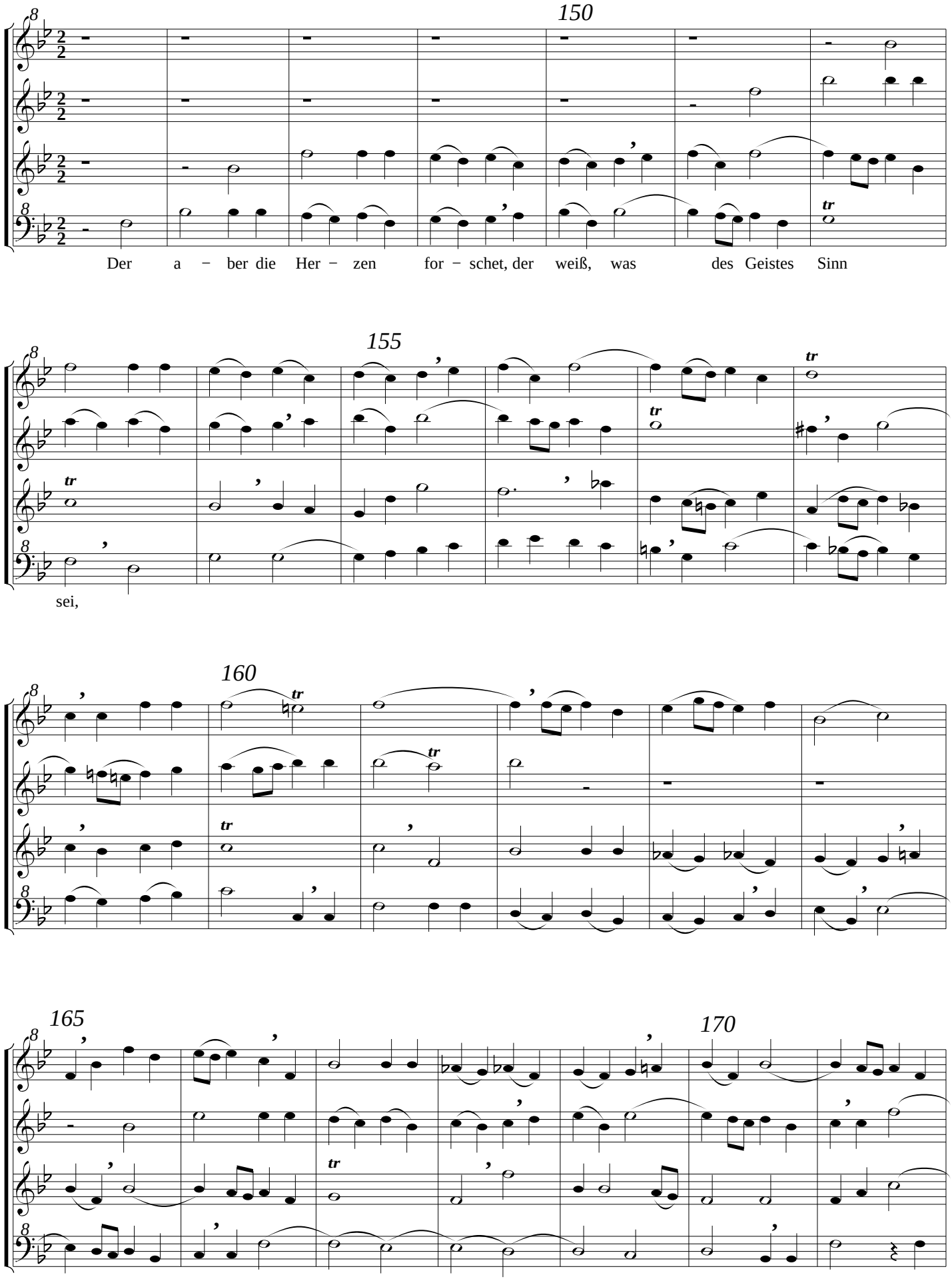
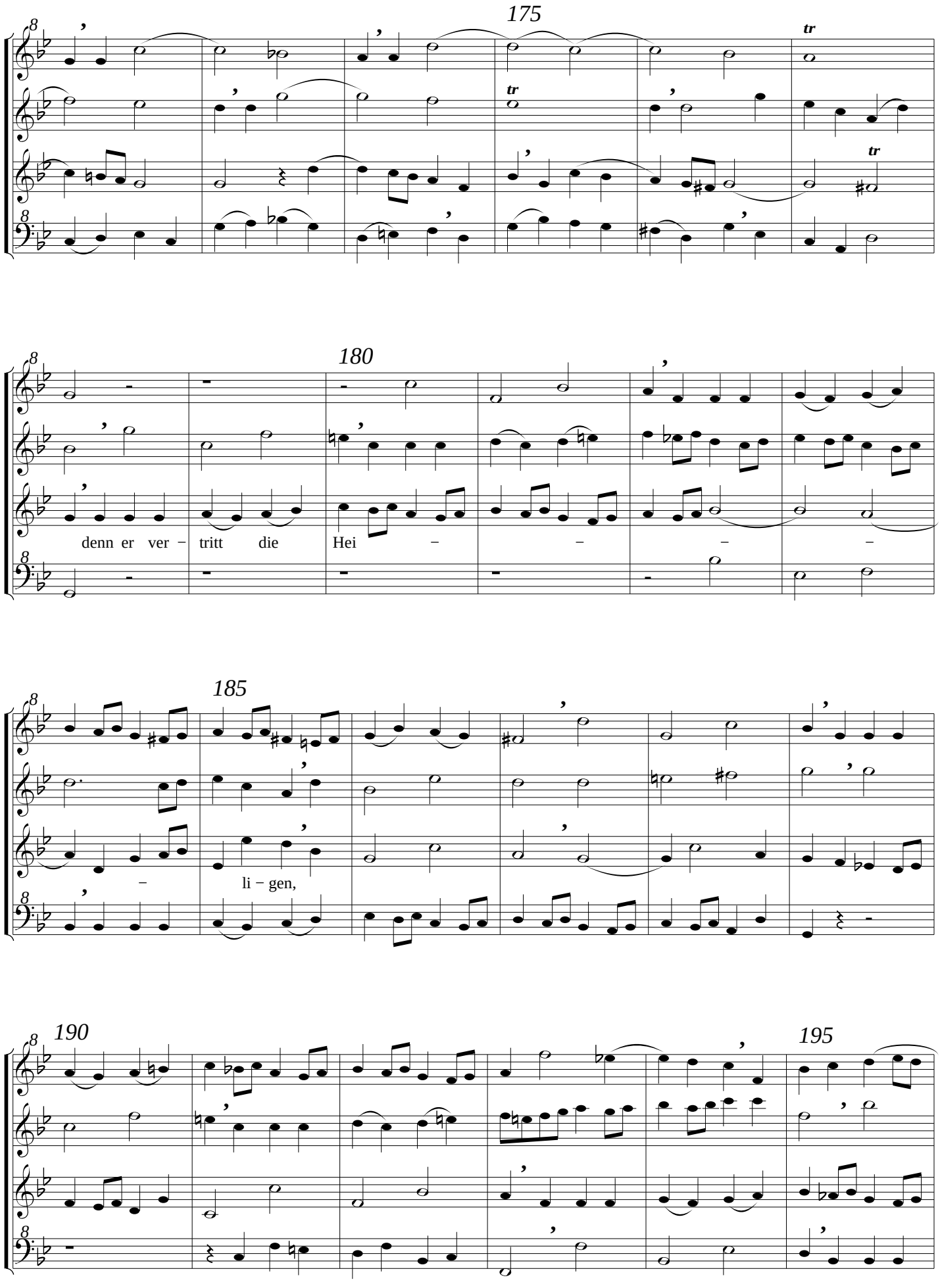
2. Allabreve: Der aber die Herzen forschet

