Night of Wonder

A Cantata for Advent or Christmas

for S.A.T.B. Chorus and Narrator
with Optional Vocal Solos, Additional Speaking Parts,
Congregational Refrain and Instrumental Accompaniment

Written and Arranged by Jay Althouse and Sally K. Albrecht

This work may be performed with keyboard accompaniment alone, keyboard and instrumental accompaniment consisting of brass quartet, 2 clarinets, flute and drum, or with fully-orchestrated accompaniment cassette.

- **Choral Score** – (16129)
- **Preview Pack** – (16130) *Choral Score and Performance Cassette*
- **InstruPax** – (16131) *2 Trumpets, 2 Trombones, 2 Clarinets, Flute, Drum*
- **Performance/Accompaniment Cassette** – (16132)

Performance Time: Approximately 25 Minutes

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Cover Art: Detail from *Adoration of the Shepherds* (1688) by Charles Le Brun (1619-1690).
Collection of the Louvre, Paris, France.

Art Direction: Holly DeBord
Cover Design: Pieper Design

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FOREWORD

Night of Wonder is an Advent or Christmas cantata for S.A.T.B. chorus, keyboard, narrator and speakers, with optional additional accompaniment by 2 trumpets, trombone, tuba (opt.), flute, 2 clarinets and drum. Six choruses and five readings trace the journey from the Advent prophecy to the annunciation of Mary, and from the birth of Jesus to the heavenly angel host proclaiming, "Glory to God in the highest."

Approximately twenty-five minutes in length, this cantata is designed for incorporation into regular Christmas worship services. It may also be lengthened to create a special Christmas program or pageant by the addition of seasonal carols, costumes and simple staging. The five readings may be performed by a single narrator or by three or more speakers. Congregational participation is optional, but is encouraged, especially in the singing of the final chorus, "Angels We Have Heard on High." A reproducible program may be found on page 48 for performance with congregation.

Readings 1, 3 and 5 are adapted from various scriptural sources by the composers. The narrator may perform these readings as written, or substitute the same scriptural references drawn from other sources, reflecting the preferences of the pastor and\or congregation.

Readings 2 and 4 are the texts from the beloved Advent and Christmas carols "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" and "What Child Is This?" These may be spoken by the narrator, by individual choir members, or by other solo voices. While the carol texts are spoken, musical arrangements of the carols may be played softly on keyboard or other solo instrument, or by an instrumental ensemble. If vocal soloists are available, they may sing Readings 2 and 4 or, where available, a unison children's choir may sing these carols.

Optional brass accompaniment (2 trumpets, trombone, opt. tuba) is available for Choruses 1 and 6, and solo trumpet for Chorus 4. Optional woodwind accompaniment is available for Choruses 2 and 5, and drum for Chorus 3. This flexible instrumental scoring permits the use of brass only, woodwinds only, or drum only, with keyboard as accompaniment to the choir. An optional full performance/accompaniment cassette is also available (for a complete component listing, please see the title page).

Night of Wonder is designed with performance flexibility as one of its primary goals. It may be performed in its entirety on the fourth Sunday in Advent, on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or the first Sunday after Christmas. It may also be presented in segments spanning several weeks, as follows:

- Advent Sunday 2 — Chorus 1, Reading 1, Chorus 2
- Advent Sunday 3 — Reading 2, Chorus 3
- Advent Sunday 4 — Reading 3, Chorus 4
- Christmas Eve or Day — Reading 4, Chorus 5, Reading 5, Chorus 6

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Reproducible Program 48

Additional Resources

Following are several fine Alfred keyboard, vocal solo and vocal duet collections which may serve as sources of additional music to incorporate into performances of **Night of Wonder**.

- **Carols for the Season** (#12231) — Anna Laura Page
  5 intermediate organ solos for Christmas
- **Carols for Two** (#11536) — Jean Anne Shafferman
  7 duets on traditional carols for Advent and Christmas
- **Christmas for Solo Singers** — Jay Althouse
  14 seasonal favorites for for vocal solo and piano
  Med. High Voice (#11676) • Med. Low Voice (#11677)
- **The Christmas Soloist** — Jay Althouse
  9 unique settings of Christmas favorites for vocal solo and piano
  Med. High Voice (#3385) • Med. Low Voice (#3386)
- **Come to the Manger** (#14711) — Anna Laura Page
  7 early advanced piano solos for the Advent/Christmas season
- **Favorite Sacred Classics for Solo Singers** — Patrick M. Liebergen
  18 popular masterwork vocal solos for the entire church year
  Med. High Voice (#11481) • Med. Low Voice (#11482)
- **Hymn Solos for All Seasons** — William Cutter
  10 popular hymn vocal solos for the entire church year
  Med. High Voice (#4873) • Med. Low Voice (#4874)

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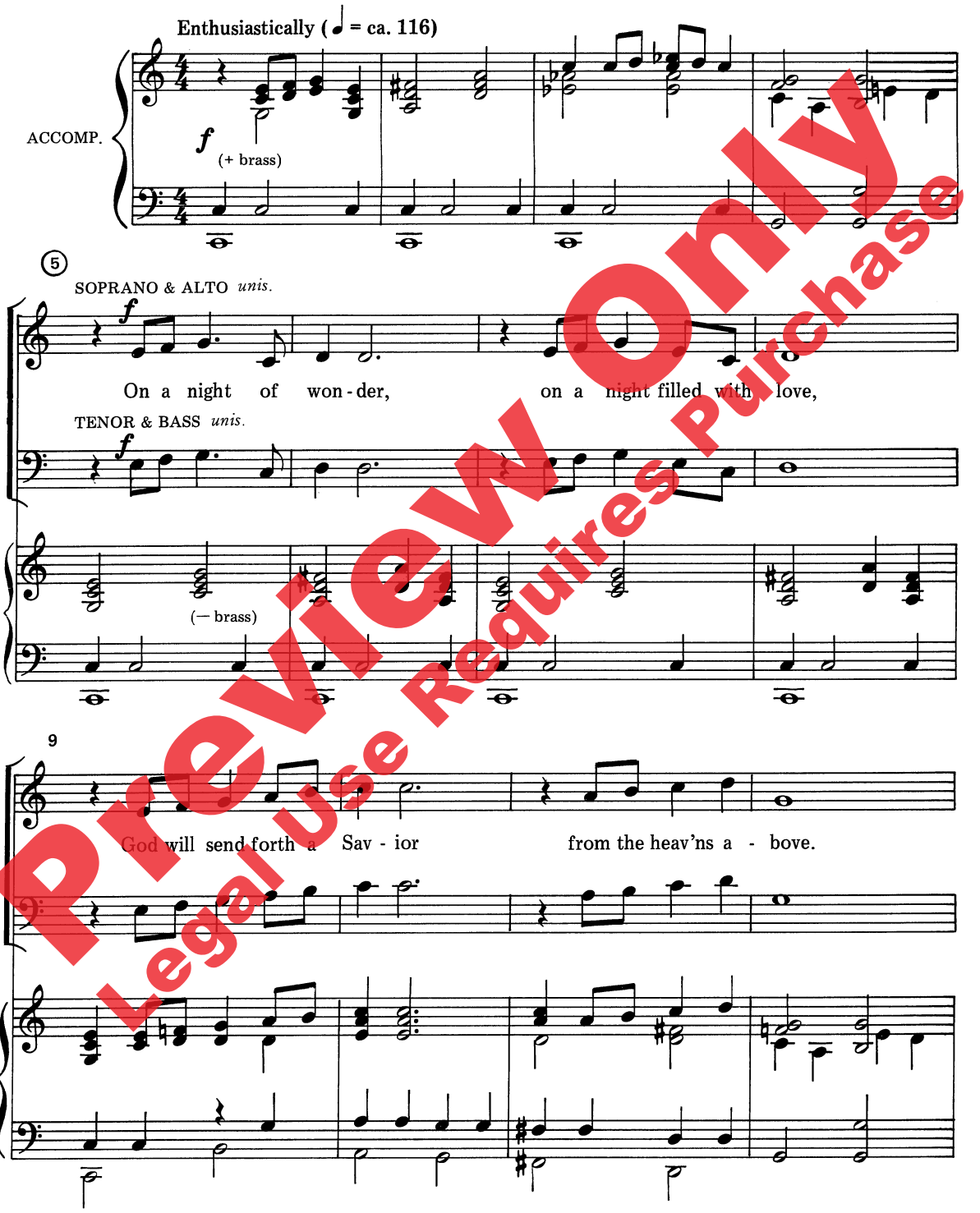
1. ON A NIGHT OF WONDER

Words and Music by
JAY ALTHOUSE



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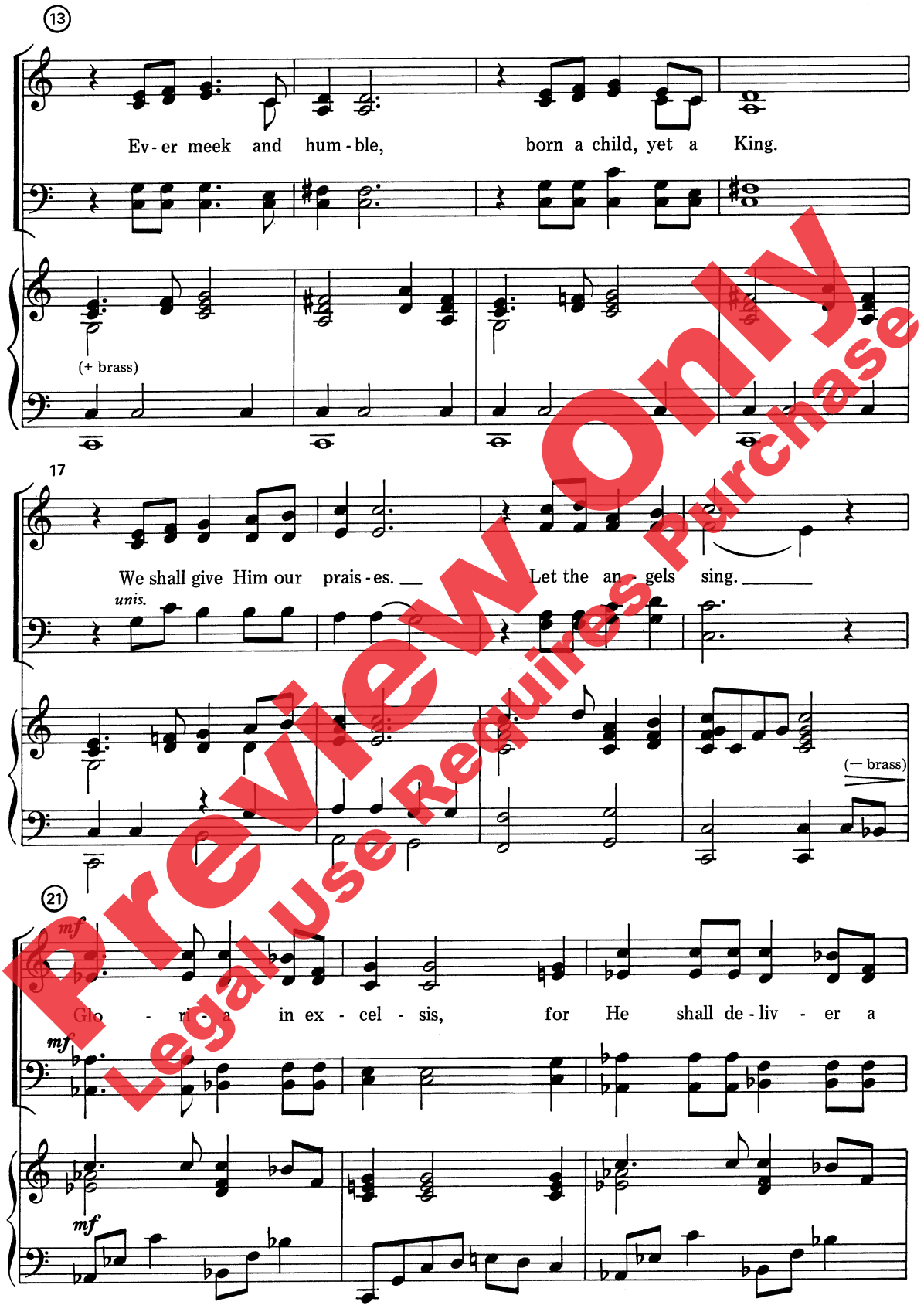

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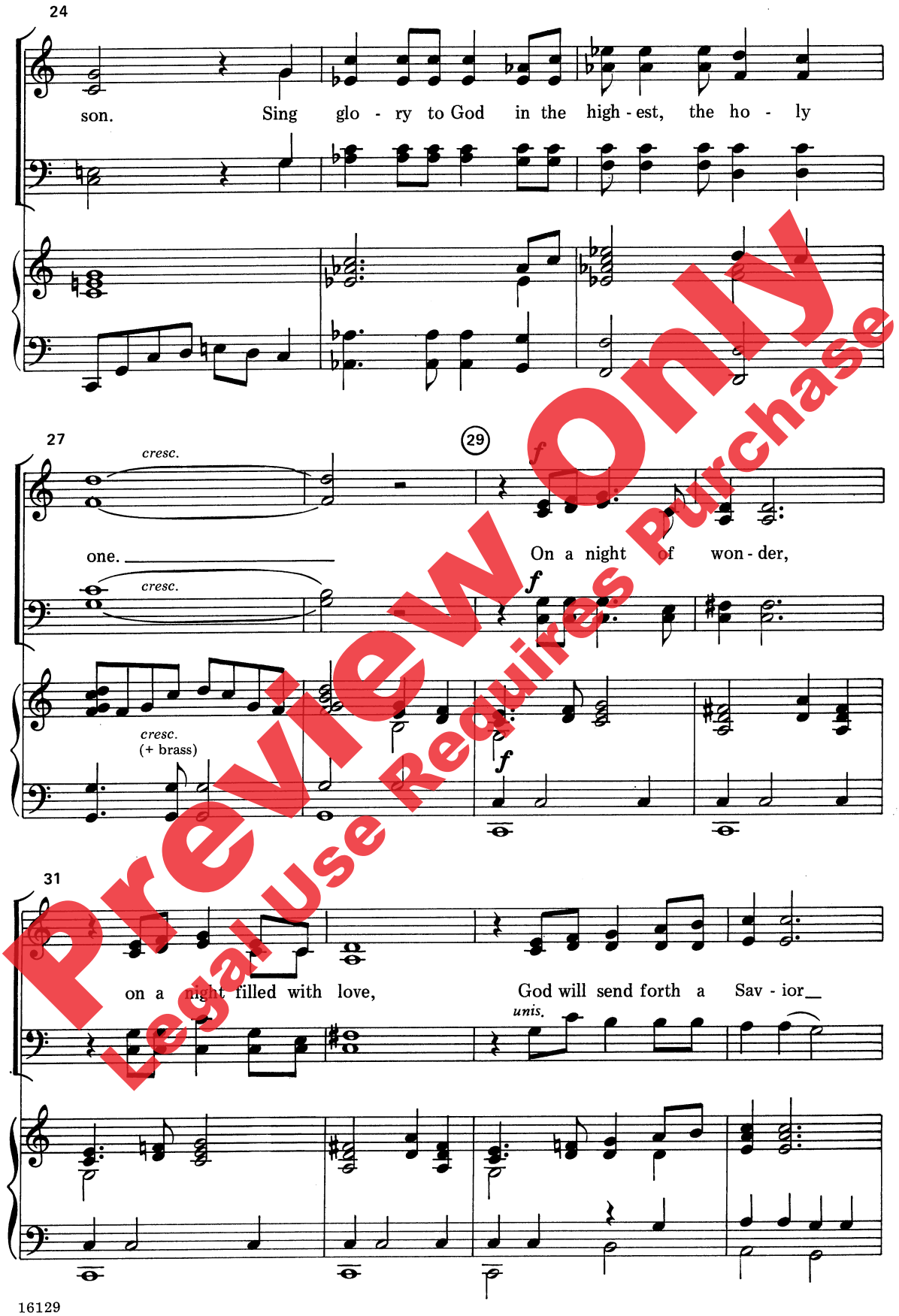

