

### *From the Arranger:*

Pairing well-known lyrics with a relatively unknown melody has an intriguing effect on interpretation. Isaac Watts' text, *Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed*, is typically set to the hymn tune, MARTYRDOM. Composed by Hugh Wilson at the beginning of the 19th century, its key of G major and 6/8 time signature give the melody a lilting, sweet, sentimental nature.

When I discovered that the lyrics also fit the Sacred Harp tune, LOVINGKINDNESS, I was drawn to its modal melody. Early Americans often used the minor mode to express assurance, certainty and resolve rather than sadness. In the new setting, Watt's words no longer merely express how the poet feels, they demonstrate what the poet knows to be true.

The musical approach to this anthem should reflect that understanding. Vocal tone in measures 1-32 and 49-69 should be bright and forward with minimal or no vibrato. The clapping adds to the sense of staunch faith. In contrast, the middle section in measures 33-48 should be sung with a much warmer tone to reflect the chromatic harmony and the emphasis of the text on emotional and volitional response. – Craig Courtney

# Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed

Isaac Watts, 1707

For A Cappella SATB Choir

LOVINGKINDNESS

J. P. & S. R. Penick, 1850

Arranged by CRAIG COURTNEY  
(ASCAP)

With staunch conviction  $\text{♩} = 72$

SA *mf* \* x

1 A - las! and did my 2 Sav - ior - bleed, and 3 did my Sov - ereign

4 die? 5 Would He de - vote that 6 sa - cred - head for 7 sin - ners such as

8 I? 9 Thy bod - y slain, sweet 10 Je - sus, thine and 11 bathed in its own -

12 blood, 13 While all ex - posed to 14 wrath di - vine the 15 glo - rious Suff - 'rer

stood! — Was it for crimes that I have - done, He groaned up - on the

16 TB 17 Hmm 18 19

tree? Hmm

20 21 A - maz - ing pit - y! 22 Grace un - known! And 23 love be - yond de -

Well might the sun in dark - ness hide, and shut its glo - ries -

24 gree! 25 Hmm 26 27

\* Handclaps

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in, *Hmm*

28 29 30 31

When God, the might-y mak-er, \_ died for His own crea-ture's

**More slowly and expressively**

*mp*

32 33 34 35

Thus might I hide by blush-ing \_ face while His dear cross ap-  
sin!

36 37 38 39

pears; Dis-solve my heart in thank-ful-ness, and melt mine eyes with

*mf*

40 41 42 43

tears. But drops of tears can ne'er \_ re-pay the debt of love I \_

*rit.* *mp*

44 45 46 47

owe. Here, Lord, I give my-self a-way; 'tis all that I can