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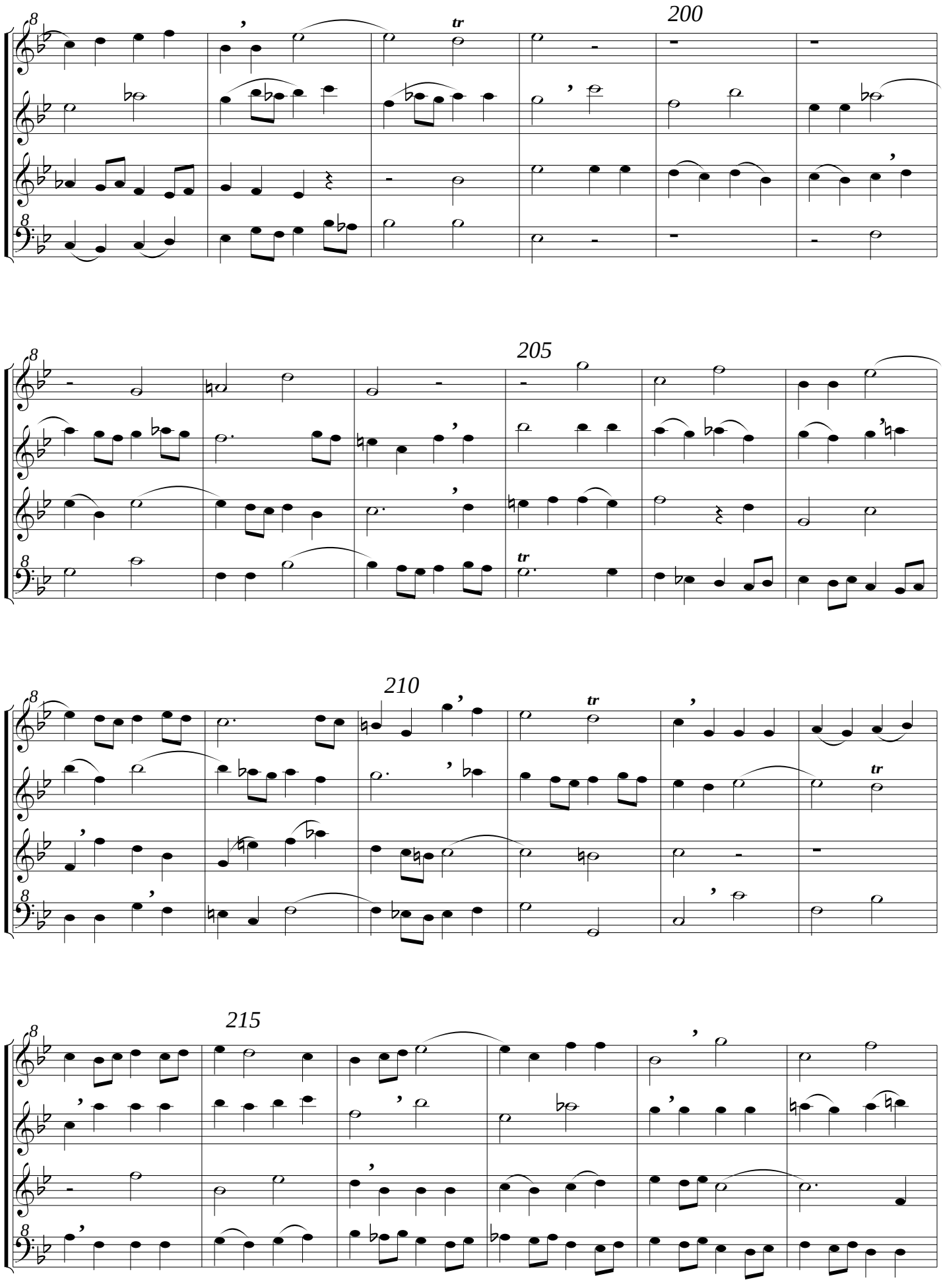
180
denn er ver − tritt die Hei − − − −
185
− li − gen,
190
195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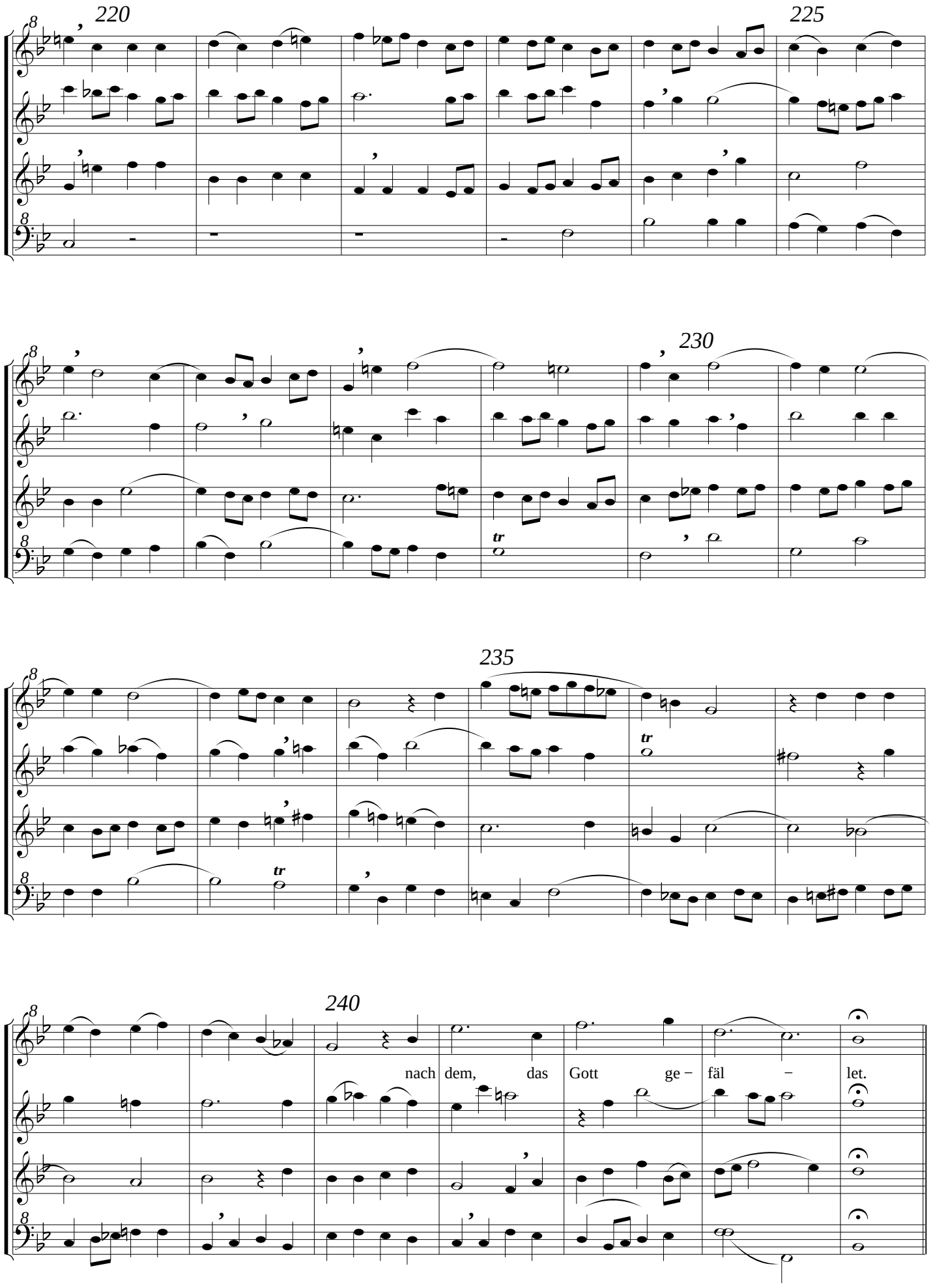
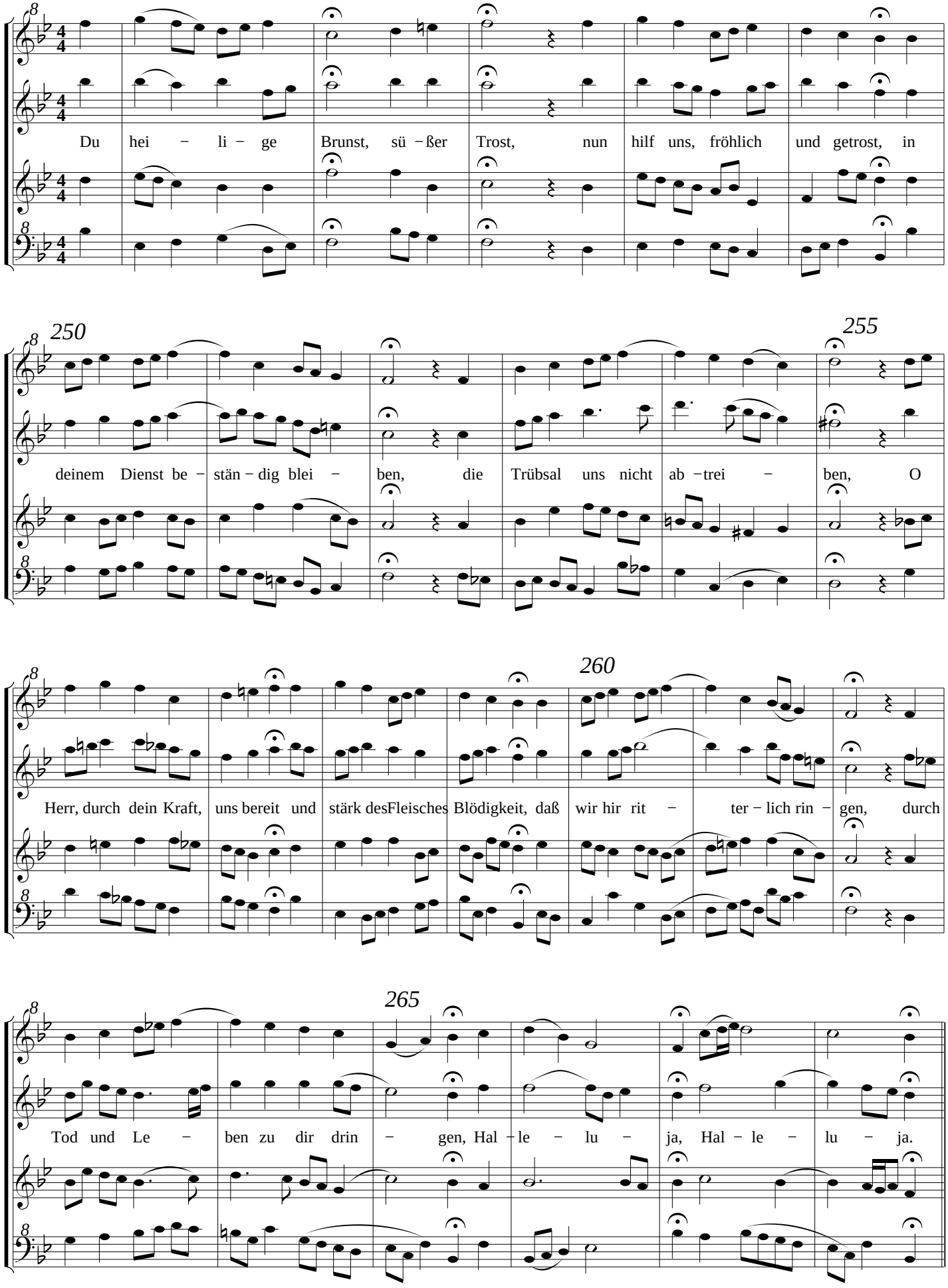
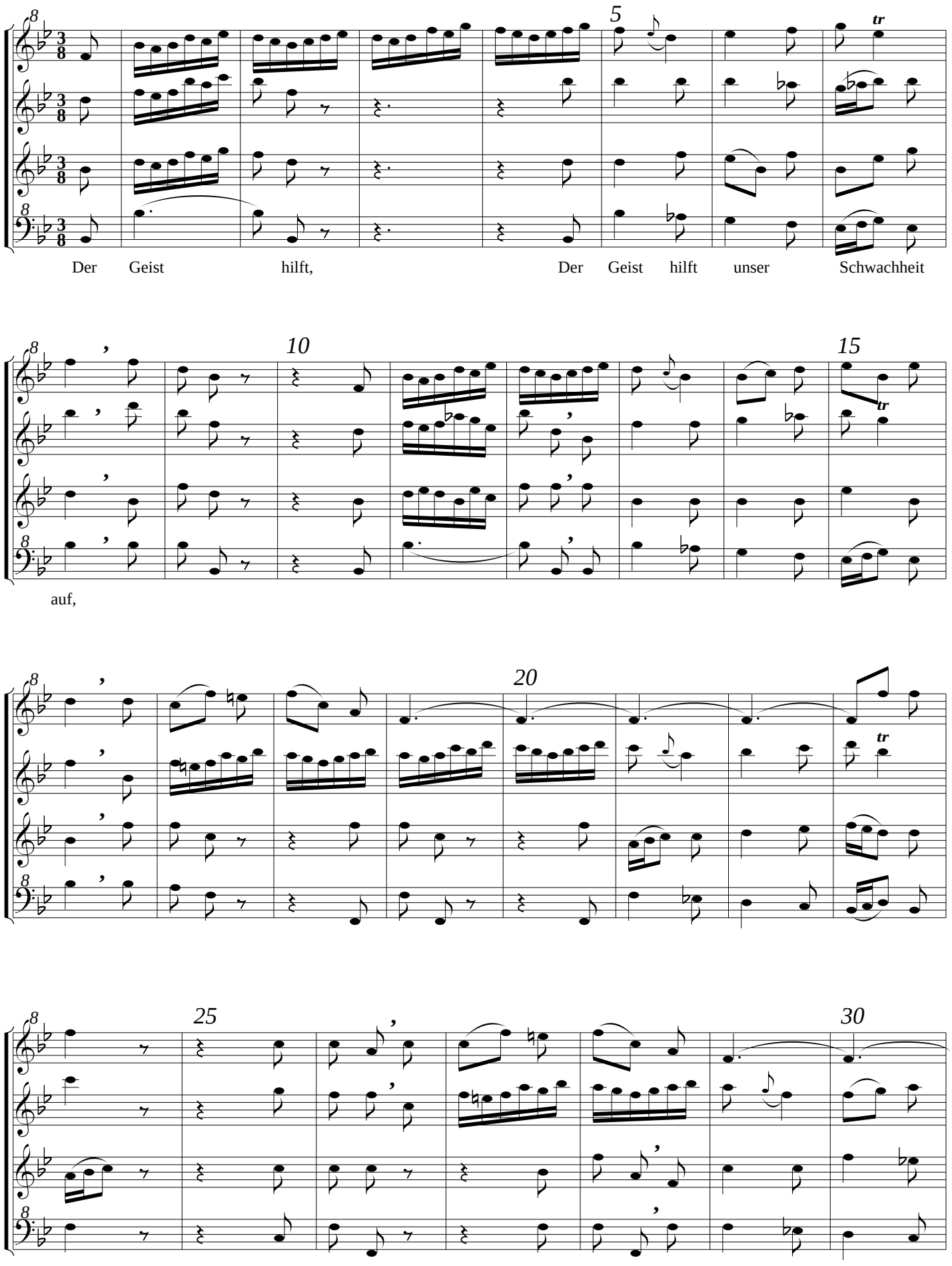

220
225
230
235
240
nach dem, das Gott ge − fäl − let.