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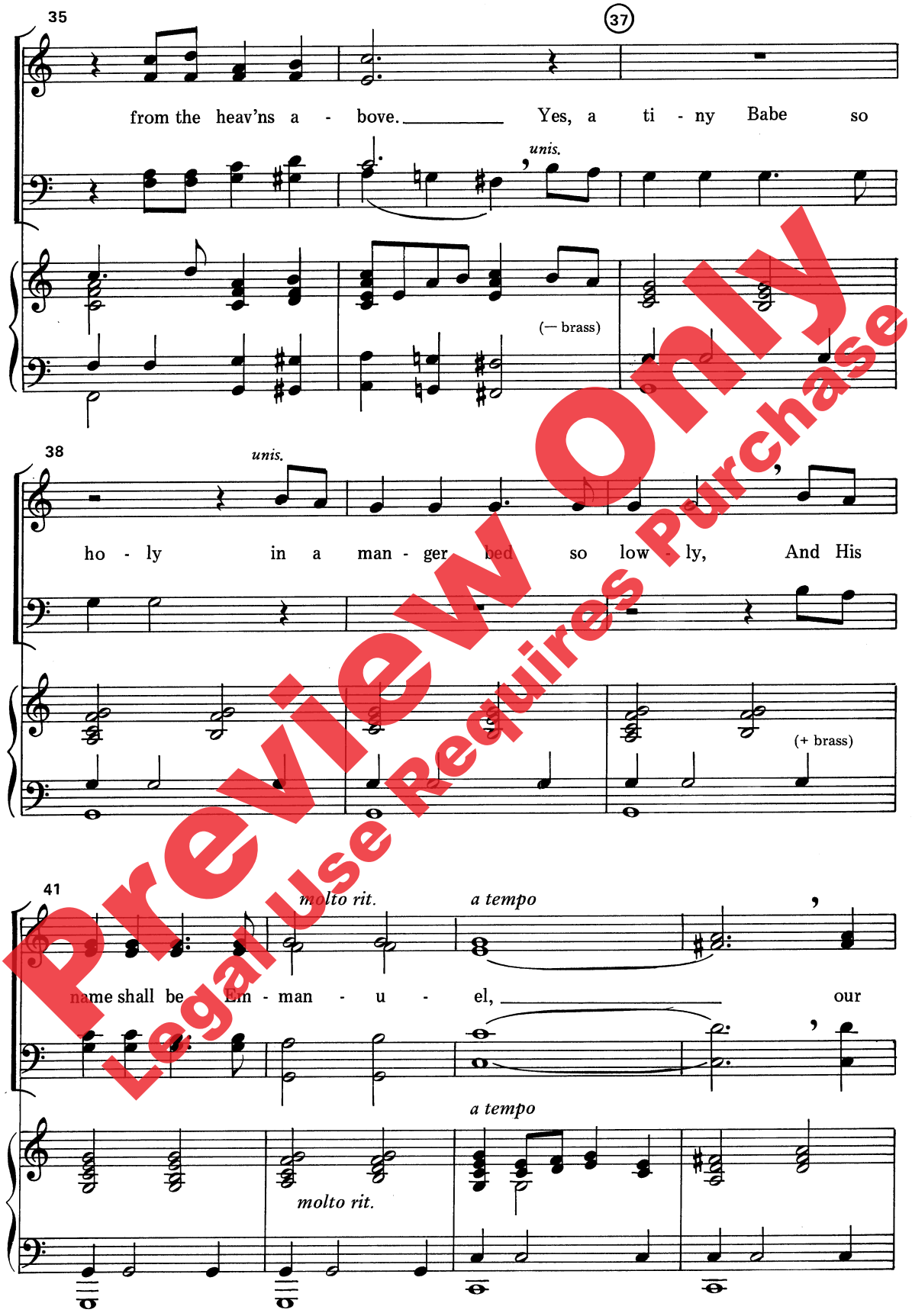

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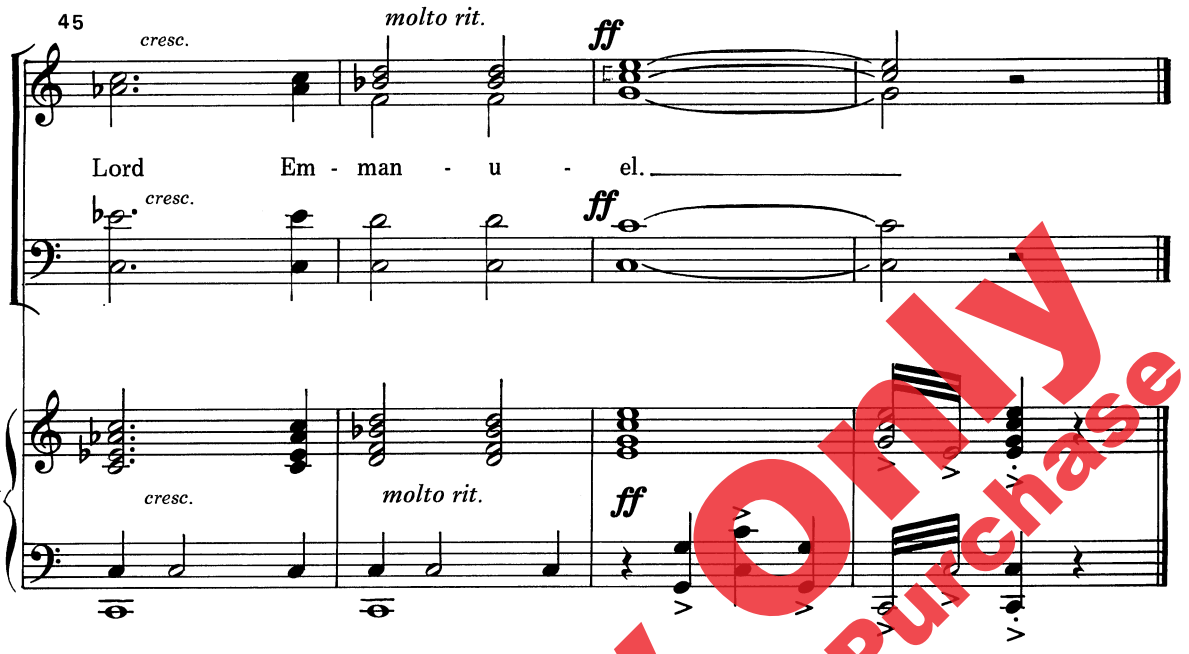

FIRST READING: Luke 1: 26-31

NARRATOR: The angel Gabriel was sent from God
to the city of Galilee, named Nazareth,
to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph,
of the house of David;
and the virgin's name was Mary.
And the angel came unto her and said:

GABRIEL: "Hail, Mary, full of grace.
Blessed are you among women.
Do not be afraid, for you have found favor with God.
And, behold, you shall conceive in your womb
and bring forth a Son,
and you shall call His name Jesus."

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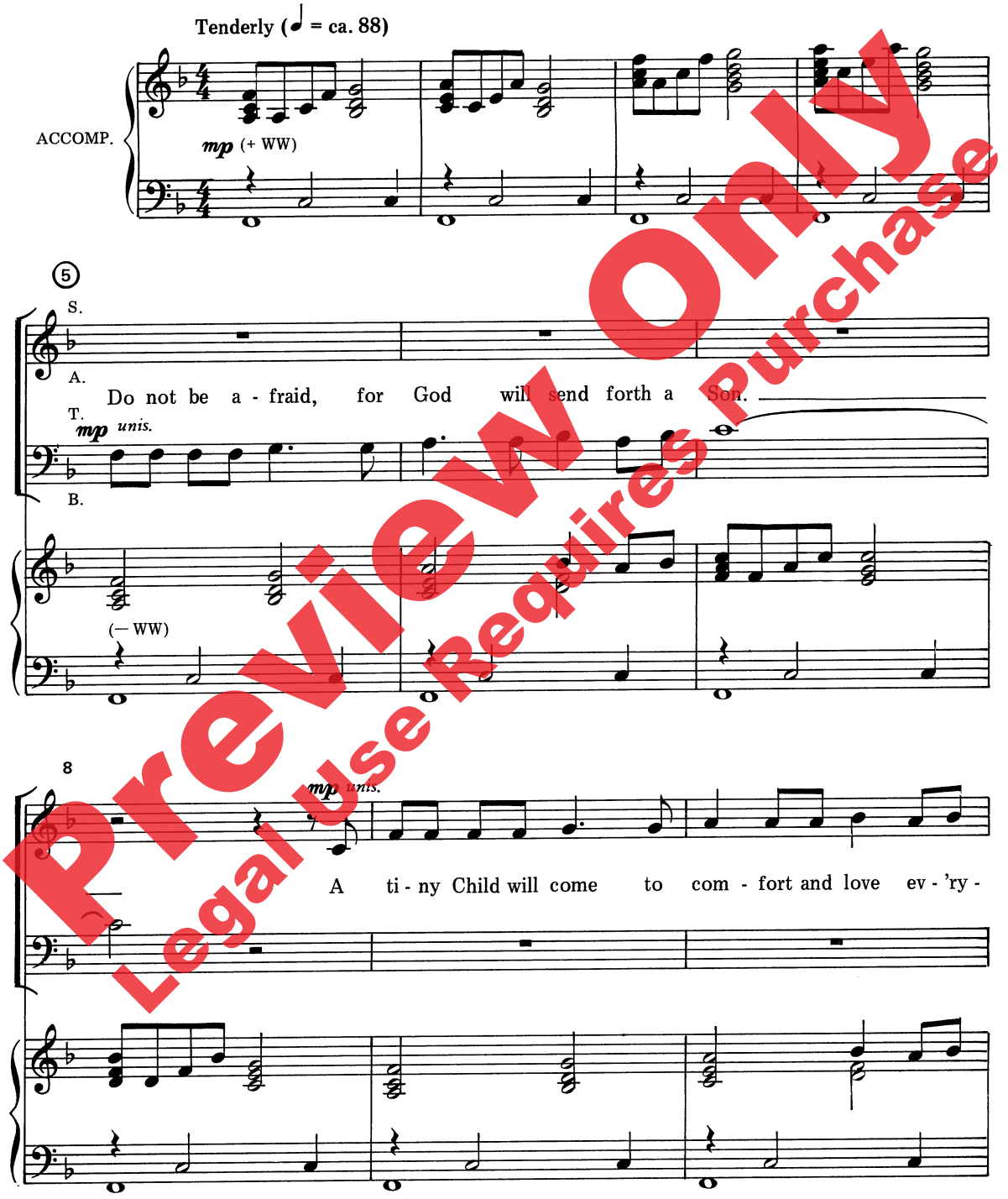
2. LET THE CHRIST CHILD IN

Words and Music by
JAY ALTHOUSE *and*
SALLY K. ALBRECHT



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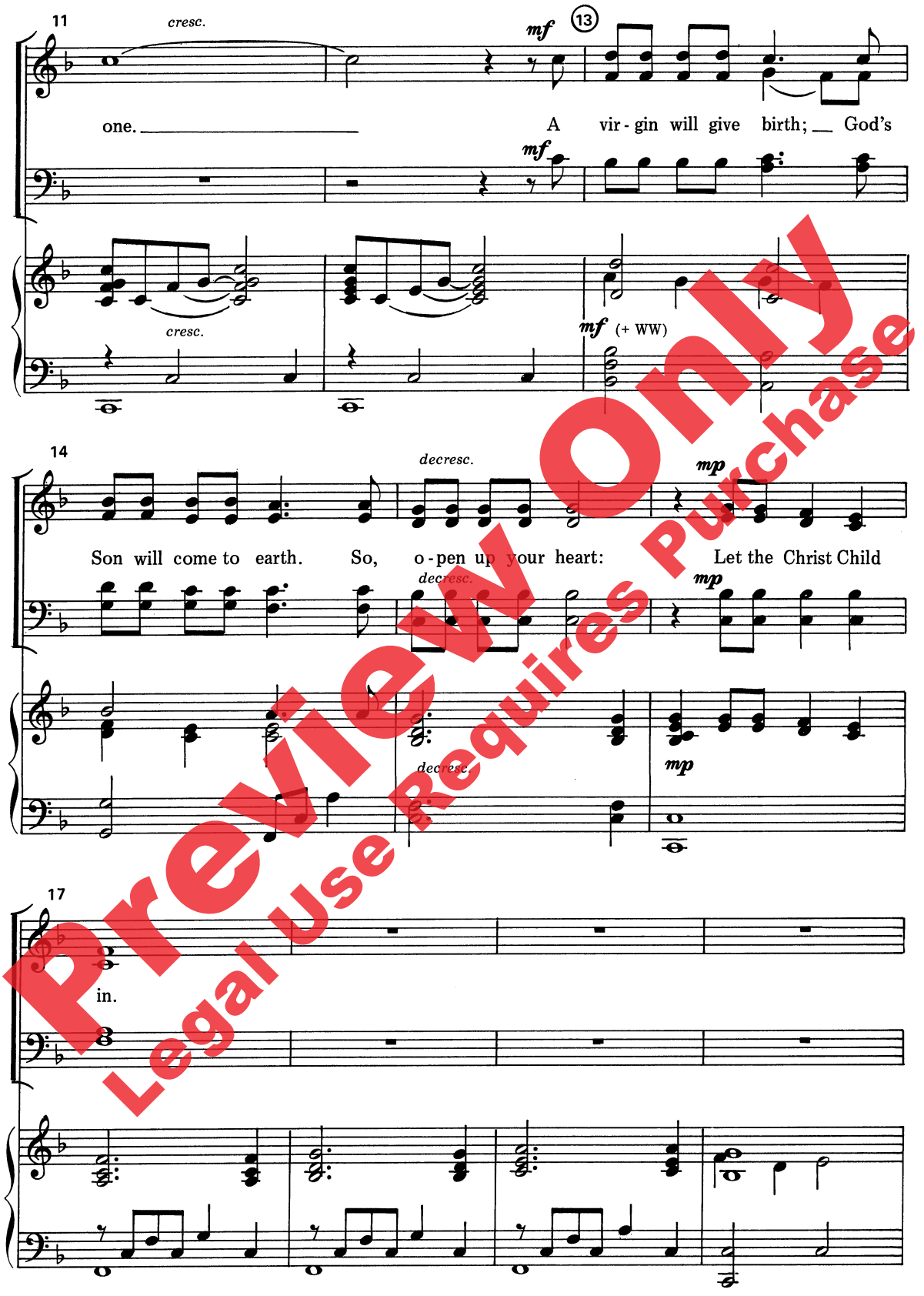