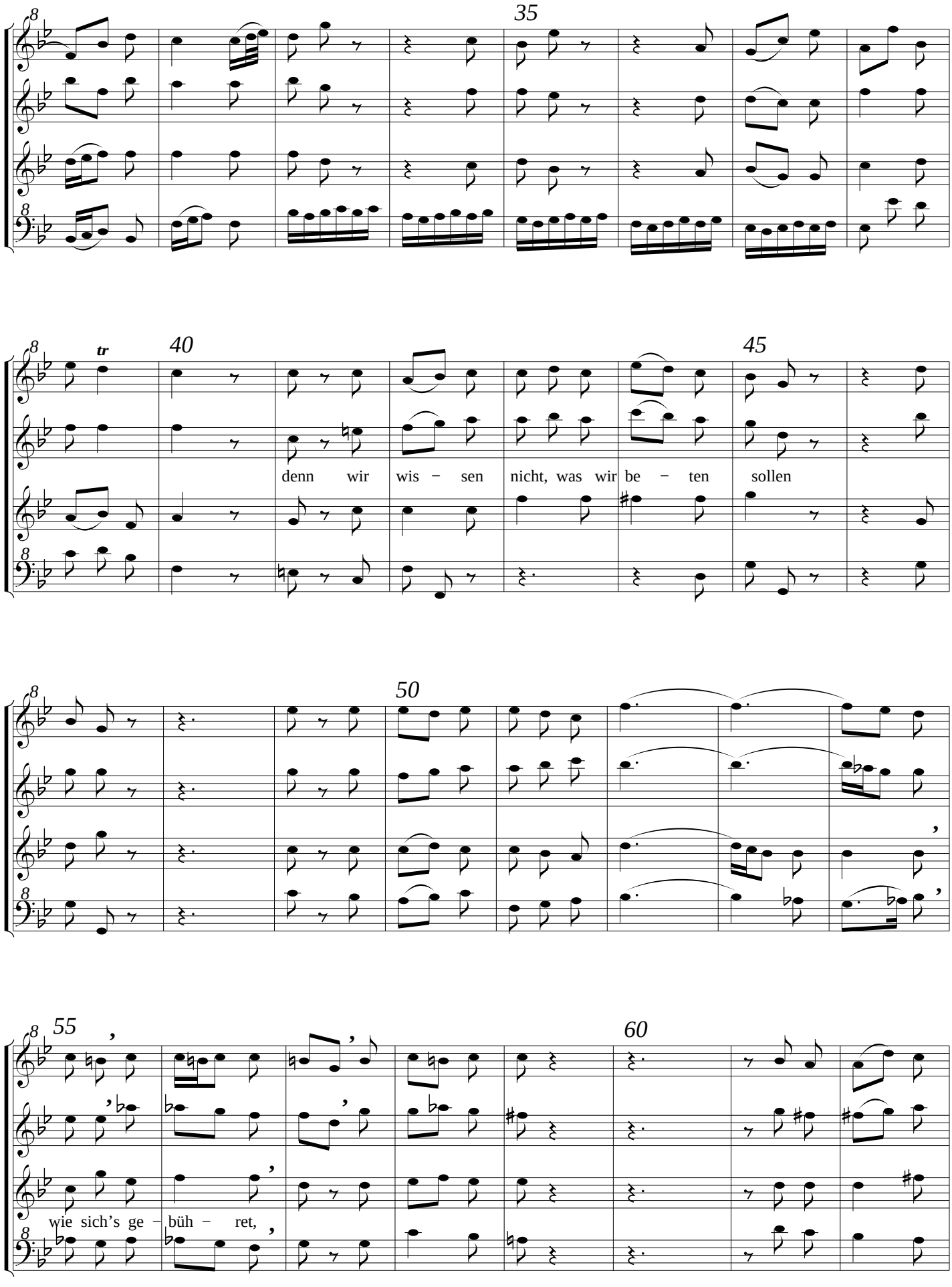
3. Choral: Du heilige Brunst

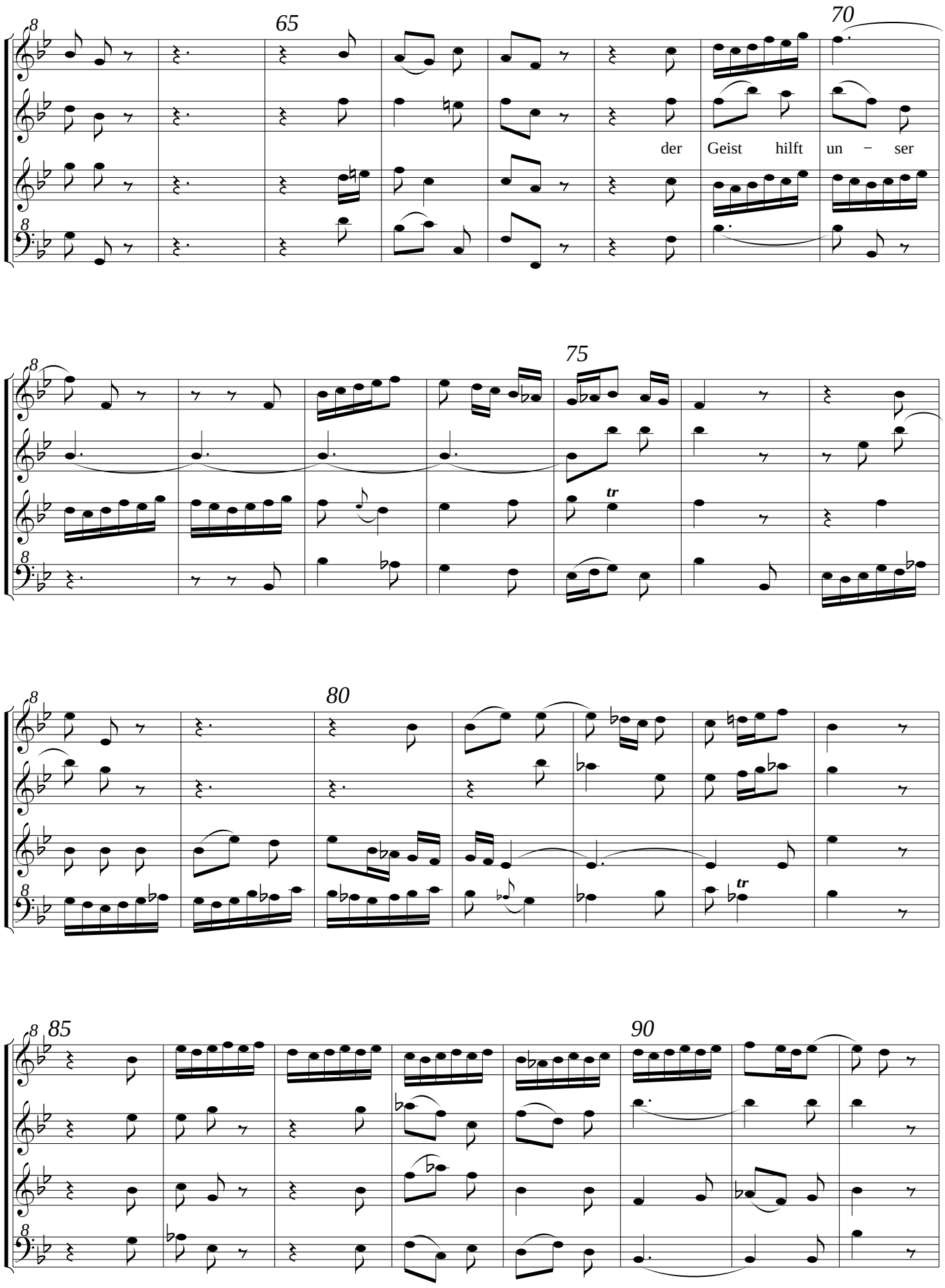


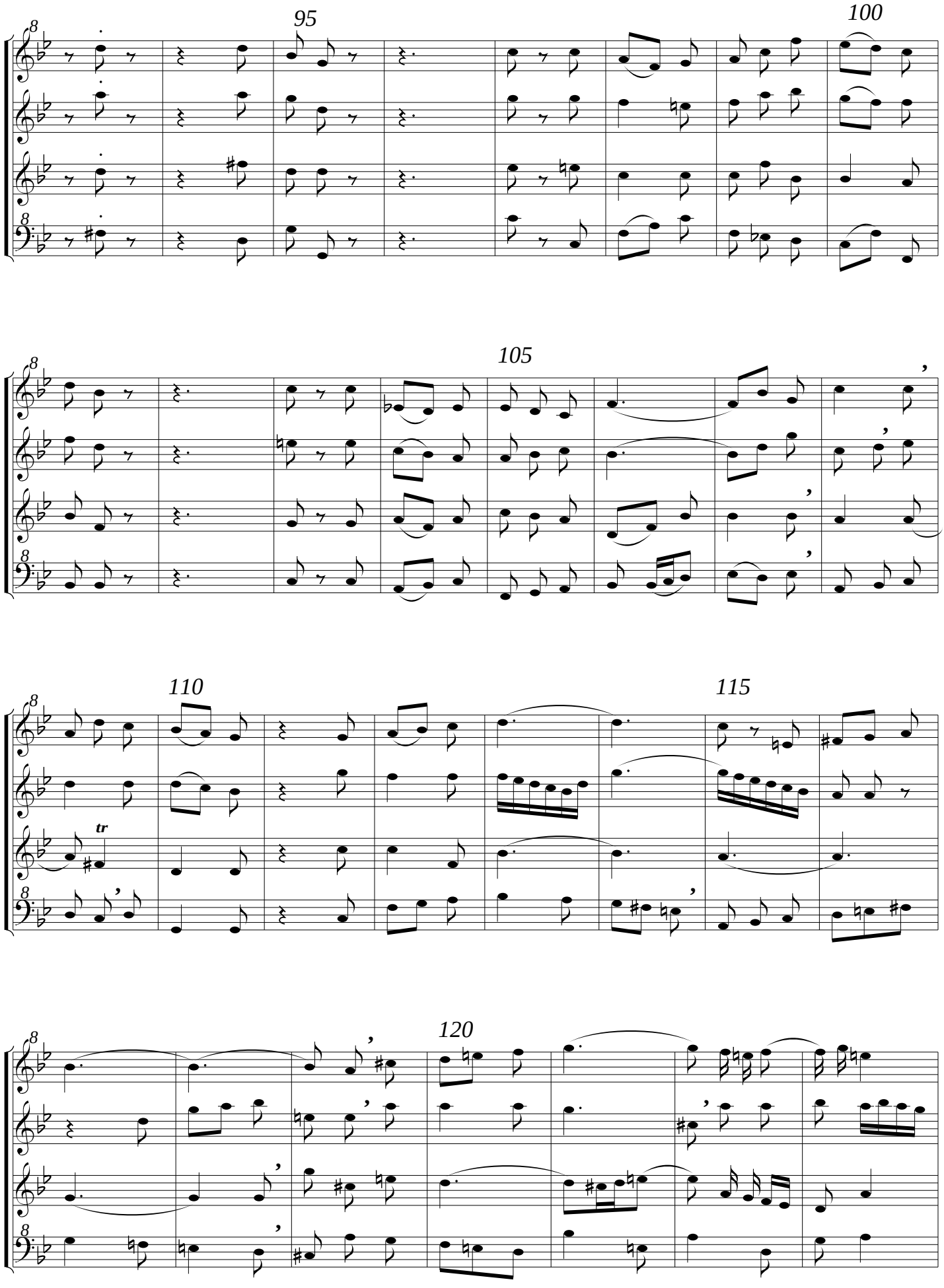
Choir 1 part, Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf

1. Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf




35
40
tr
45
denn wir wis − sen nicht, was wir be − ten sollen
50
55
60
wie sich's ge − büh − ret,


65
70
der Geist hilft un − ser
75
tr
80
tr
85
90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110
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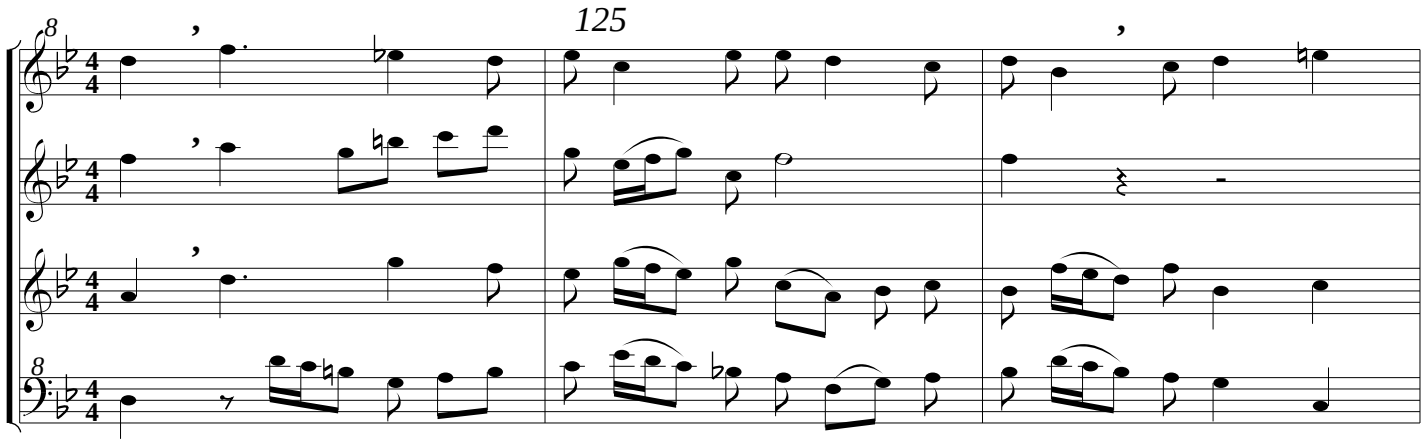
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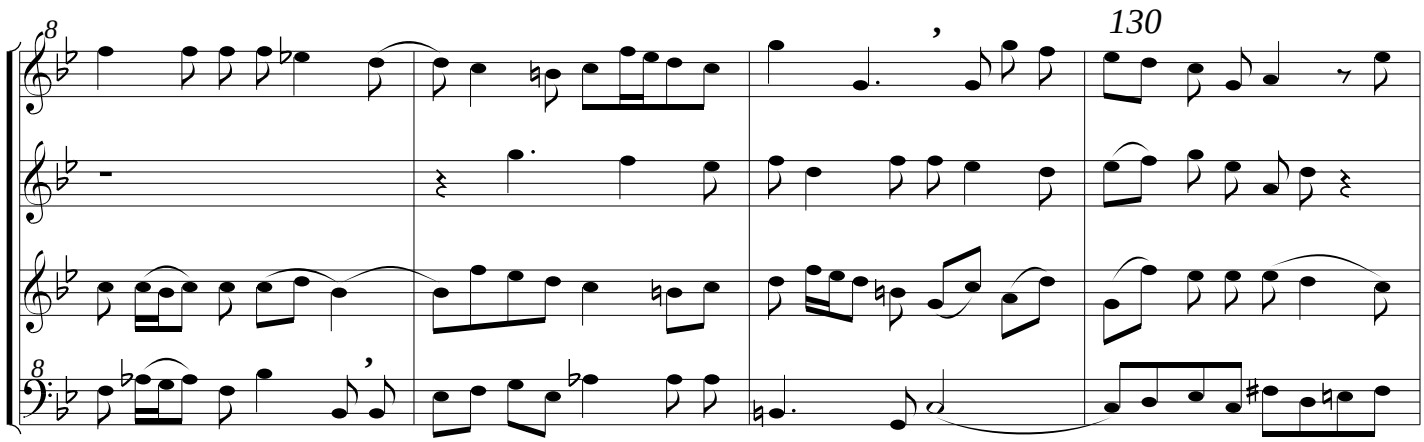
son − dern der Geist selbst vertritt uns aufs beste mit un − aus −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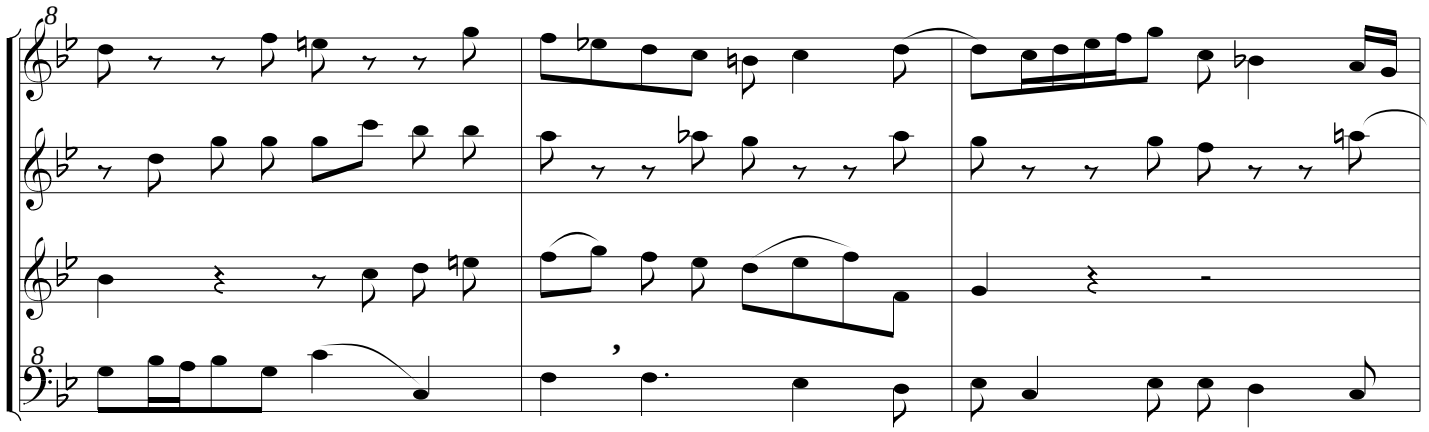
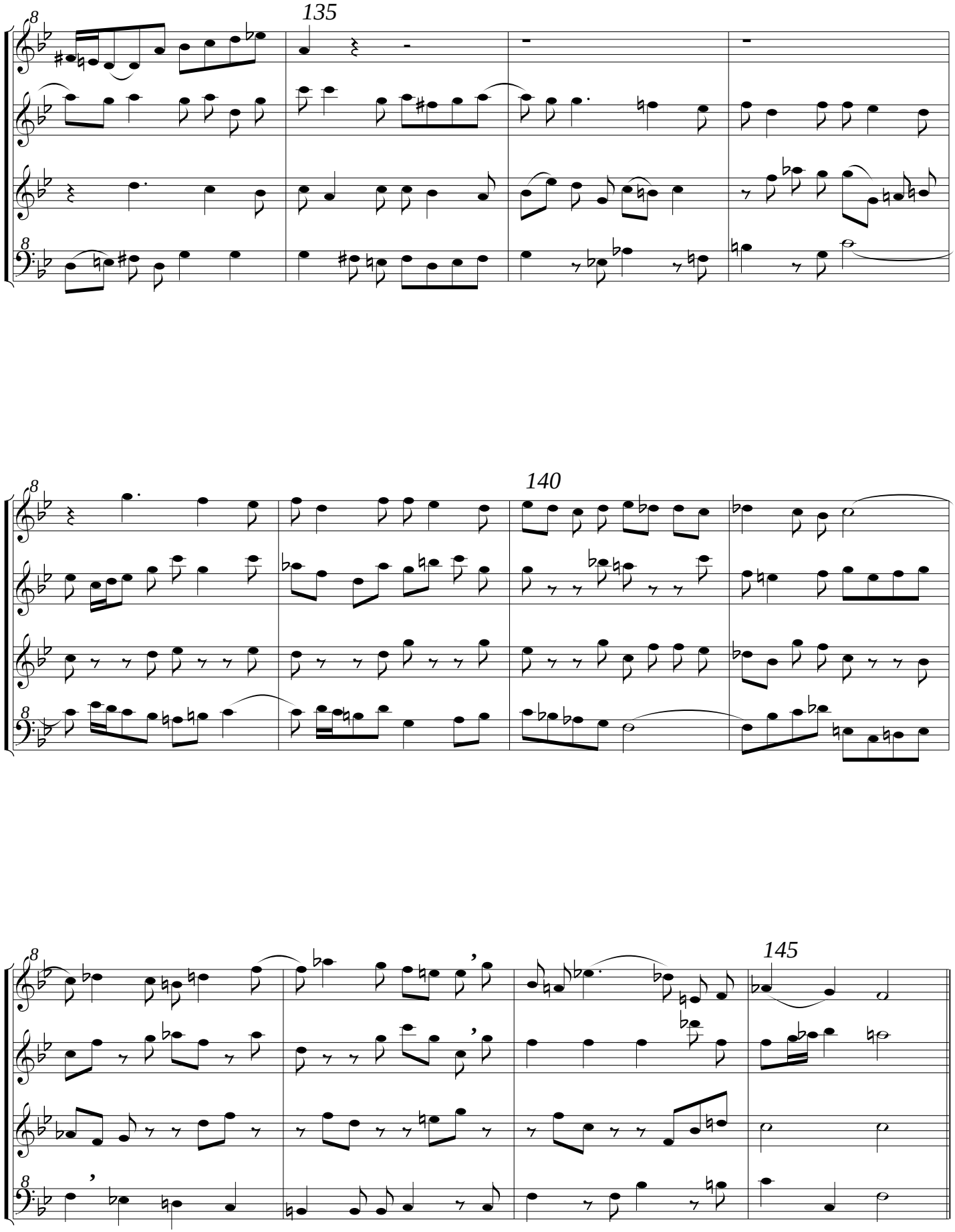
− sprechlichen Seufzen,




135
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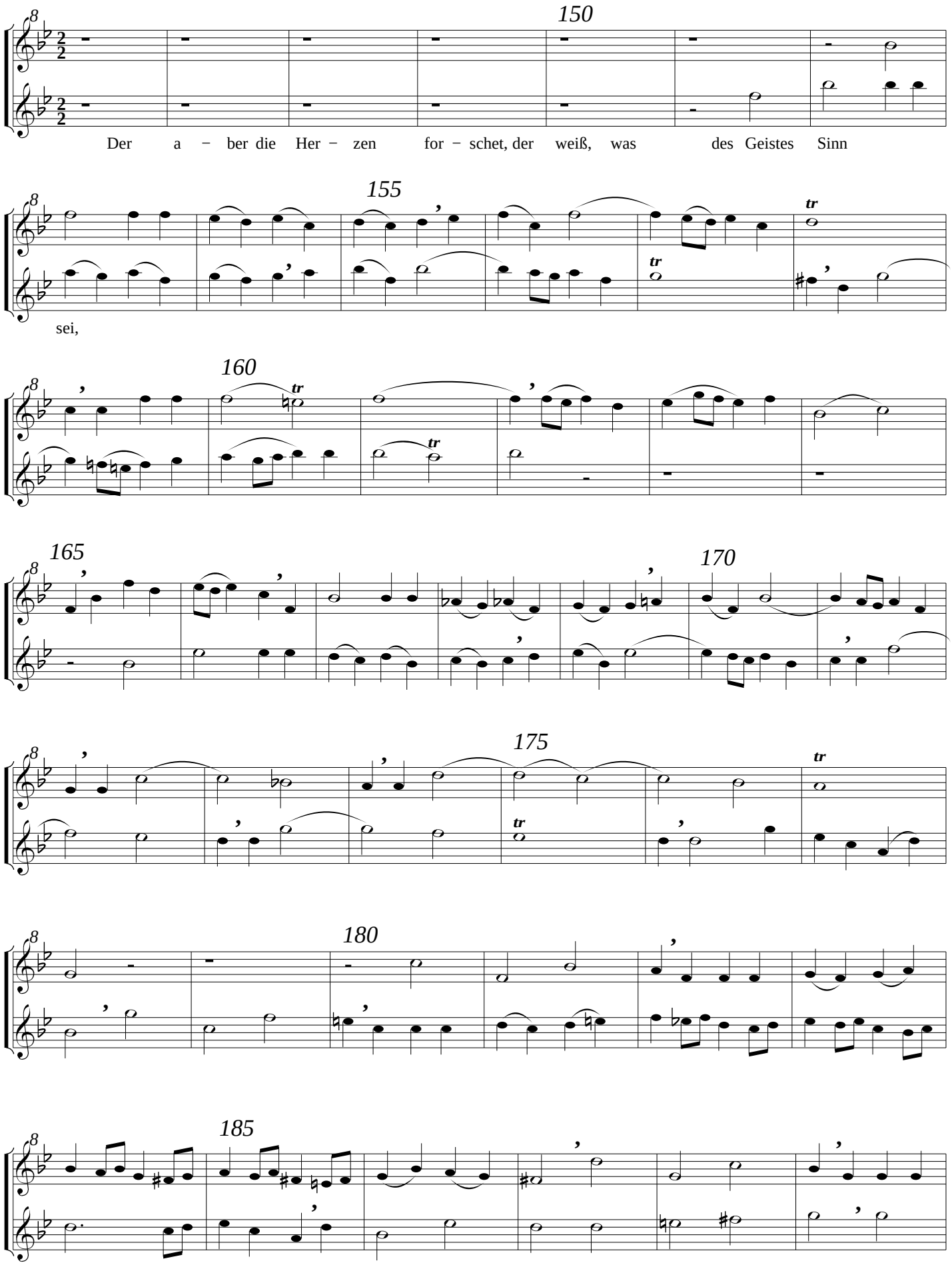
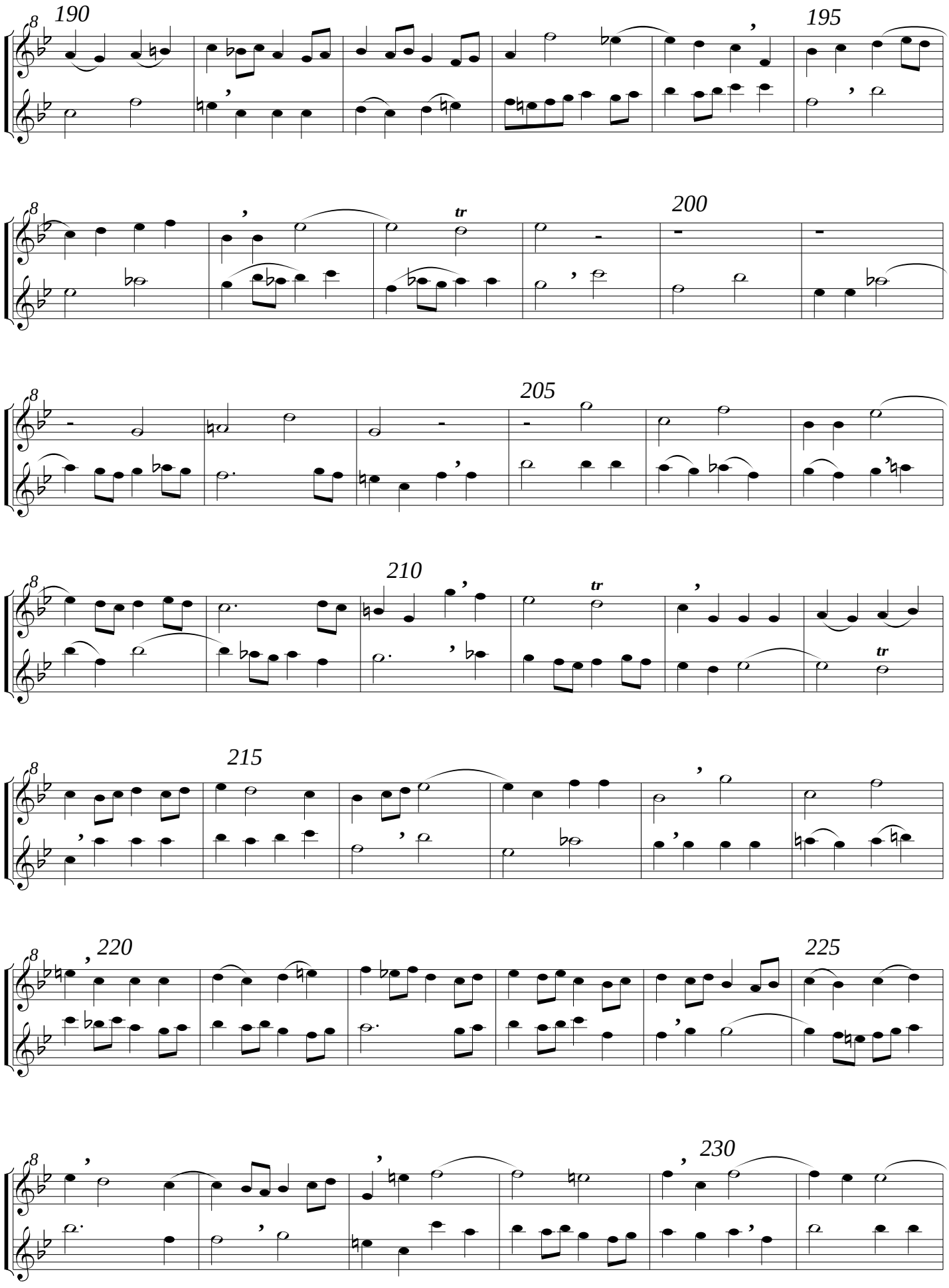
Soprano and Alto part, Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf