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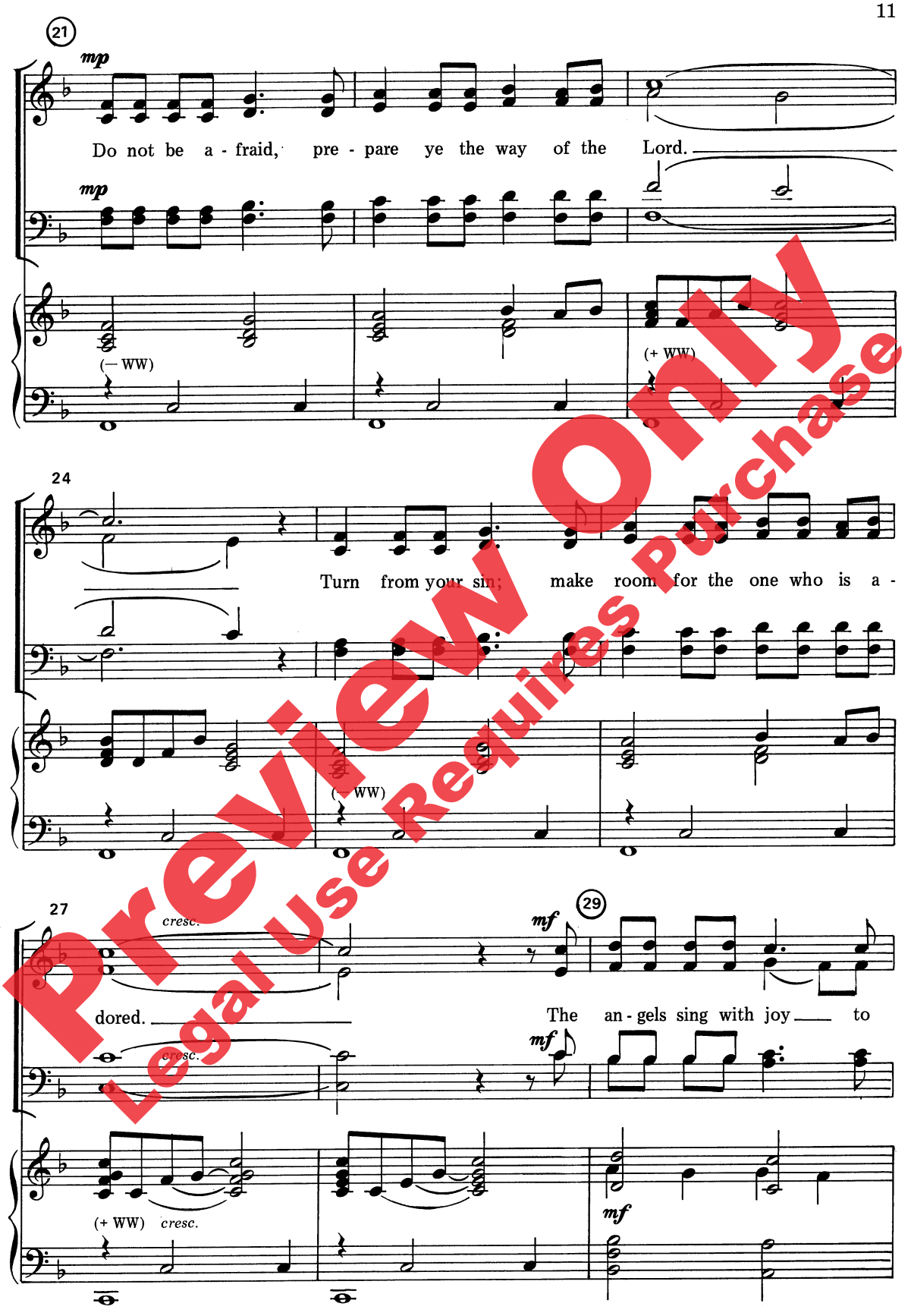

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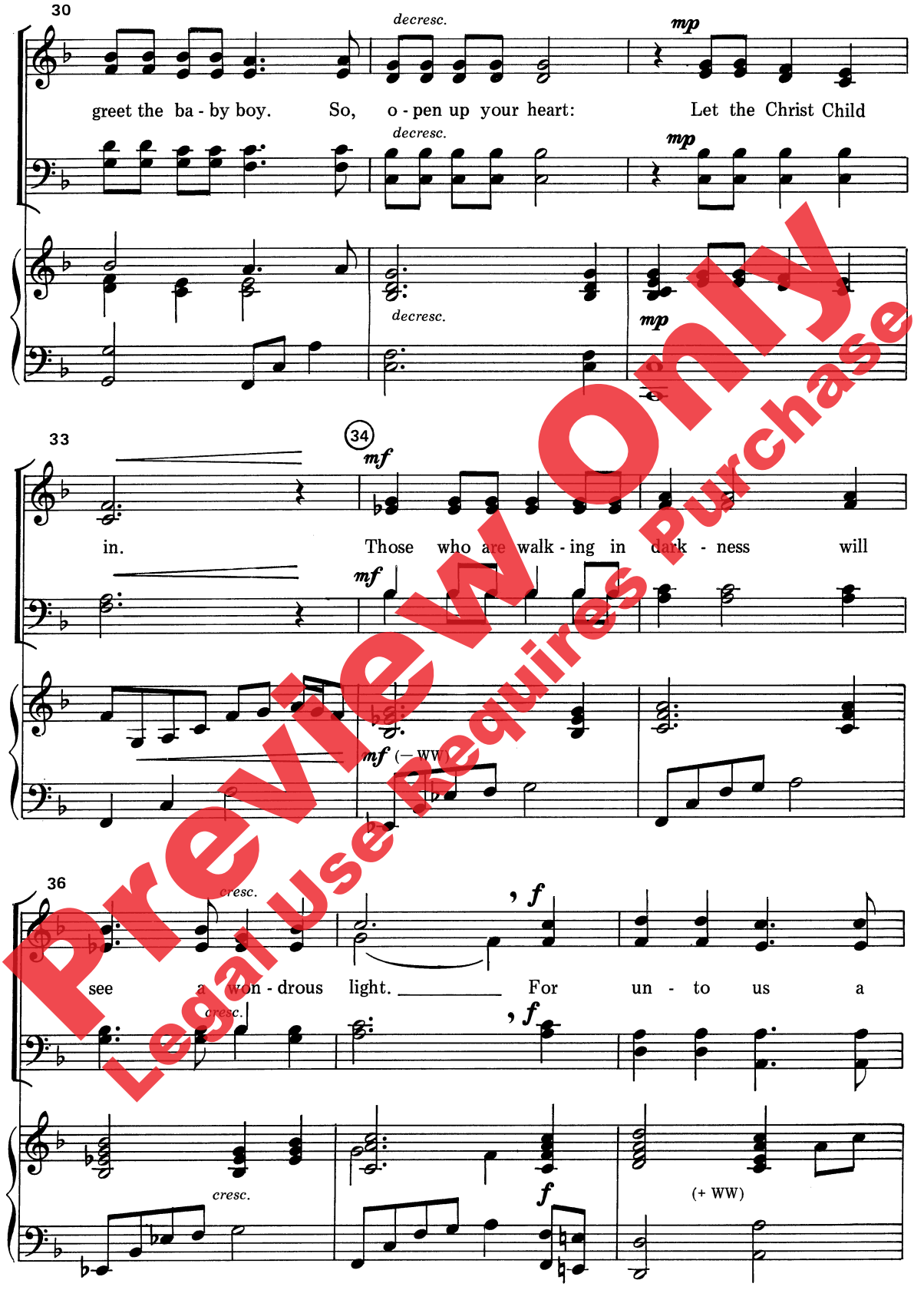

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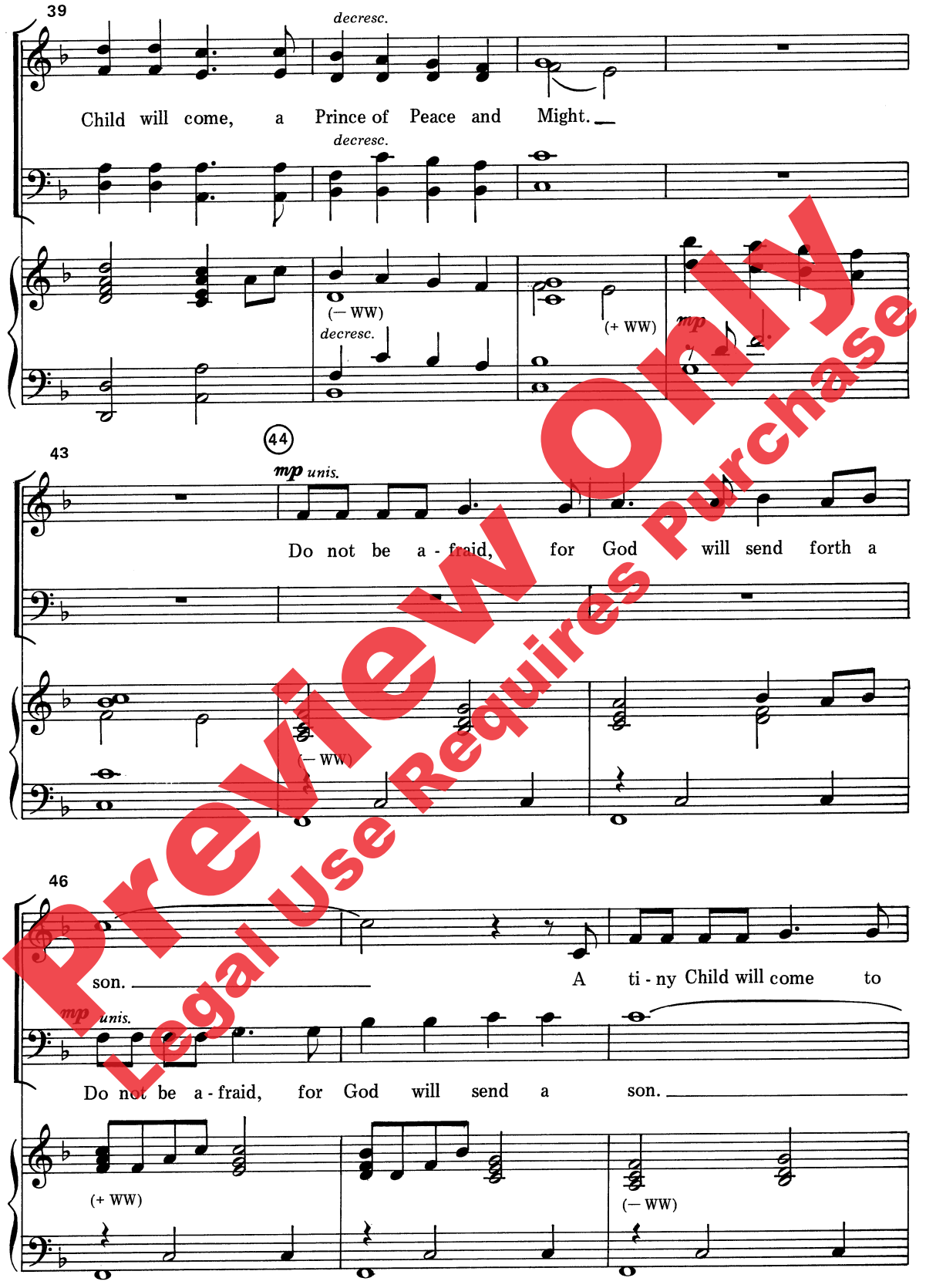

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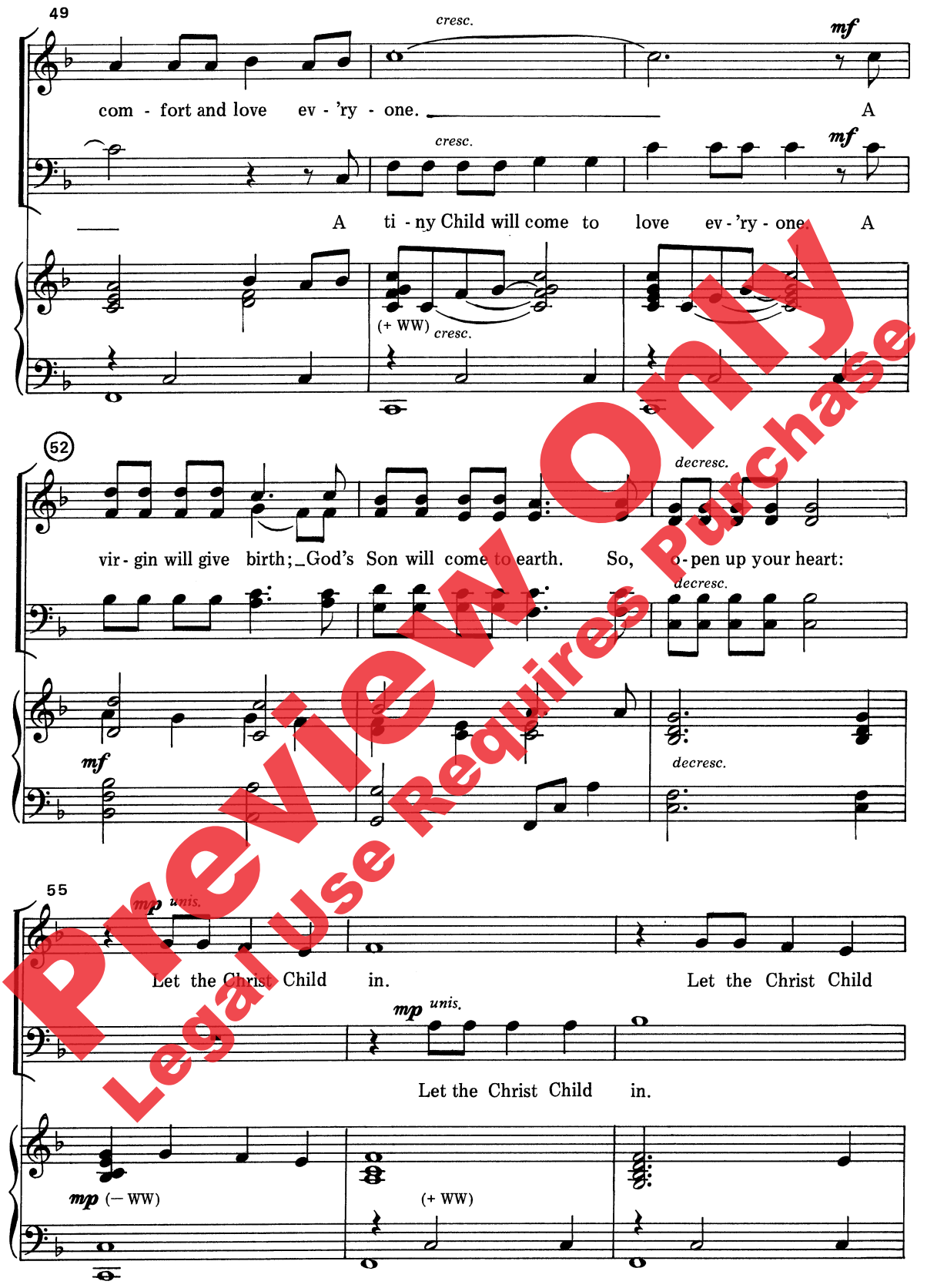