2. Allabreve: Der aber die Herzen forschet

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195
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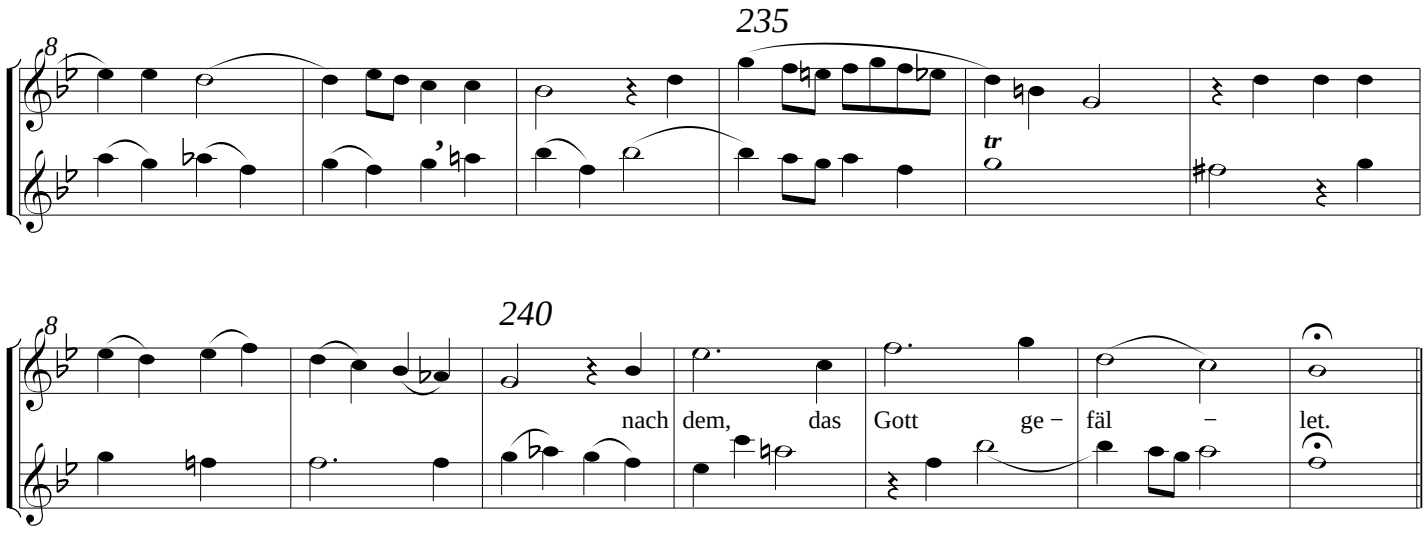
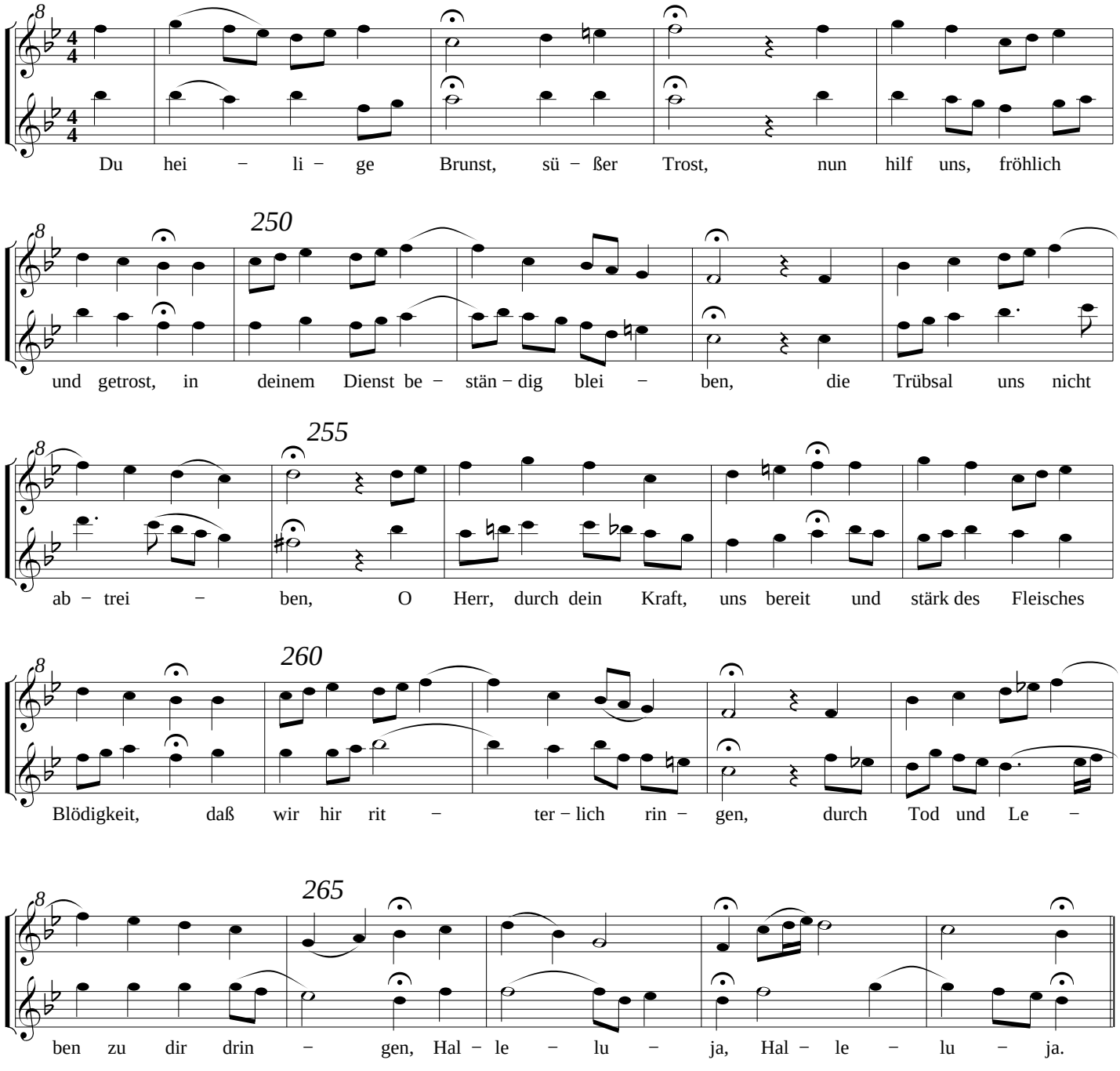
225
230
tr

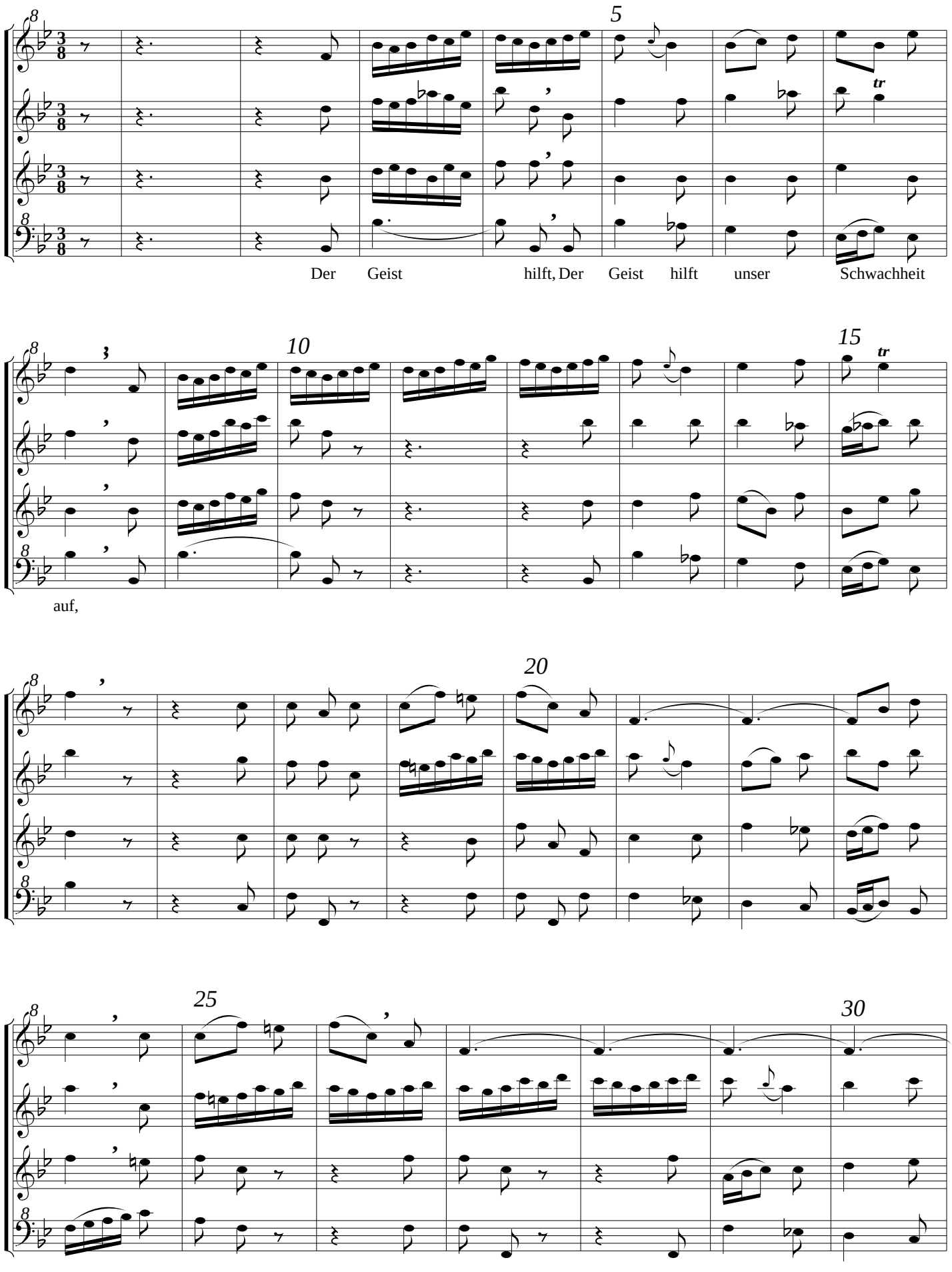


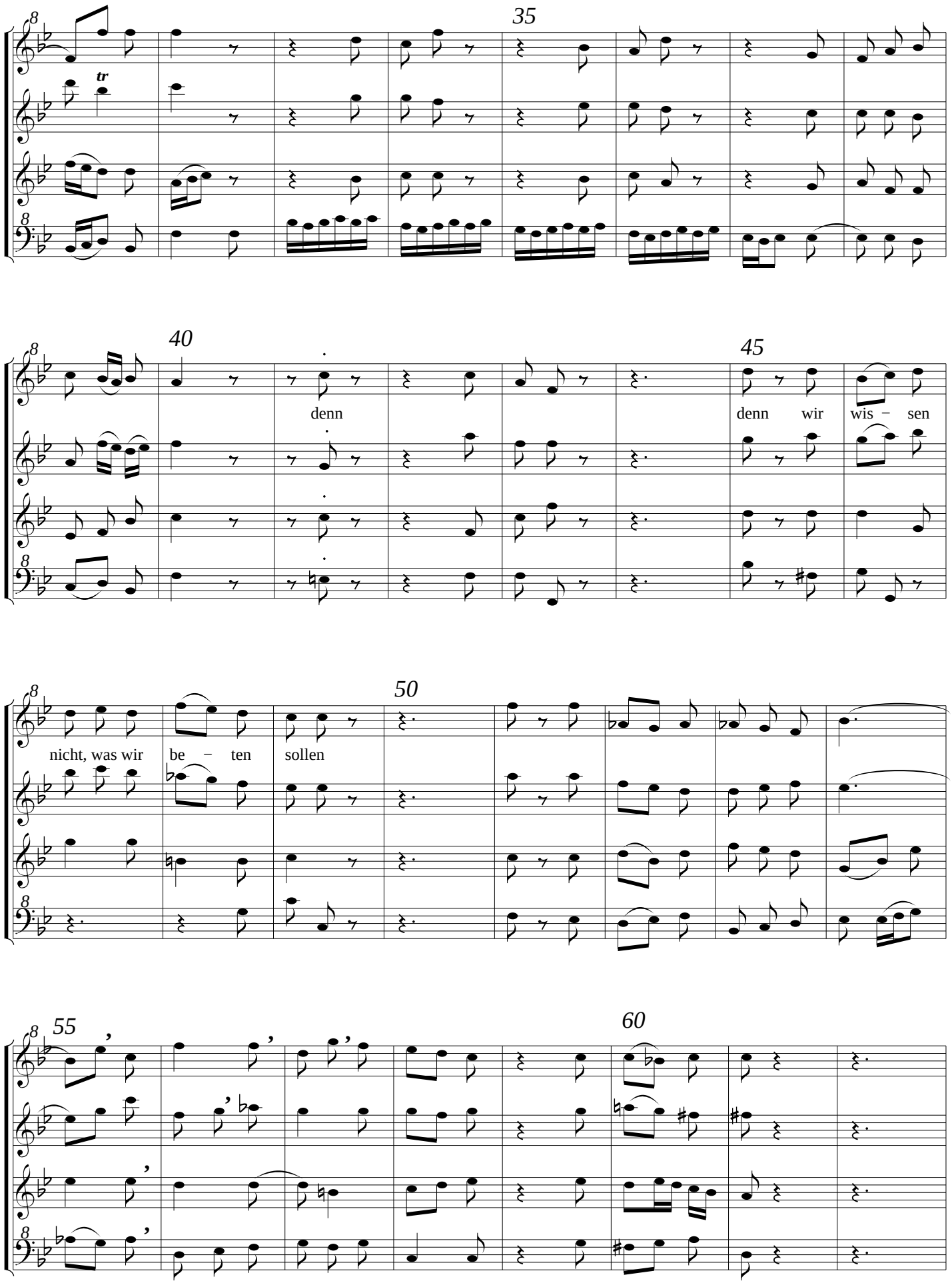
3. Choral: Du heilige Brunst

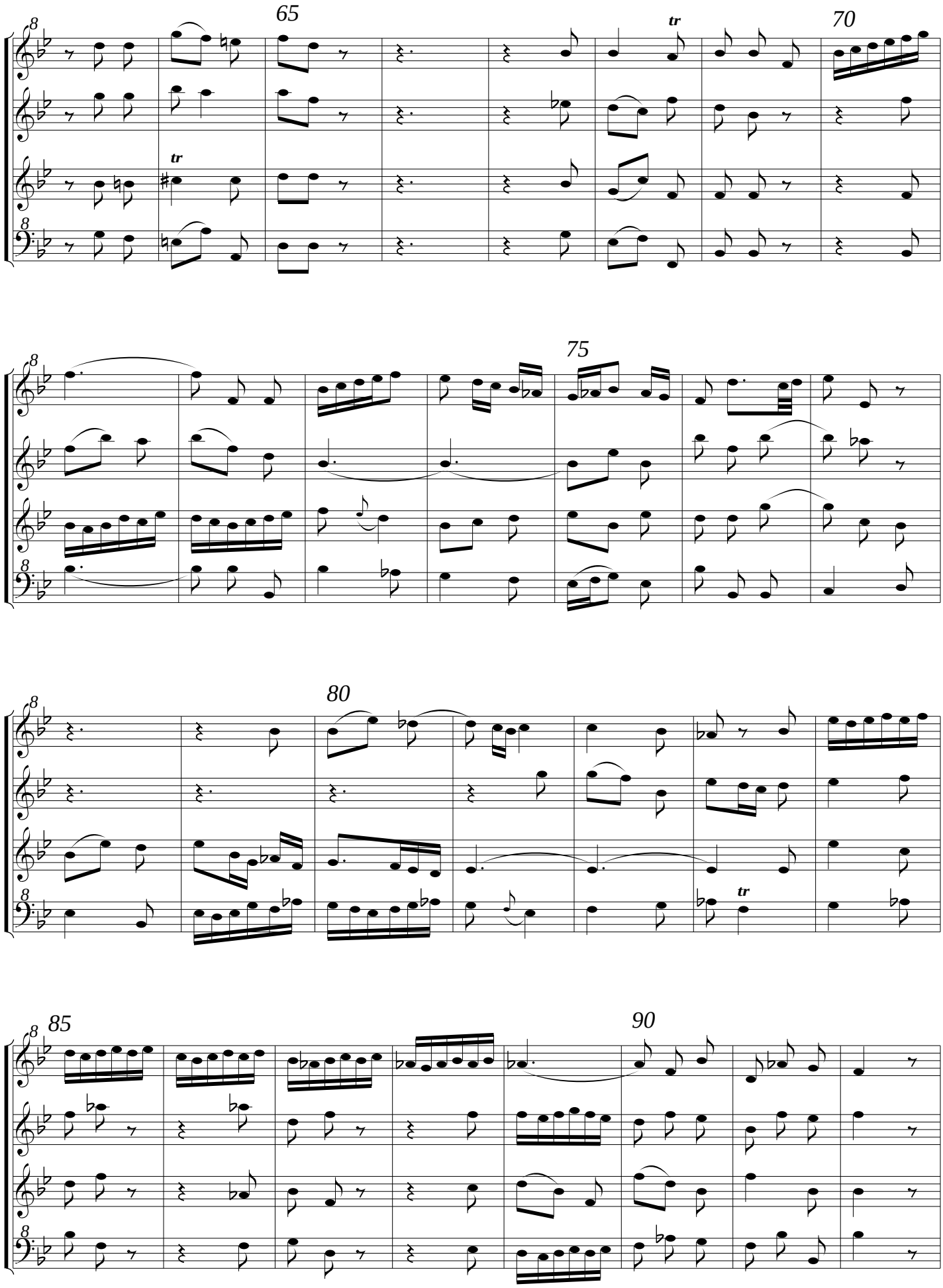


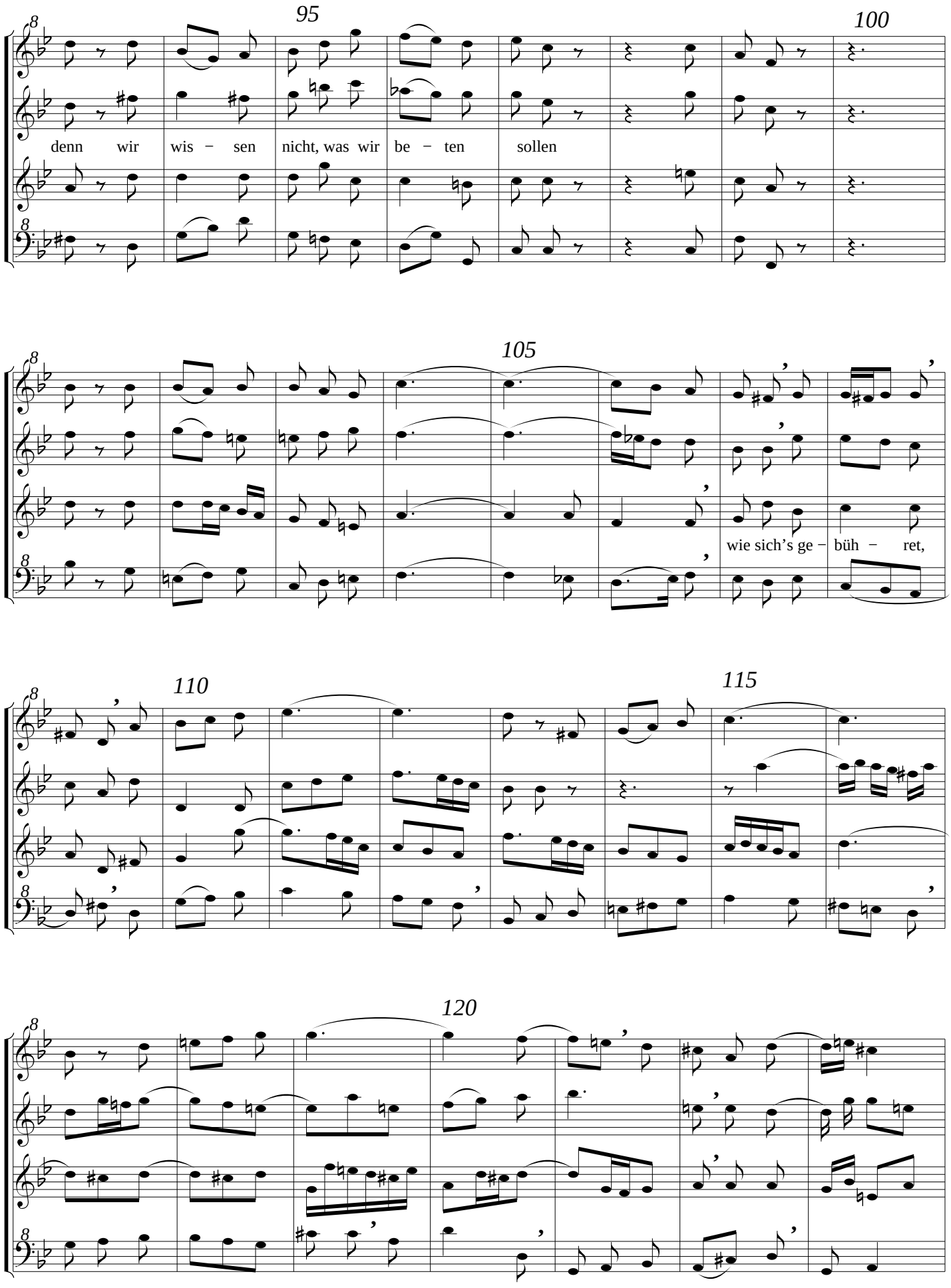
Choir 2 part, Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf