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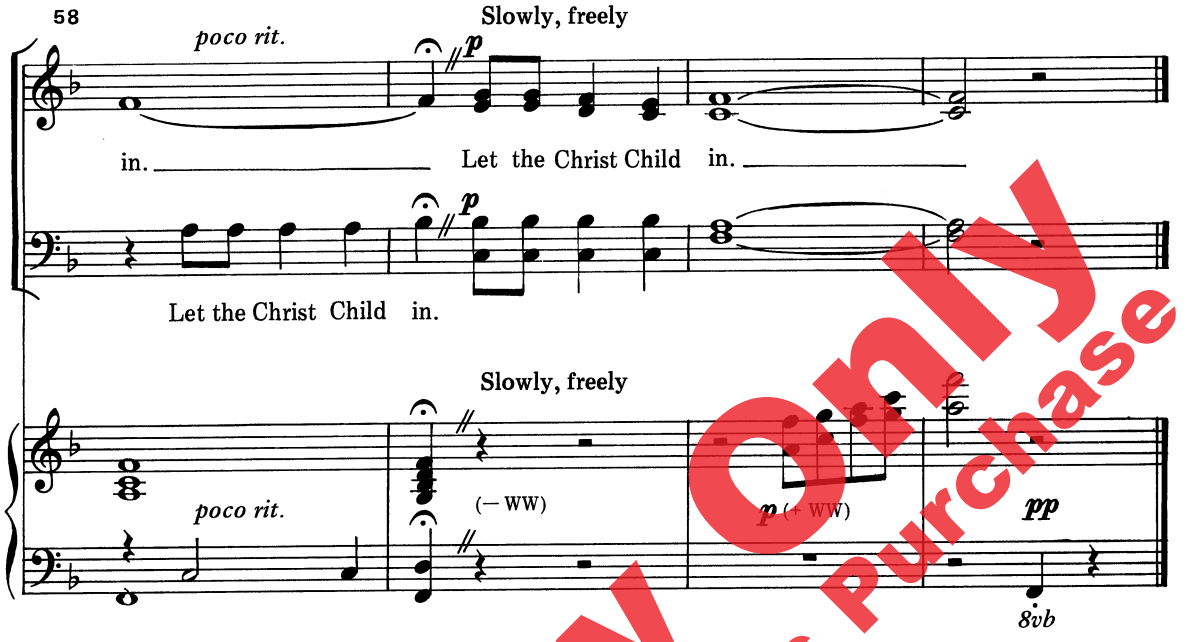

SECOND READING: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

9th century Latin text, translated by John M. Neale (1818-1866)

(may be spoken or sung as a vocal solo)

NARRATOR: O come, O come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here,
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice, rejoice,
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice, rejoice,
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

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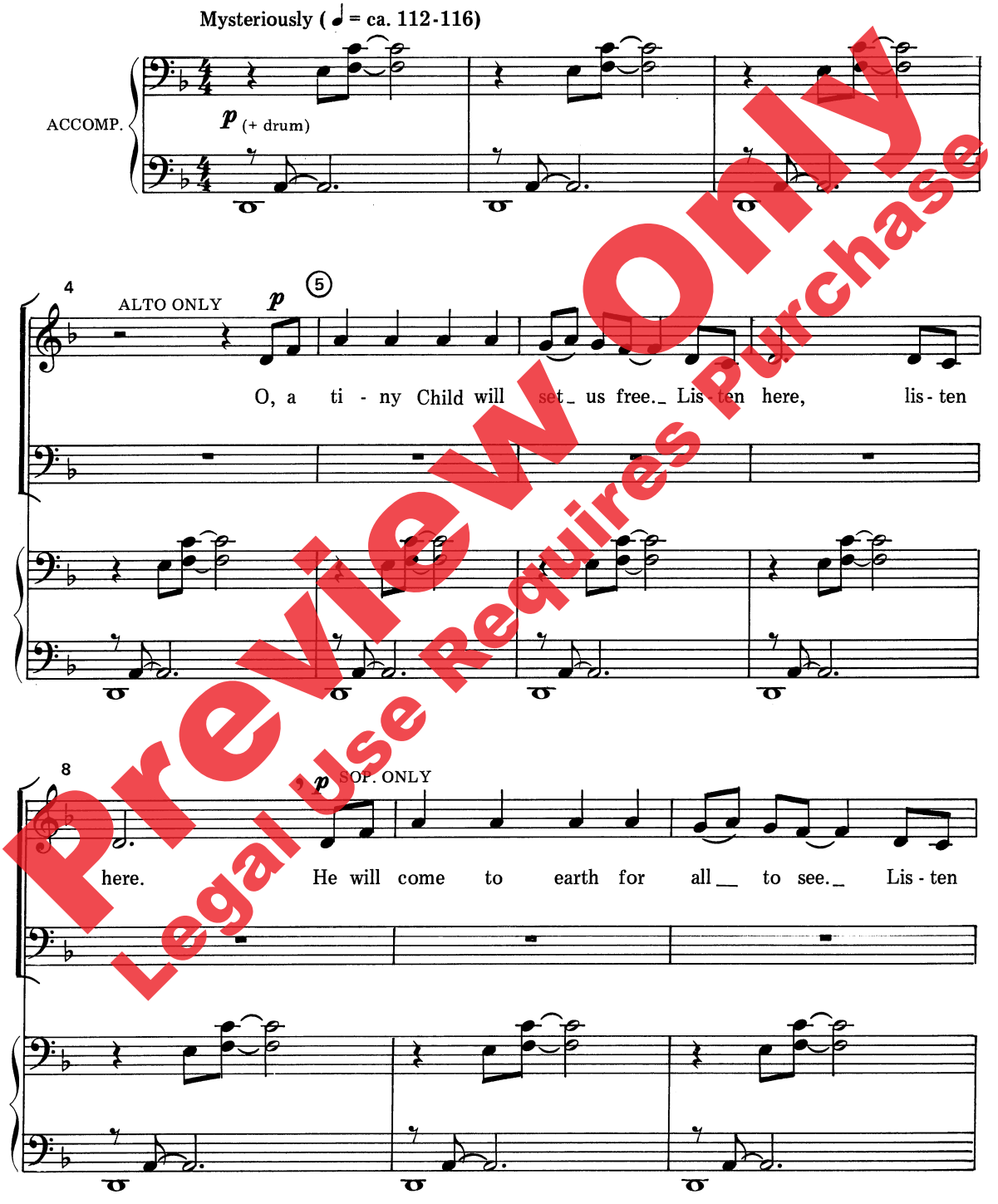
3. LISTEN HERE, LISTEN HERE

Words and Music by
JAY ALTHOUSE



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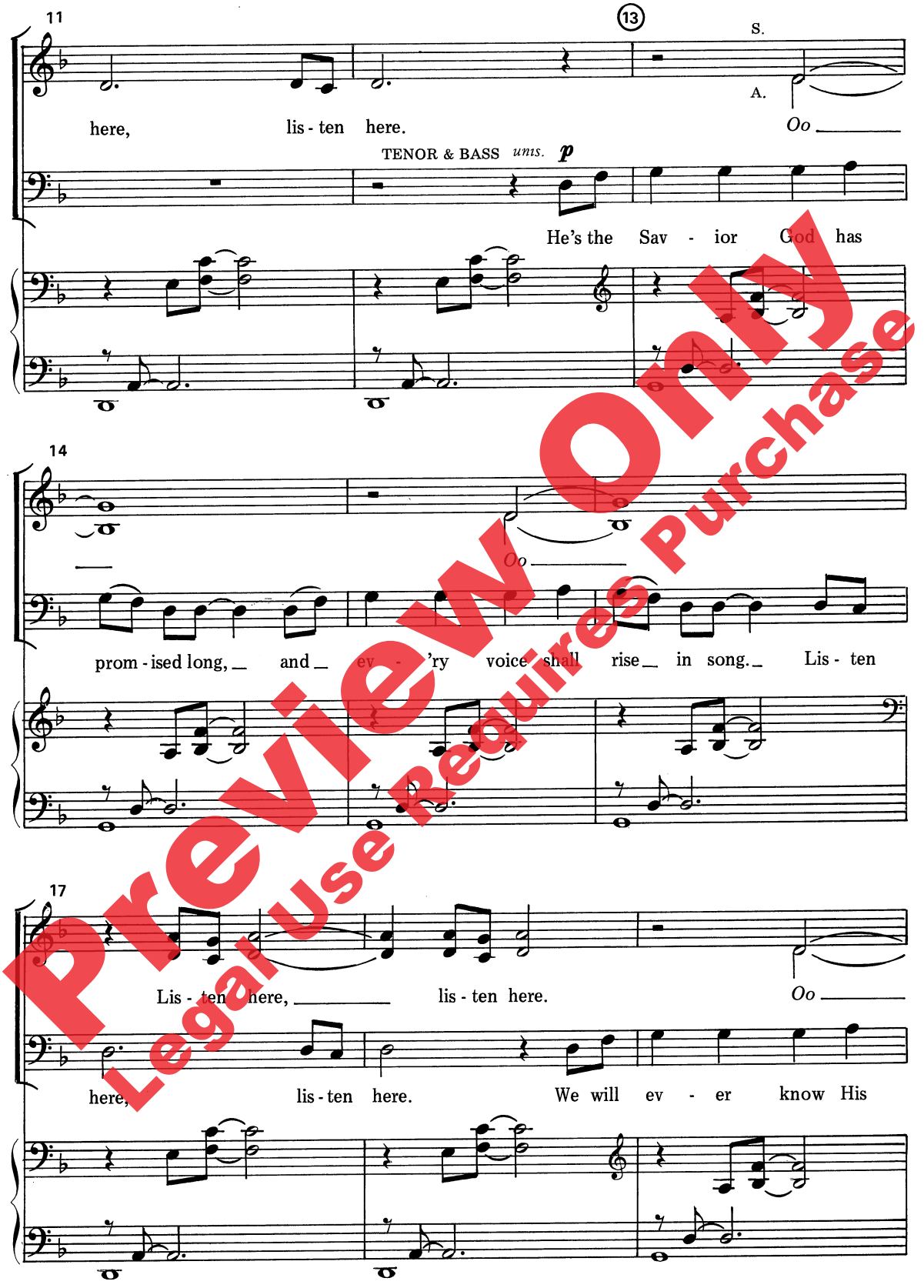

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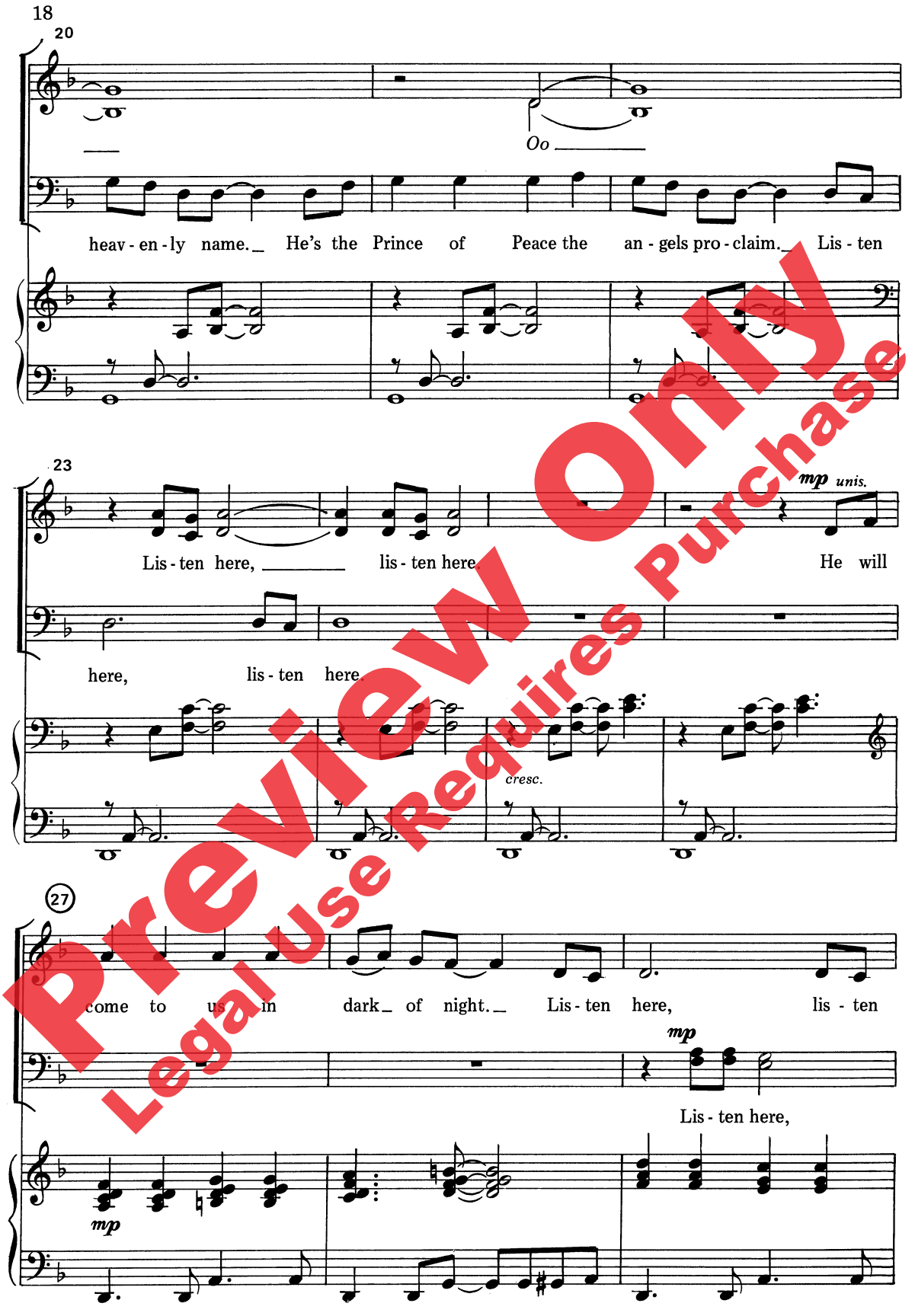

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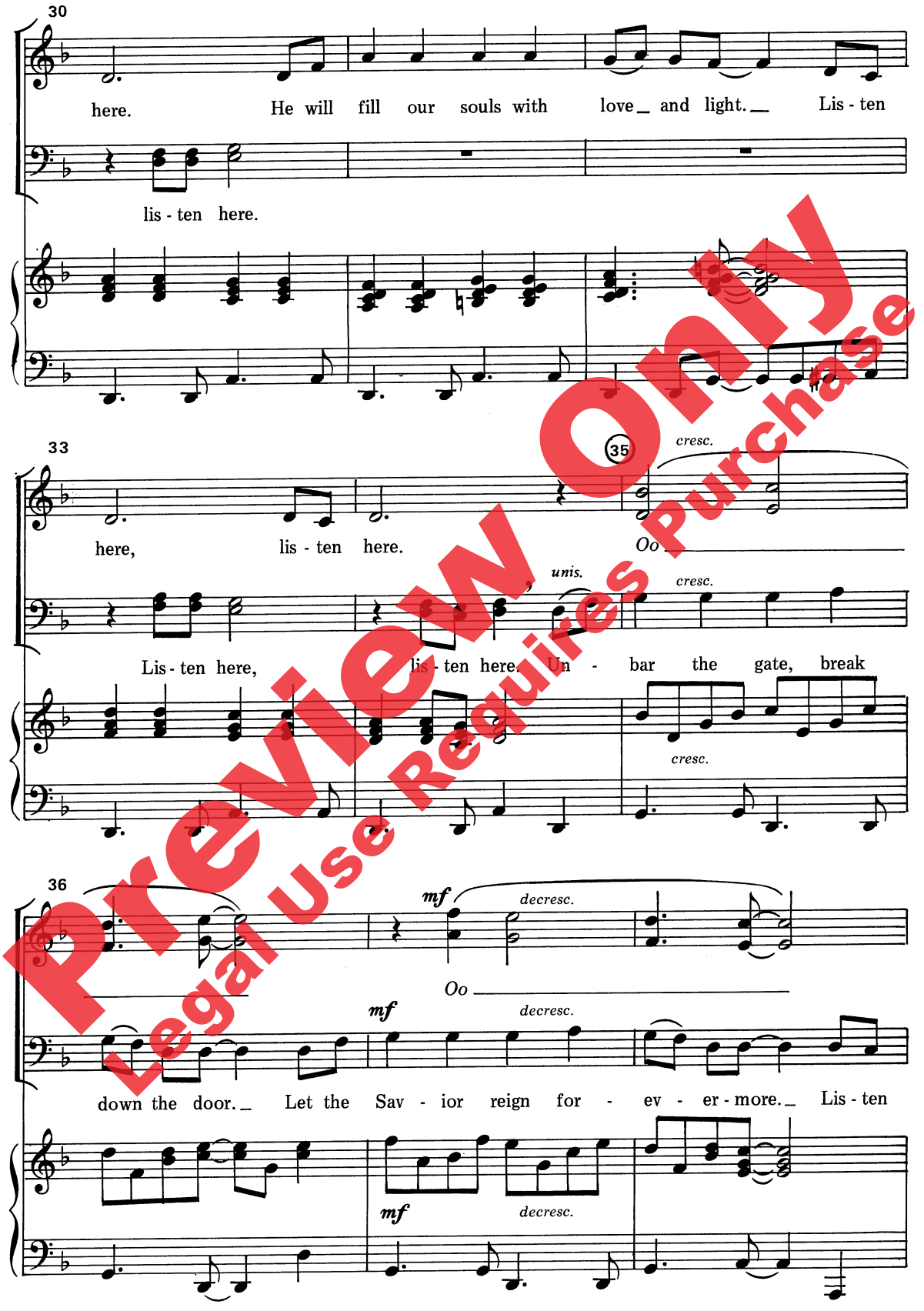