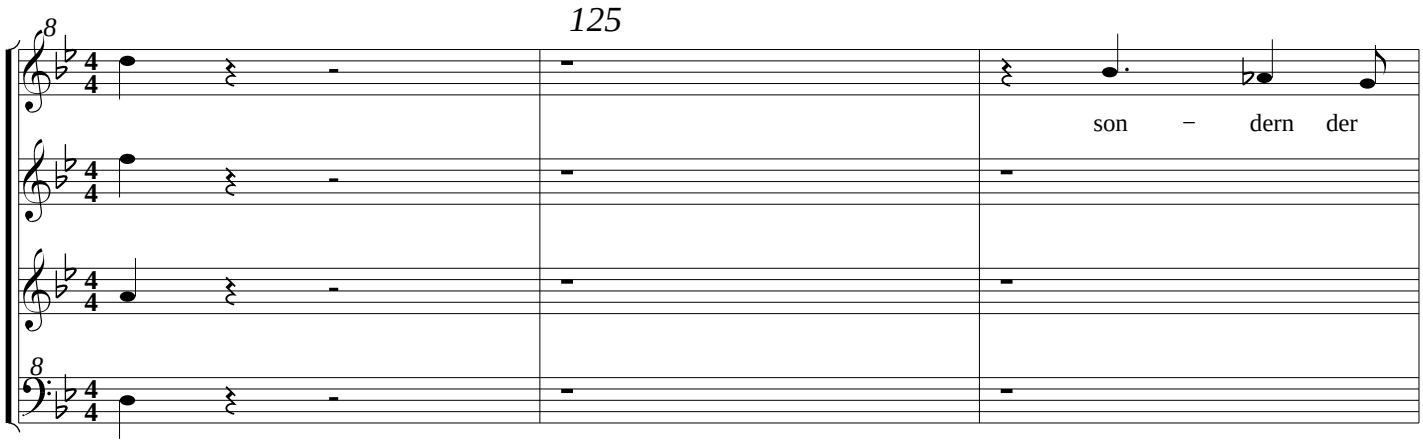
1. Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf




35
tr
40
denn
45
denn wir wis − sen
50
nicht, was wir be − ten sollen
55
60


65
70
75
80
85
90
tr


95
100
denn wir wis − sen nicht, was wir be − ten sollen
105
wie sich's ge − büh − ret,
110
115
120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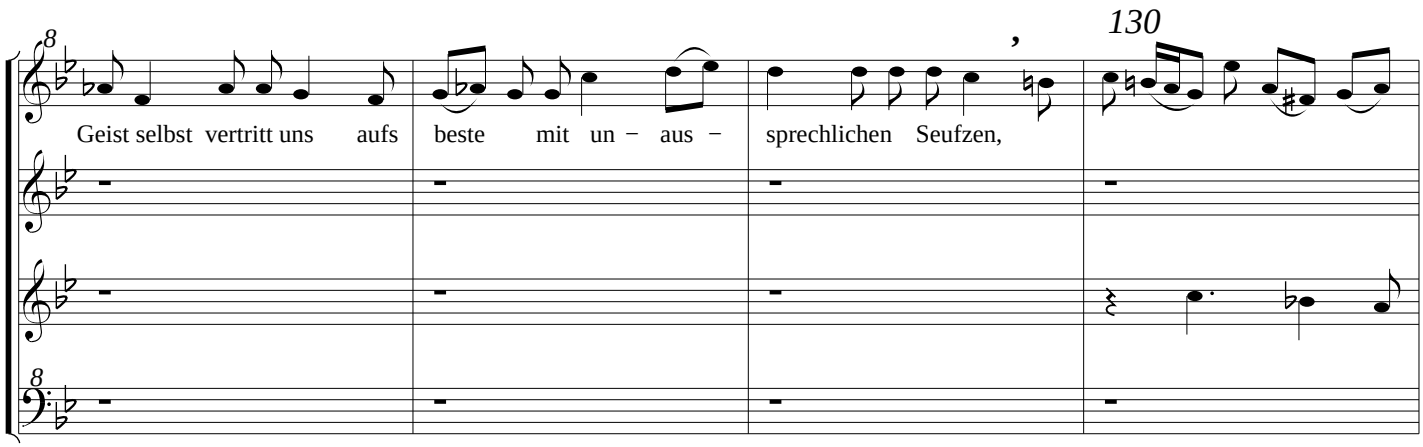
son − dern der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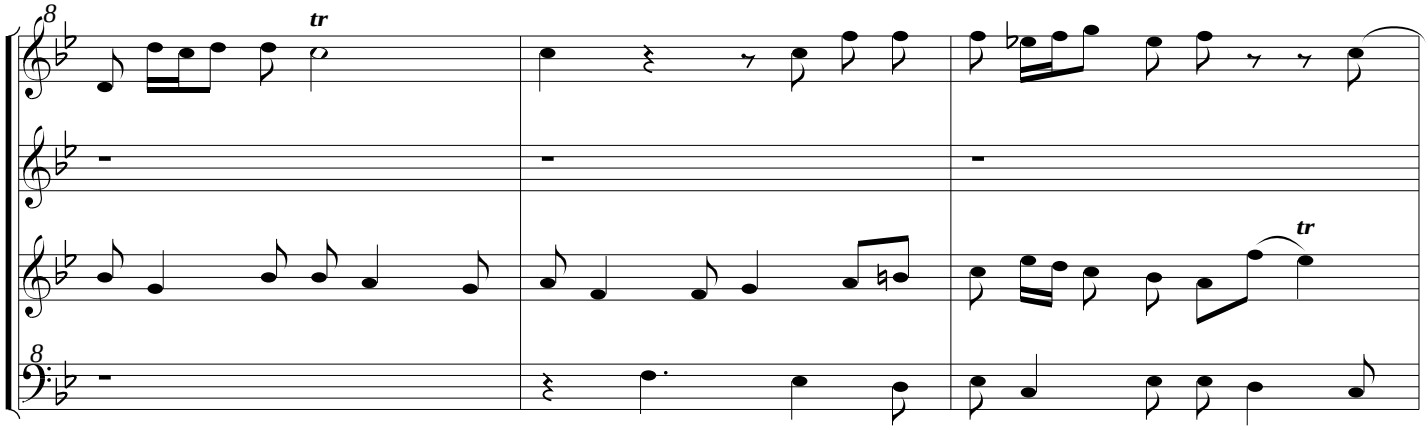
Geist selbst vertritt uns aufs beste mit un − aus − sprechlichen Seufzen,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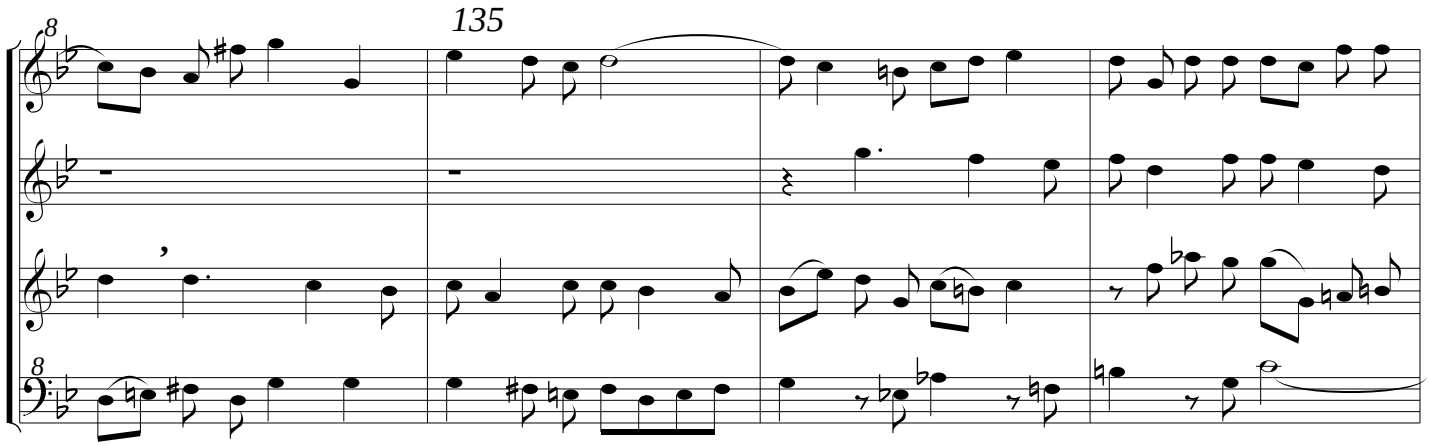
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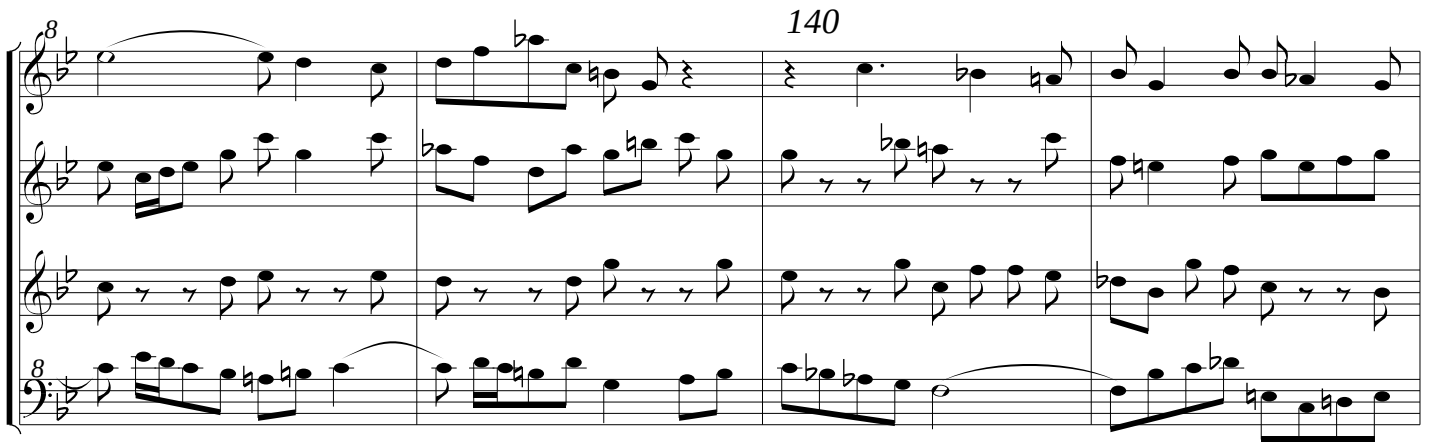
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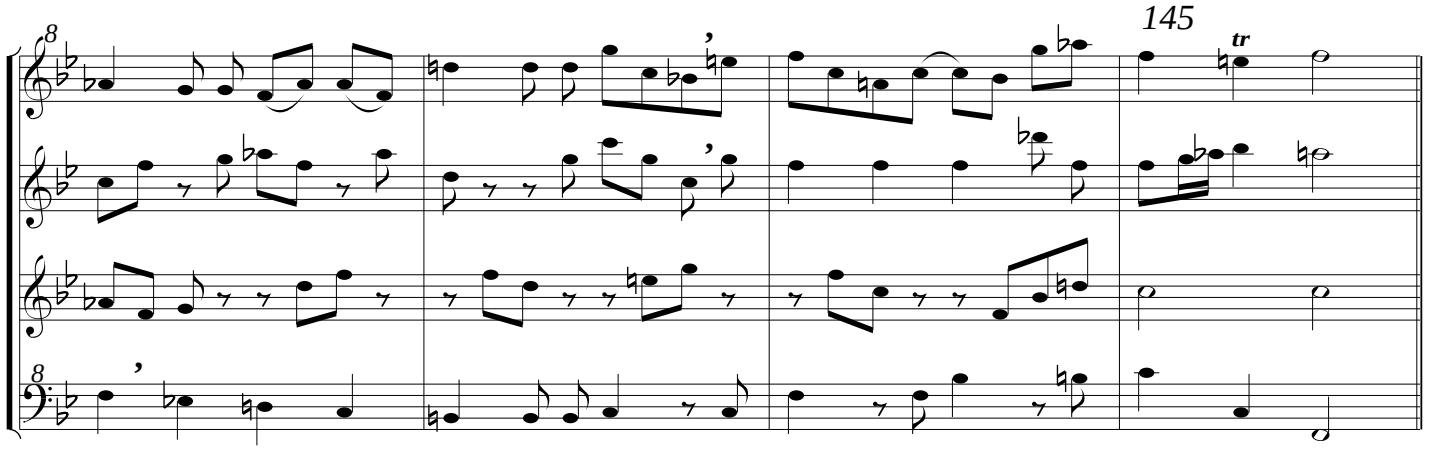
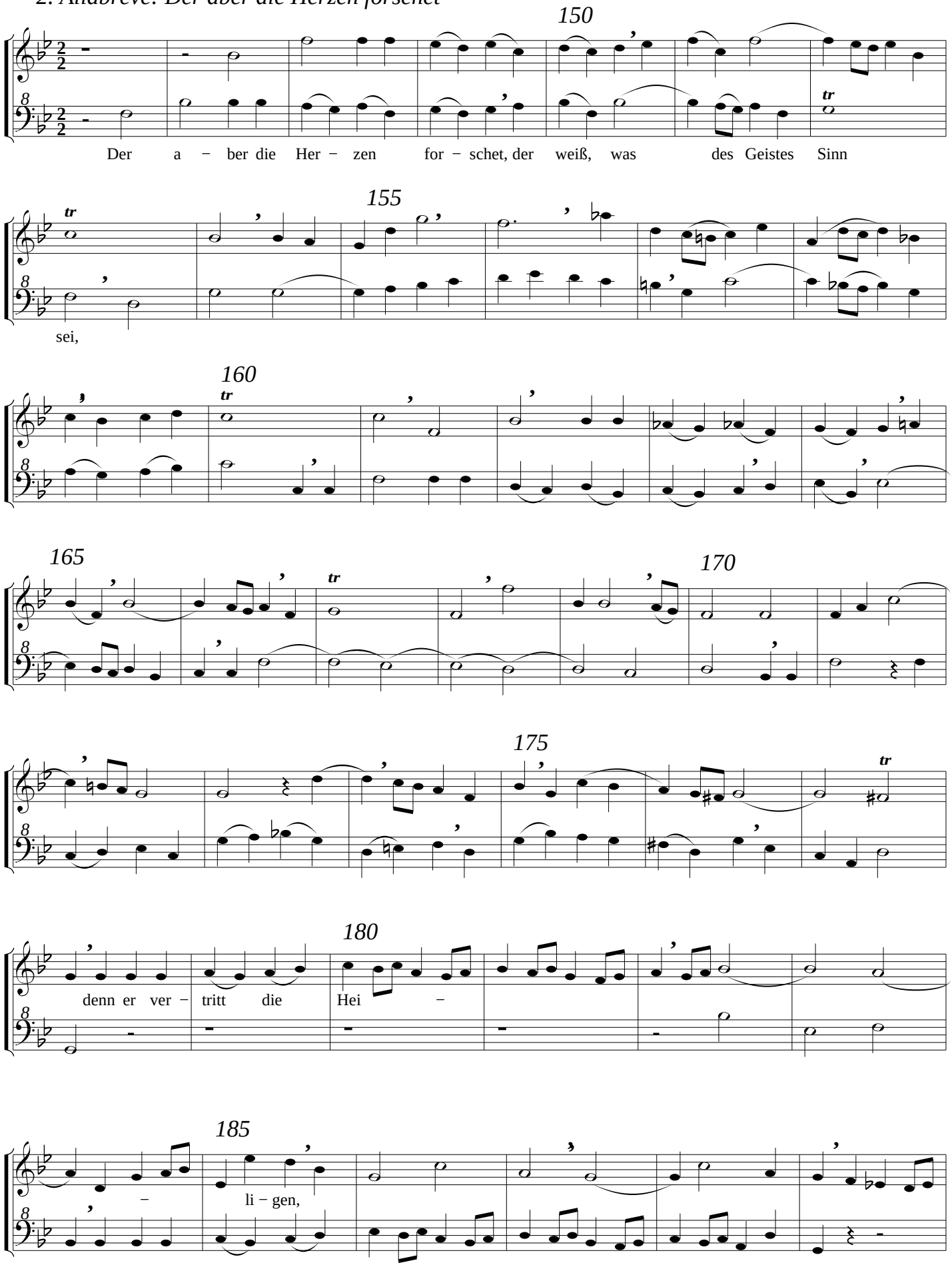
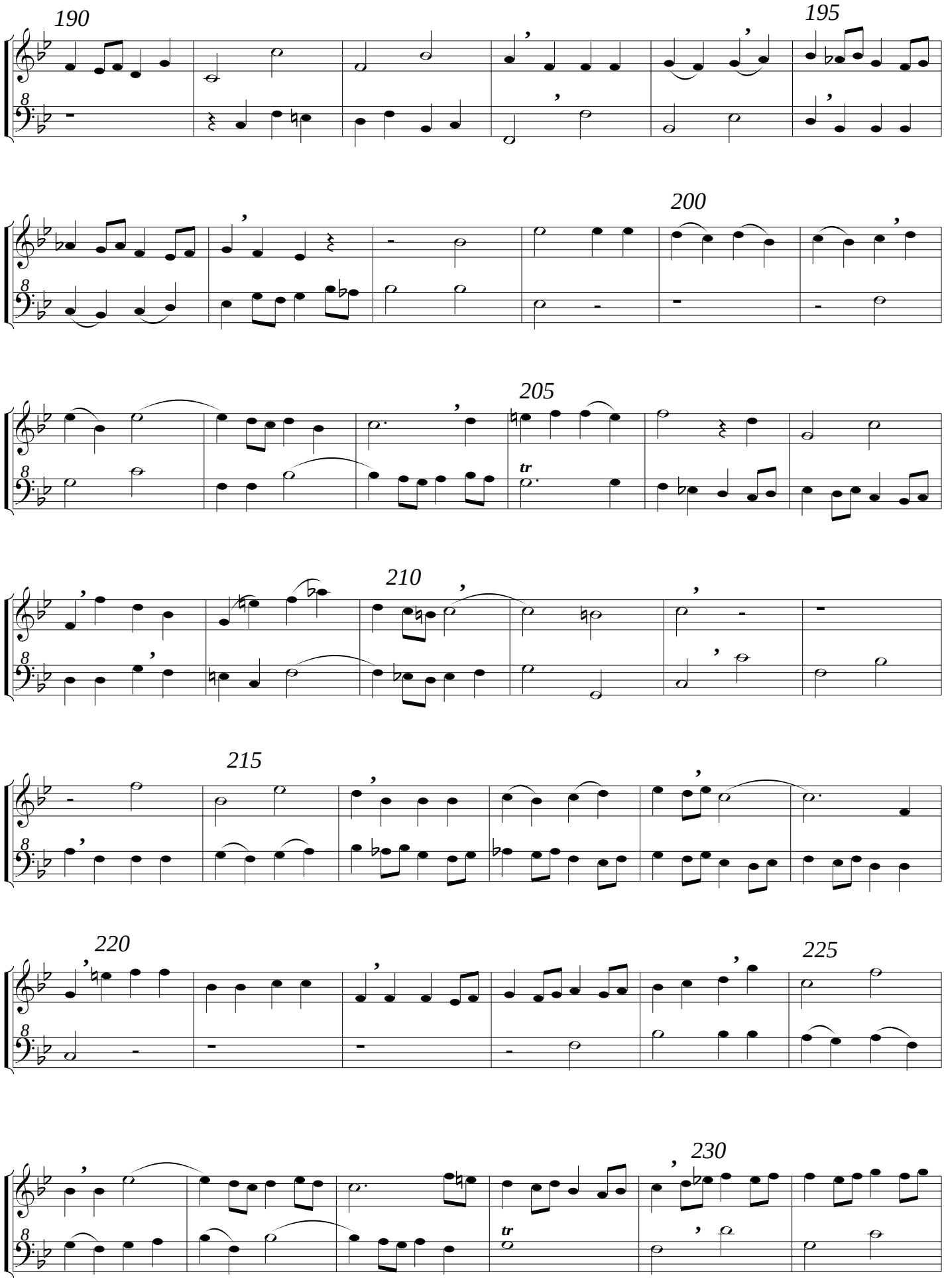