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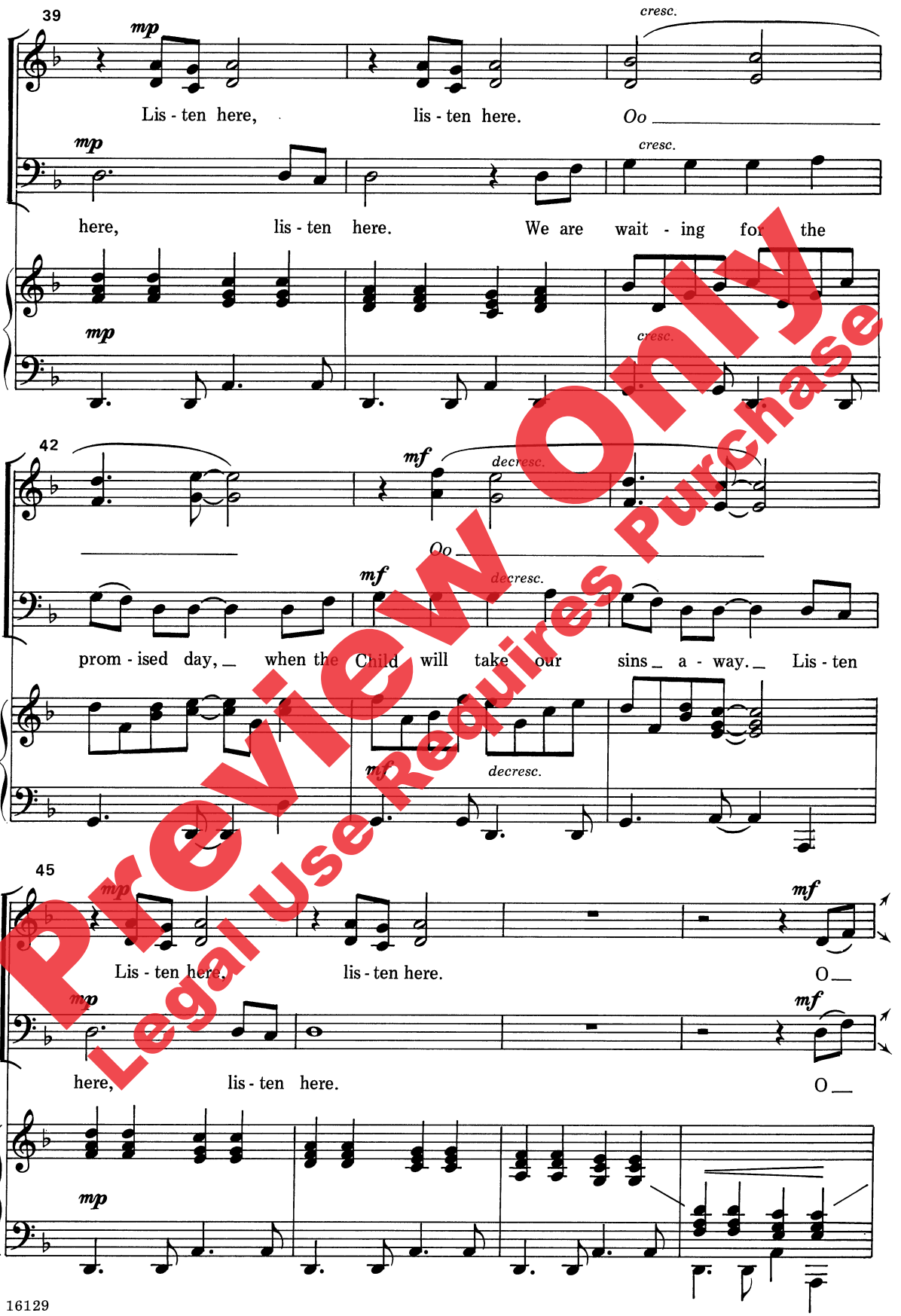

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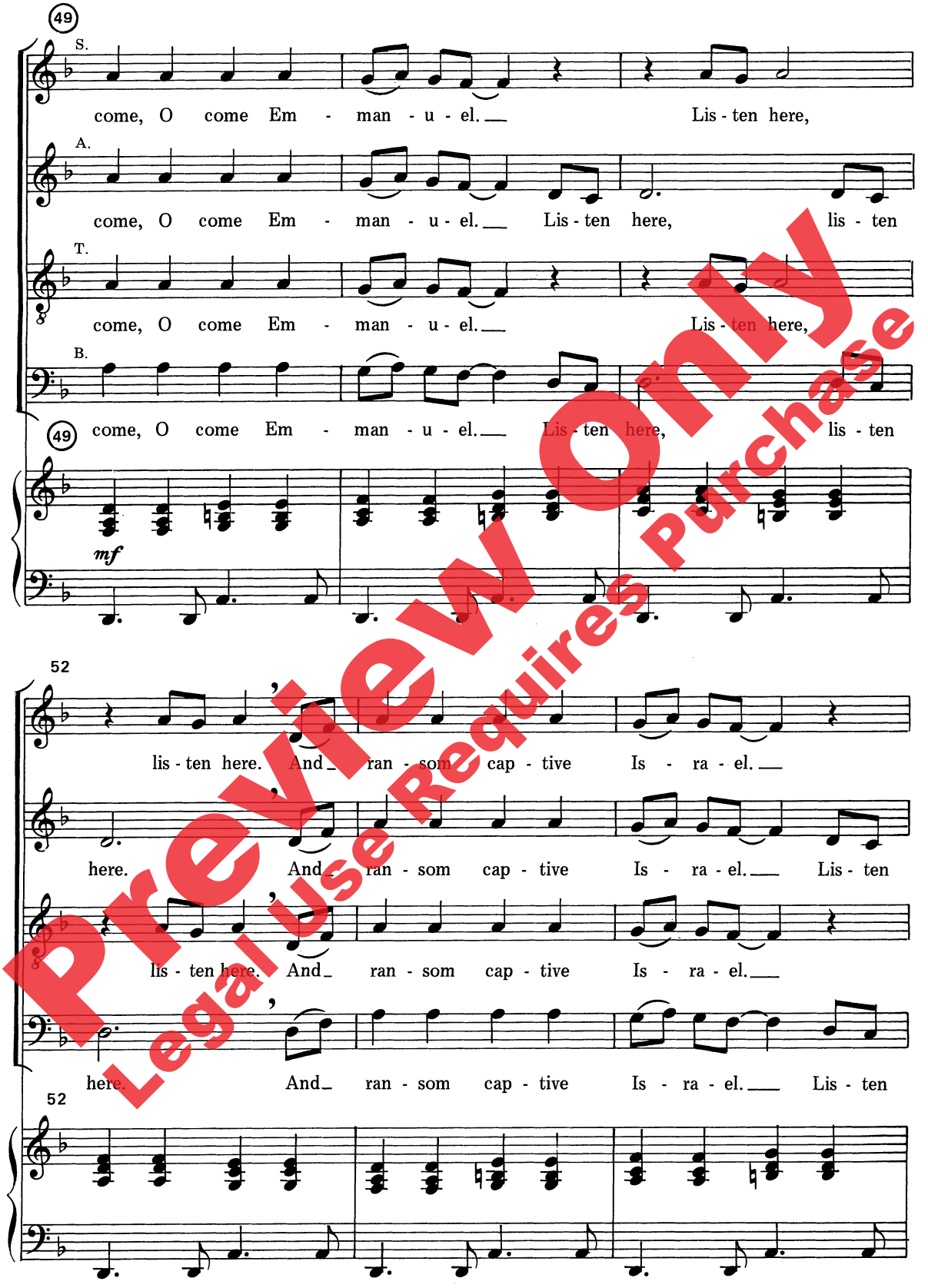

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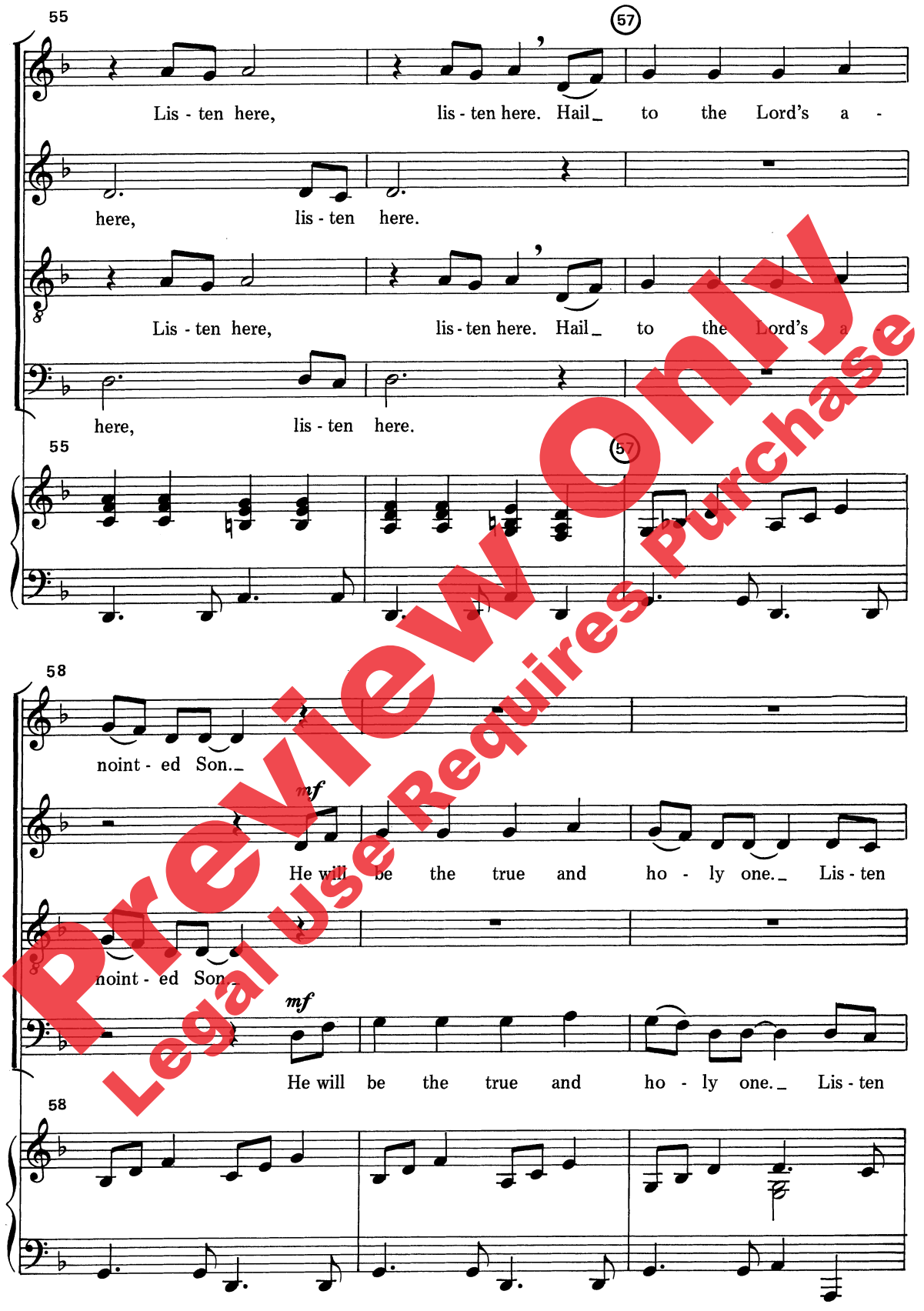

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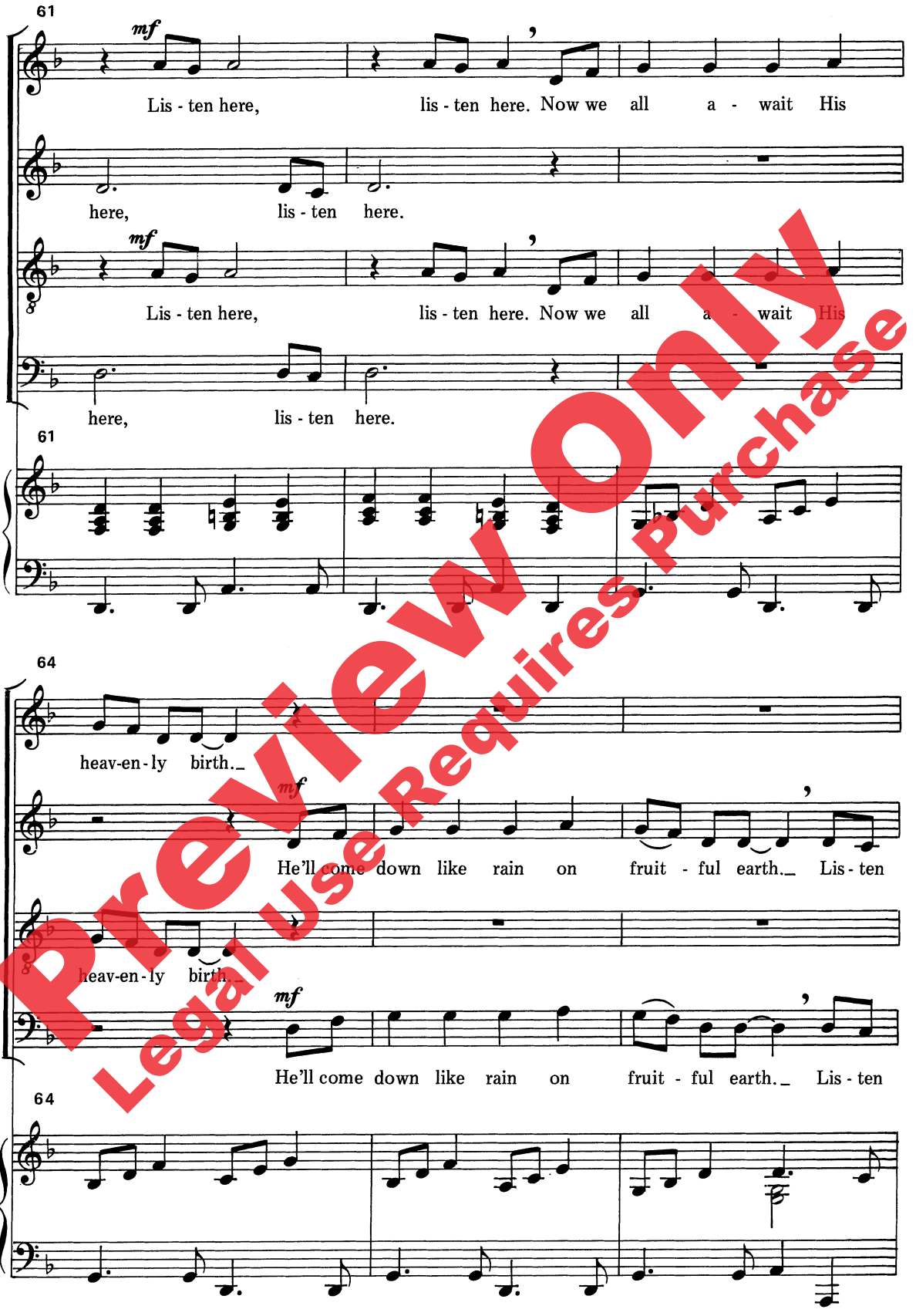

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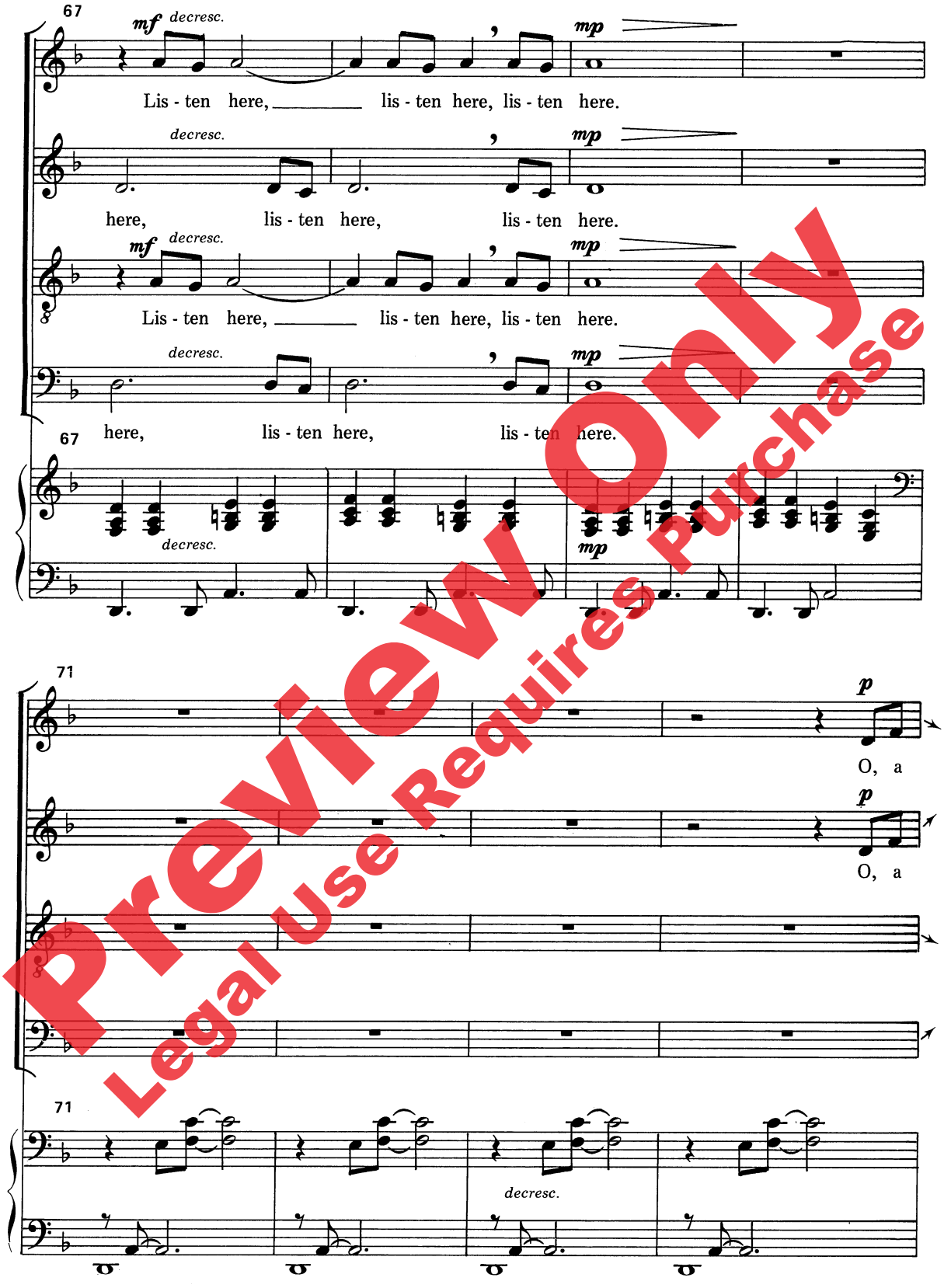

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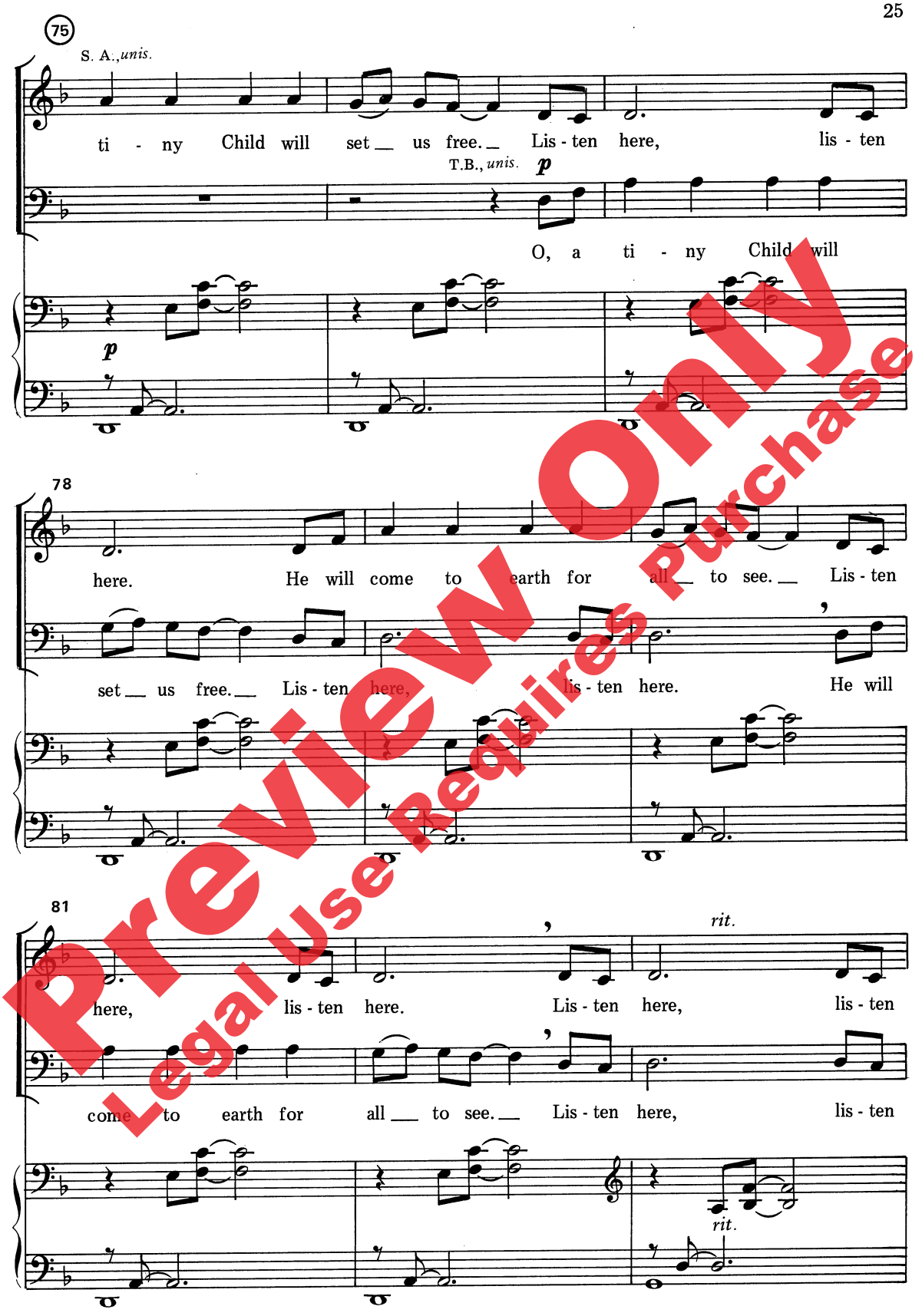

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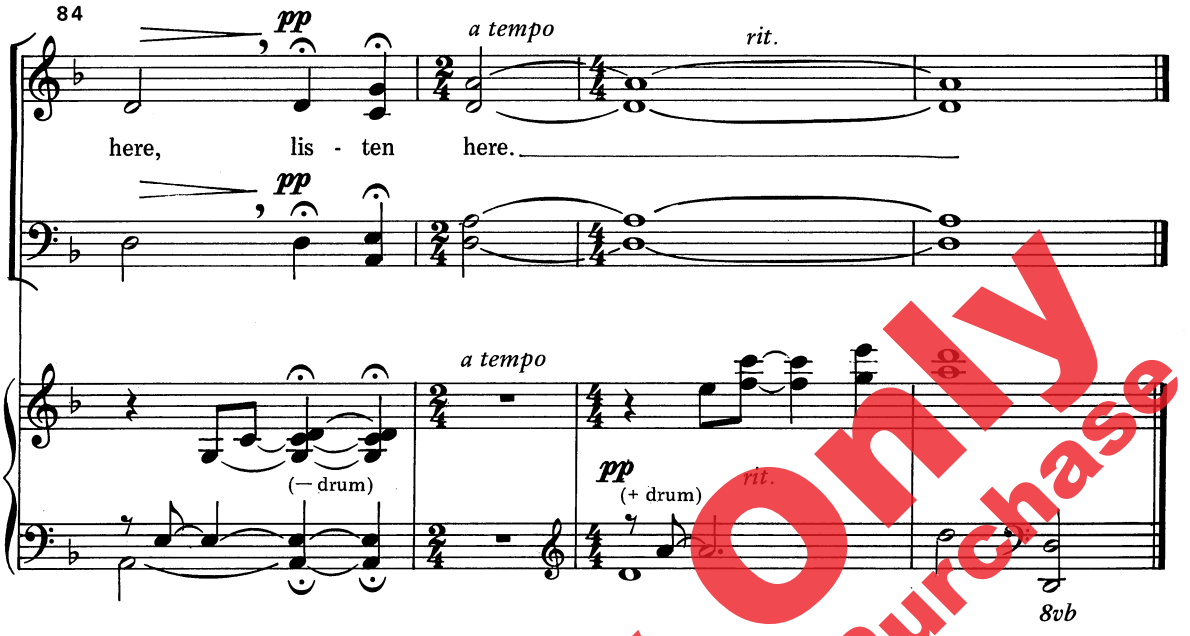

THIRD READING: Luke 2: 1-7

NARRATOR: And it came to pass in those days,
that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus,
that all the world should be taxed.
And everyone traveled to his own town to register.

So Joseph traveled from Nazareth to the city of David,
which was called Bethlehem,
bringing with him his espoused wife, Mary,
who was great with child.

While they were there, the time came for Mary to give birth.
And she brought forth her first-born Son,
and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes,
and laid Him in a manger,
because there was no room for them in the inn.

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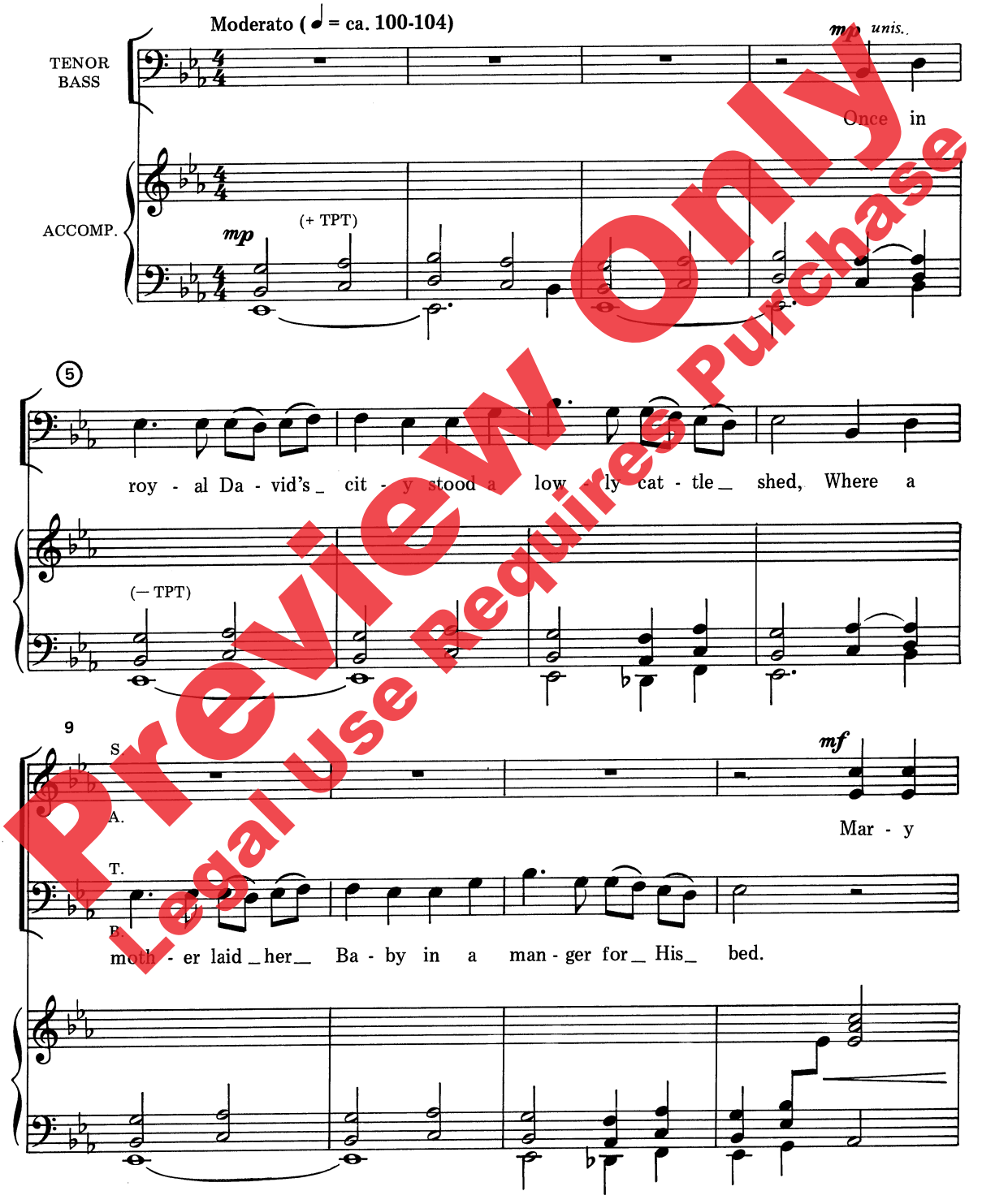
4. ONCE IN ROYAL DAVID'S CITY