145
tr

Tenor and Bass part, Der Geist hilft unser Schwacheit auf

2. Allabreve: Der aber die Herzen forschet




190
195
200
205
tr
210
215
220
225
230
tr

235

240

3. Choral: Du heilige Brunst

Du hei – li – ge Brunst, sü – ßer Trost, nun hilf uns, fröhlich

250

und getrost, in deinem Dienst be –stän – dig blei – ben, die Trübsal uns nicht

255

ab – trei – ben, O Herr, durch dein Kraft, uns bereit und stärk des Fleisches

260

Blödigkeit, daß wir hir rit – ter – lich rin – gen, durch Tod und Le –

265

– ben zu dir drin – gen, Hal – le – lu – ja, Hal – le – lu – ja.

Peter Billam was born in London in 1948, studied piano, and lived in Switzerland from 1973 to 1983, where he studied composition, classical guitar, flute and voice, worked as Musical Director of the *Théâtre Populaire Romand*, and as recording engineer, record producer and computer programmer. He moved to Tasmania in 1983, lectured in composition at the Conservatorium, conducted recorder ensembles and choirs, studied recorder, voice and harpsichord. He founded **www.pjb.com.au**, becoming the first composer to sell scores on-line, with on-line delivery, taking scores from Composer to Performer in one immediate step. *Www.pjb.com.au* offers a new approach to music publishing. These pieces are **written to be read, made to be played !**

Compositions at *www.pjb.com.au* include: *Five Short Pieces*, guitar, 1979; *Divisions on an Italian Ground*, flute and guitar, 1980; *De Profundis* and *Nacht*, on poems by Lama Anagarika Govinda, voice and piano, 1980; *Fünf Bagatellen*, piano, 1980; *Five Rounds*, choir, 1986; *Go Forth and Multiply*, choir, 1986; *Three Violin Duets*, 1987; *Fable*, for piano, 1987; *To Erich Jantsch*, SAATTB recorders, 1988; *A Suite of Curves*, trombone (or horn) and piano, 1990; *Two Recorder Duets*, alto recorders, or other melody instruments, 1991; *Trombone Quintet*, trombone, flute, piano, bass, and percussion, 1994; *Three Songs*, on poems by Jack Kerouac, Vikram Seth and Dylan Thomas, voice and piano (only the first and third of these are available), 1994; *Piano Study*, piano, 1994; *Four Dances*, various ensembles including recorder quartet, string quartet, 1995; *The Poet in the Clouds*, on a poem by S. T. Coleridge, SATB choir, 1995; *Tres Casidas del Diván del Tamarit*, on poems by Federico García Lorca, voice and piano, 1997; *Three Suites*, for the solo line, piano, and piano and a solo line, 2000; *Die Zeiten*, on poems by Kästner, Bachman and Jünger, choir (only the second and third of these are available), 2000; *Three Duets* for flutes, 2001; *For Four Hands* for piano four hands, 2002; *Three Preludes* for piano, 2003; *Second Solo Suite* for flute, violin, viola or cello, 2003; *Guitar Duet* for two guitars, 2006; *We Who Mourn* for choir, 2007; *Trio With Guitar* for guitar and two clarinets or two recorders or two violas, 2008; *Canons* for two- and four-hand piano, 2009; *Flute Trio*, 2012; *Keyboard Studies*, 2013.

Arrangements include: By J. S. Bach: *Trio BWV 655*, piano and flute; *Vor deinen Thron BWV 668*, piano; *Fugue in F minor BWV 689*, SATB recorders; *Four Duets BWV 802-5*, keyboard; *Flute Sonata BWV 1031* transposed into G major for alto recorder and keyboard; *Flute Sonata BWV 1032* completed by Peter Billam for flute and keyboard, also in C major for alto recorder, and in G major for descant; *Ricercare a 3, from the Musikalisches Opfer* for keyboard; *Ricercare a 6*, for sSATBG recorders, or strings, or two keyboards; *Fuga Canonica in Epidiapente* for keyboard and melody instrument; from the *Art of Fugue*: *Contrapuncti 1*, *4* and *9* for keyboard, and *Contrapunctus 14* as completed by D. F. Tovey, for keyboard, or for SATB recorders, or for strings; *Passacaglia and Fugue in c* for piano four hands; *Chorales with Descant* for melody instrument and piano; *Cello Suites I*, *II* and *III* for flute or alto recorder, *Forty Chorales* for piano, *Der Geist hilft* for SATB-SATB recorders. By Johannes Brahms: *Fugue in Ab minor for organ*, for SATB recorders and gamba, in A minor; *Choralvorspiele for organ* plus settings by Isaac, Bach, Praetorius, recorders. *John Carr, Divisions on an Italian Ground*, flute or recorder and guitar. By G. F. Händel: *Concerto Grosso in A minor* op 6 no 4, harpsichord and recorders; *Recorder Sonata in Bb* no 5, in G for tenor recorder and keyboard. *Claudio Monteverdi, Ecco Mormorar l'Onde*, SSATB recorders. By Arnold Schoenberg: *Verklärte Nacht* for piano. By Franz Schubert: *Four Songs*, voice and guitar; *Dances*, recorders and guitar, *Dances*, piano 4 hands. *Scriabin, Two Preludes op.67; Five Preludes op.74*, piano. *Telemann, Twelve Flute Fantasias*, recorder. *John Wilbye, Draw on sweet Night*, SSATTB recorders, and for flute choir. *Twelve Italian Songs*, voice and guitar; *Fourteen Folk Dance Tunes*, recorder and guitar; *Bushband Dances*, violin, piano accordeon and banjo; *Easy Classical Pieces*, Bb trumpet and piano.

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