Words by
CECIL FRANCIS ALEXANDER
(1823-1895)

IRBY
By **HENRY J. GAUNTLETT** (1805-1876)
Arranged by **JAY ALTHOUSE**



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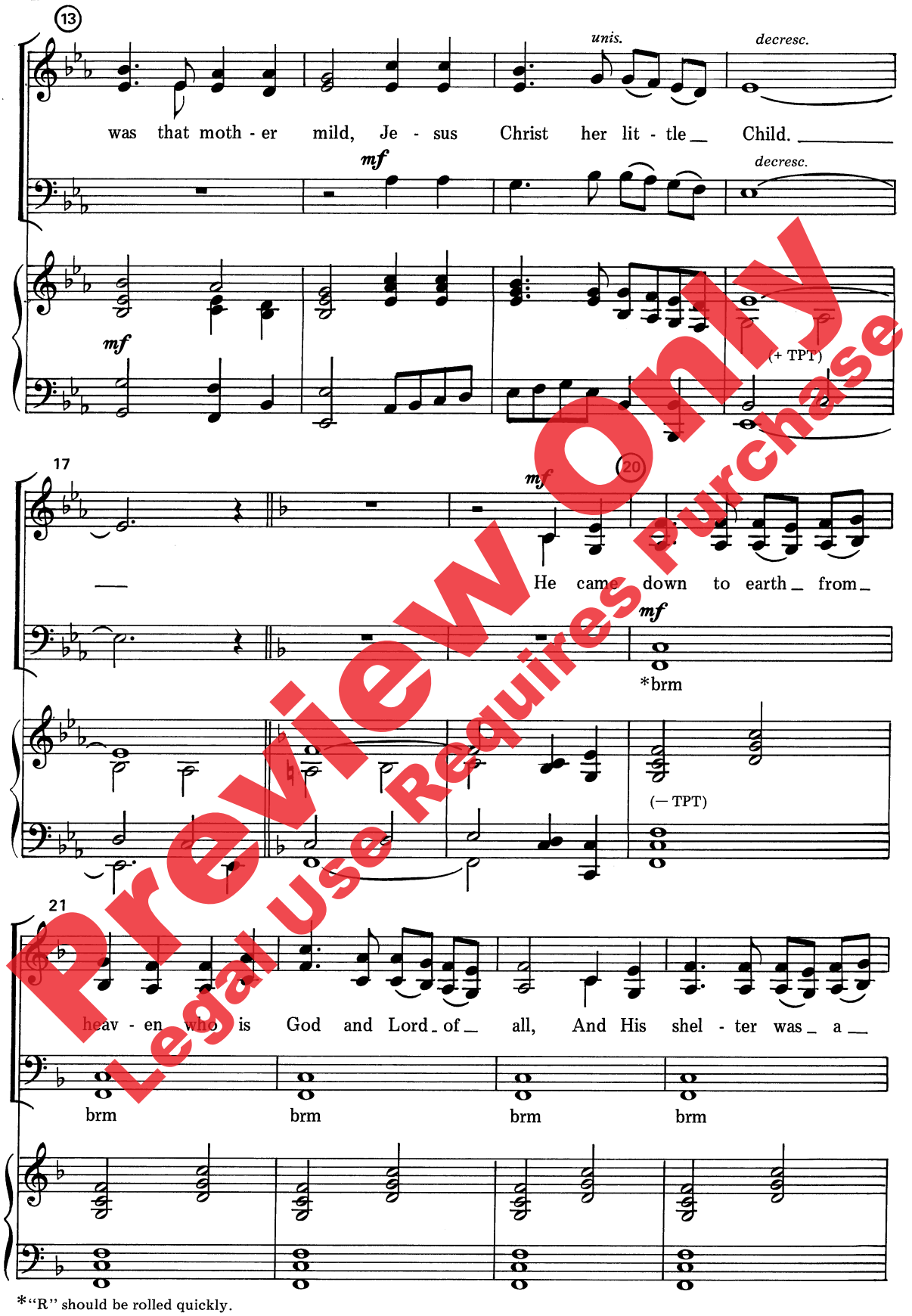

*"R" should be rolled quickly.

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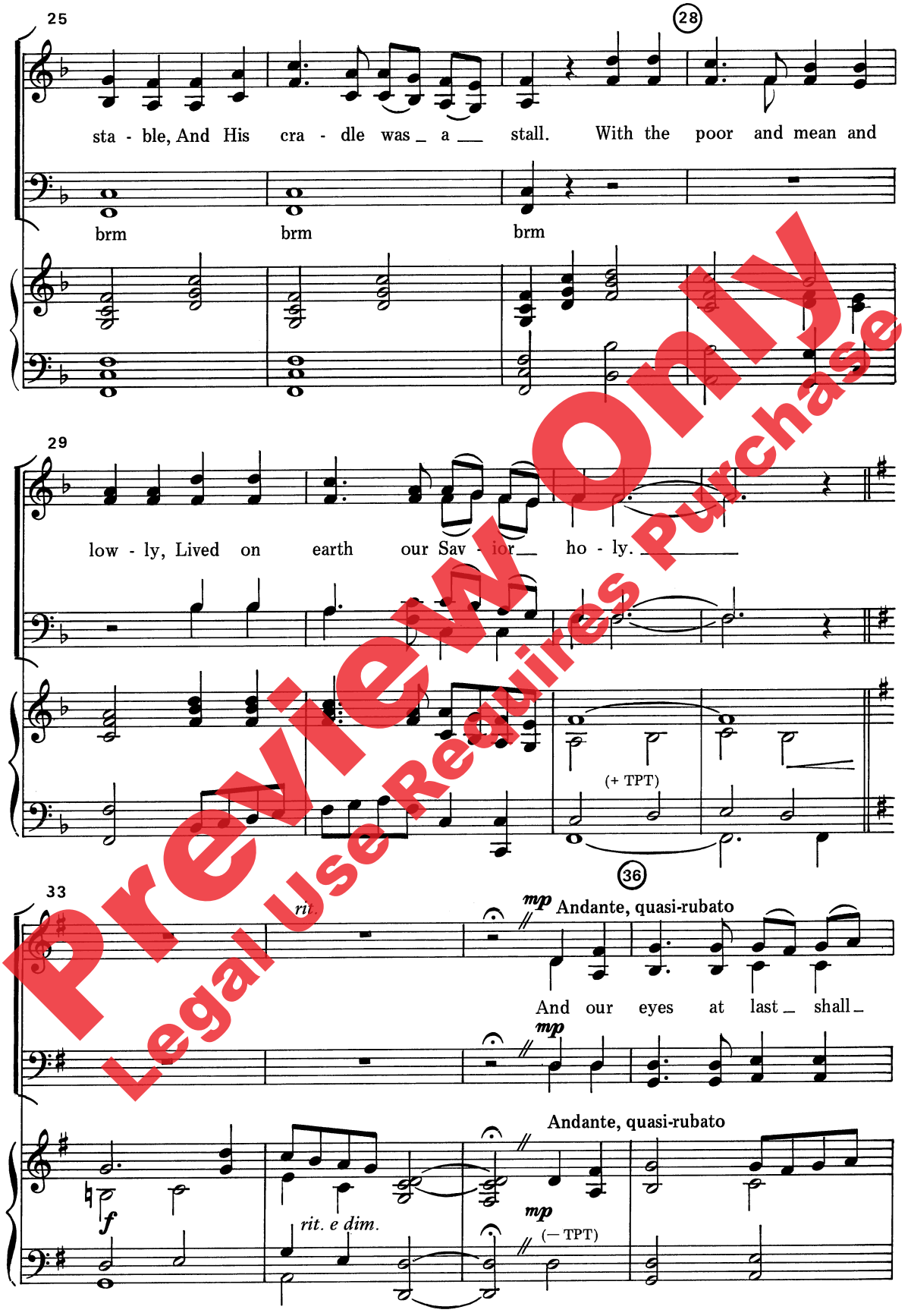

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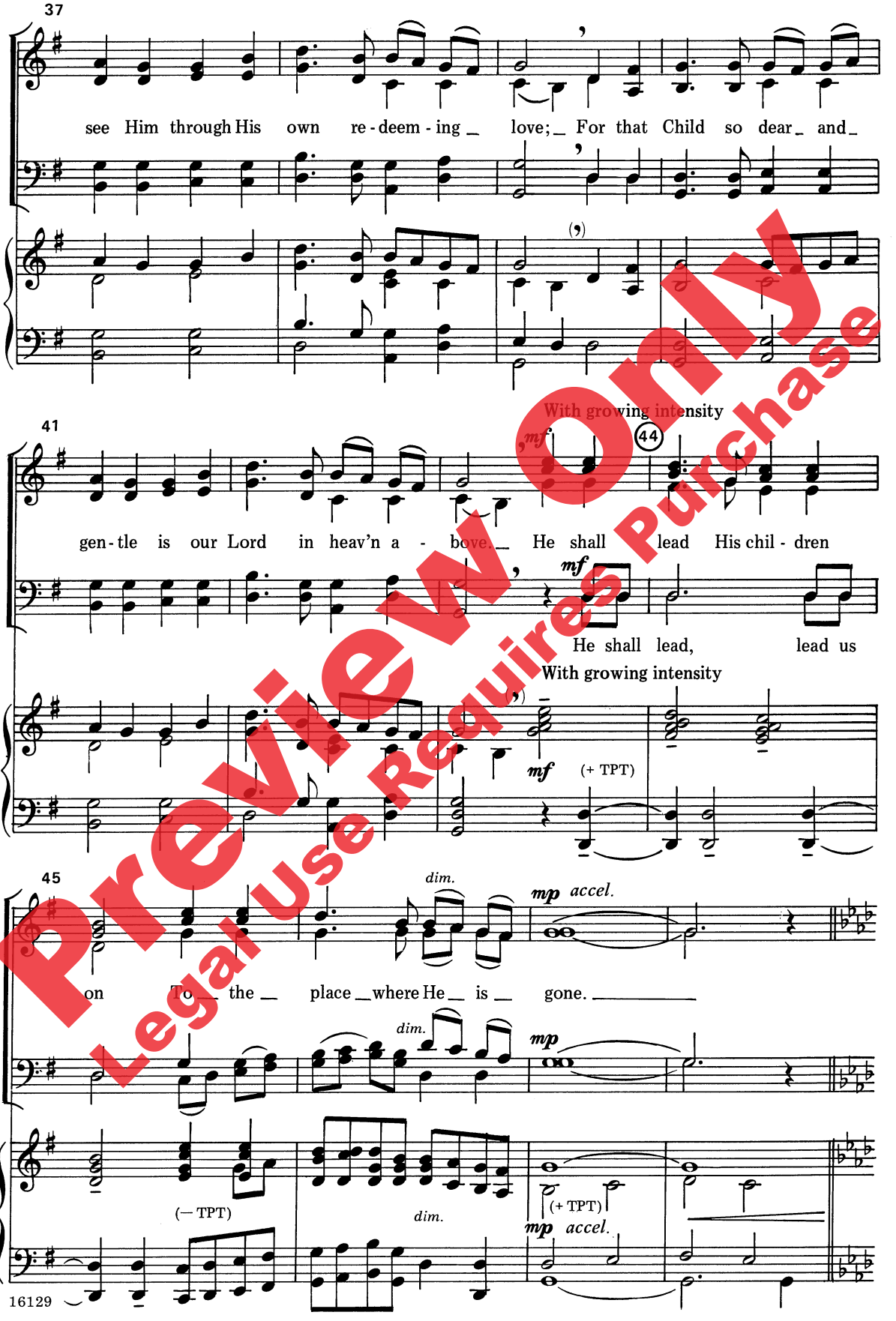

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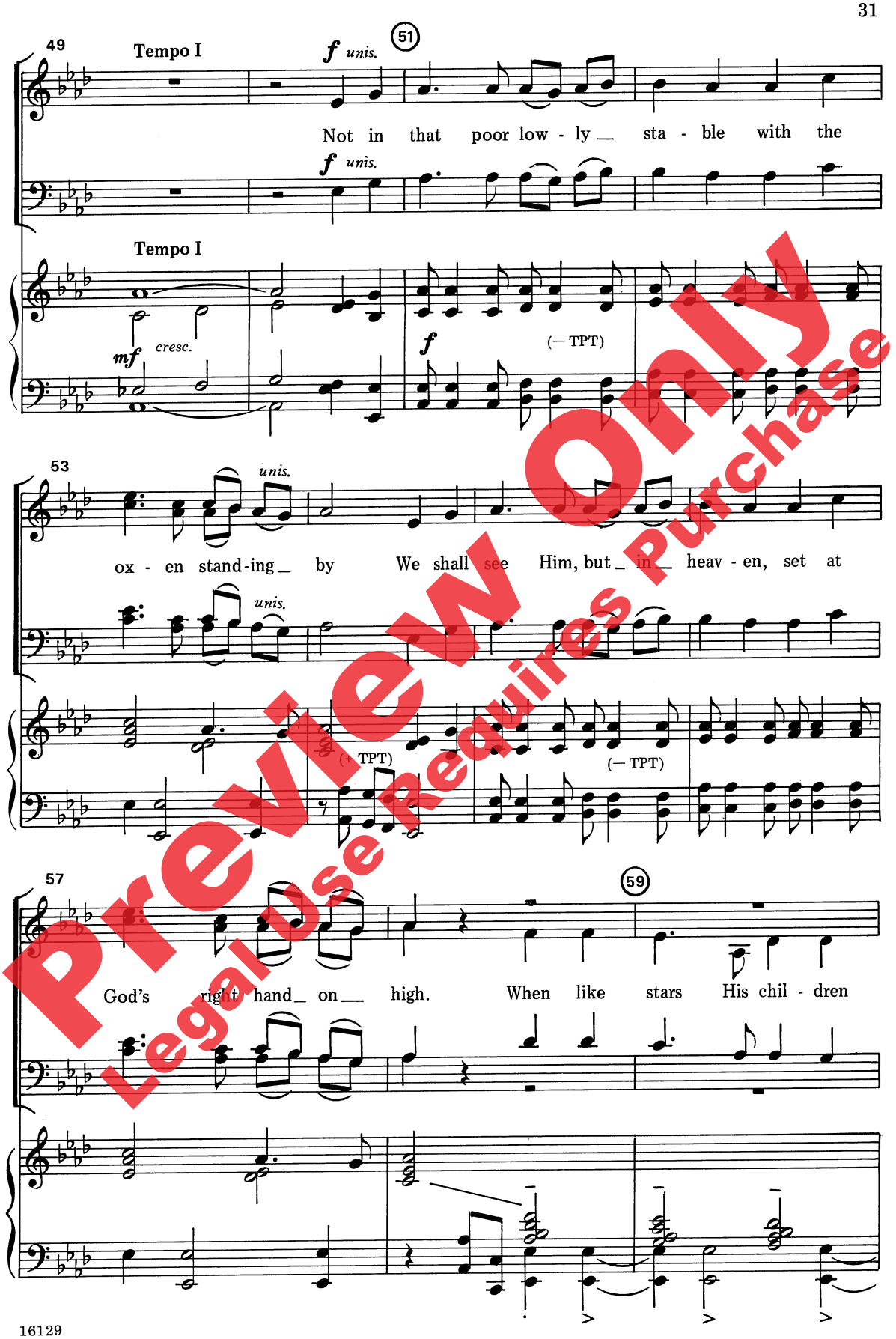

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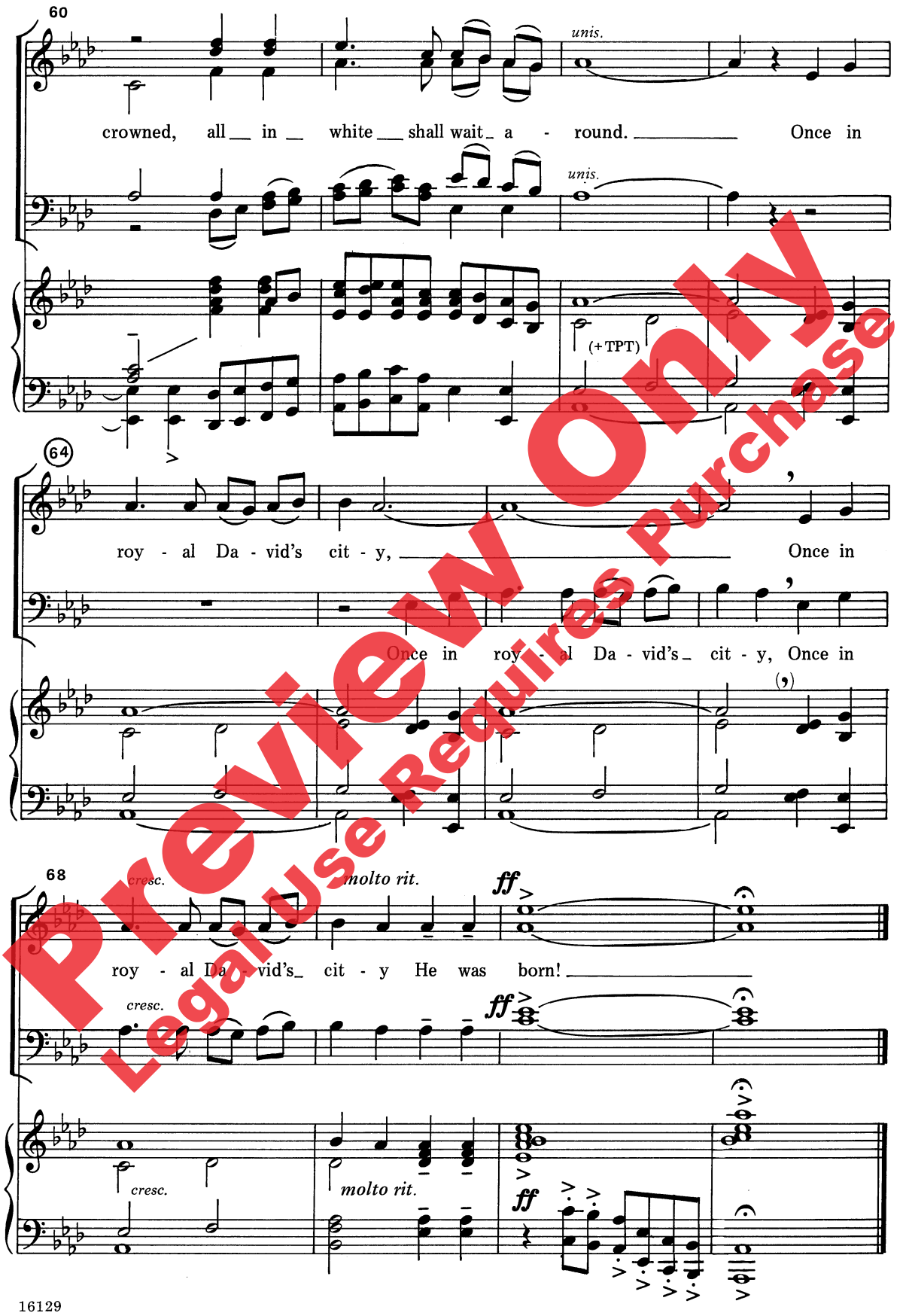

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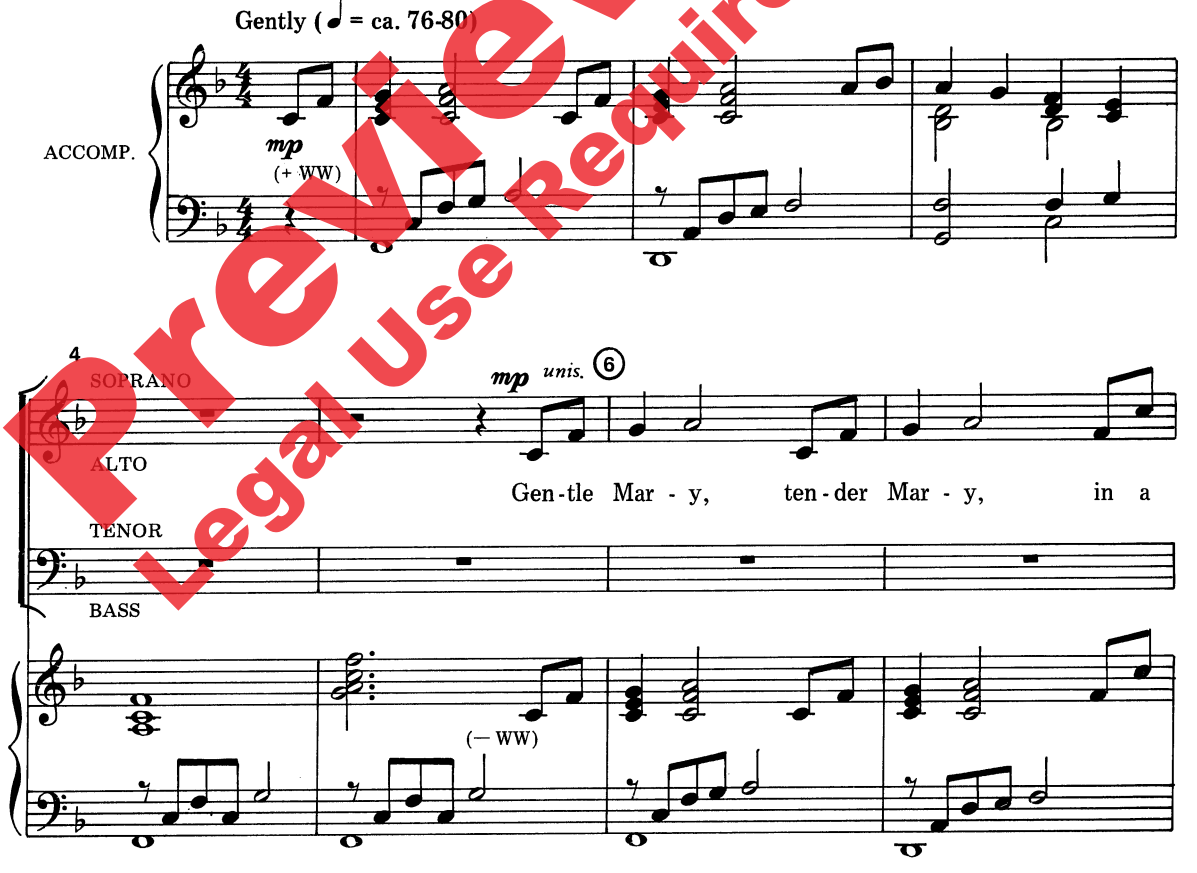
FOURTH READING: What Child Is This?

19th century text by William C. Dix, ca. 1865
(may be spoken or sung as a vocal solo)

NARRATOR: What Child is this who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!

5. GENTLE MARY, TENDER MARY

Words and Music by
JAY ALTHOUSE



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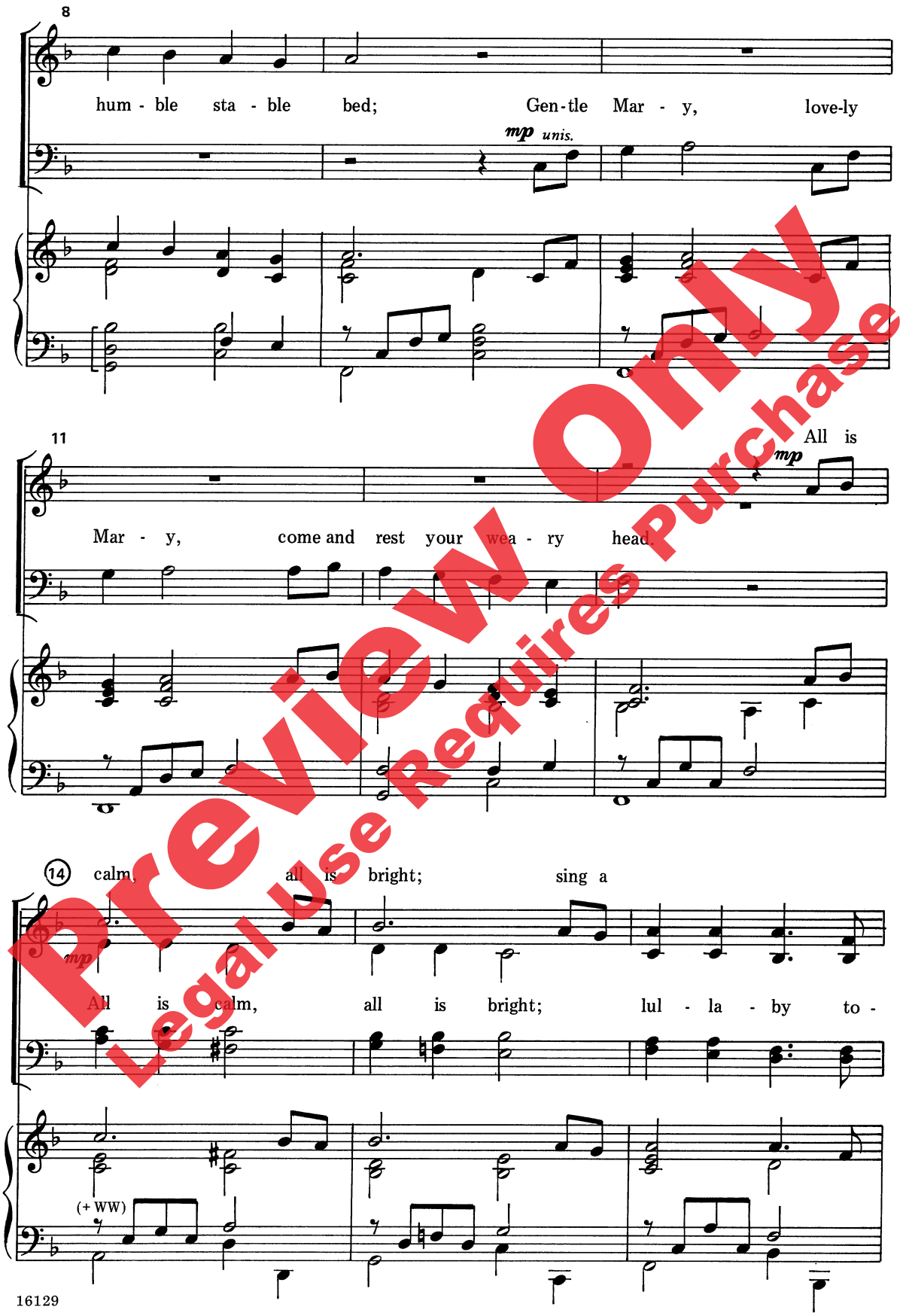

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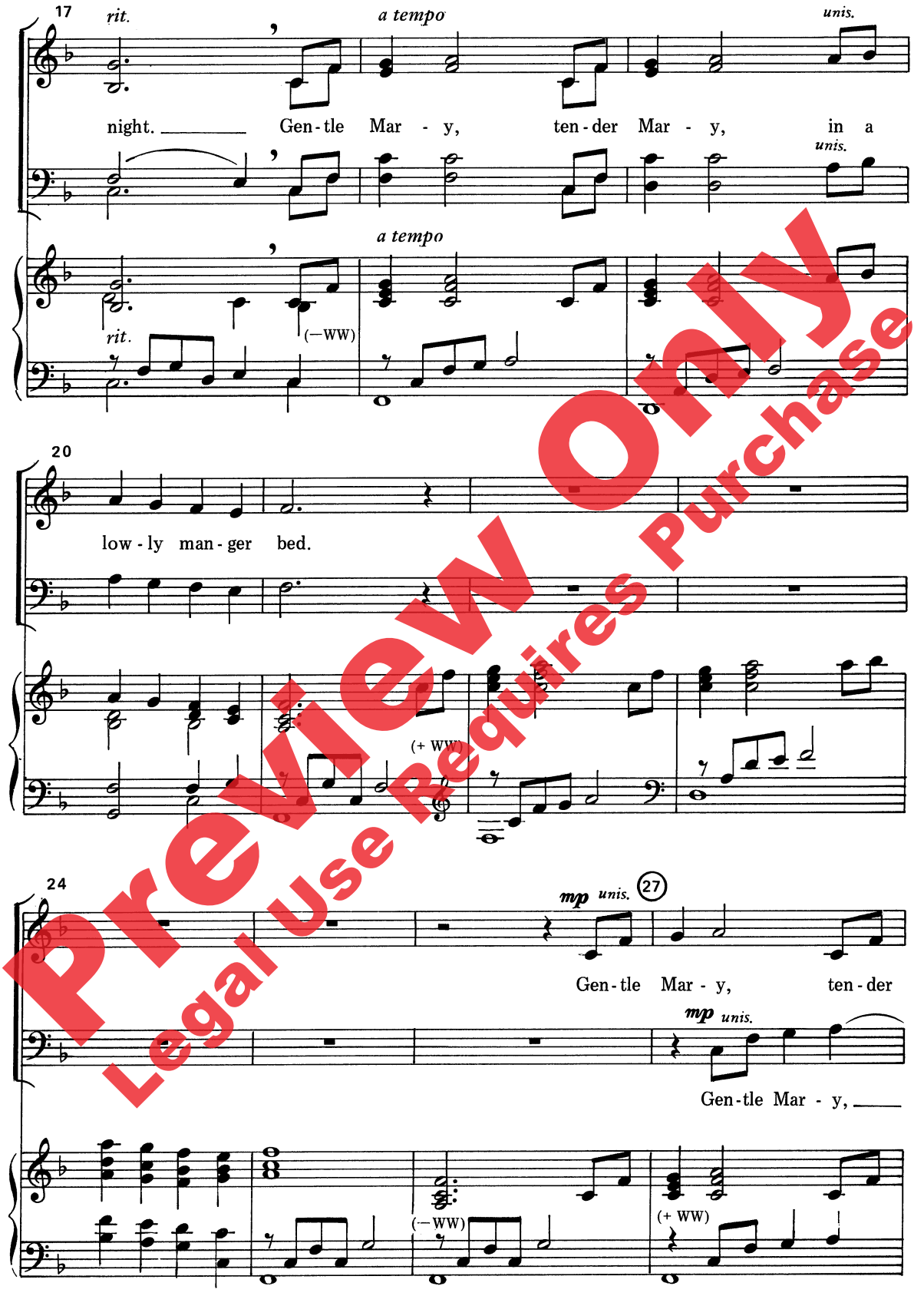

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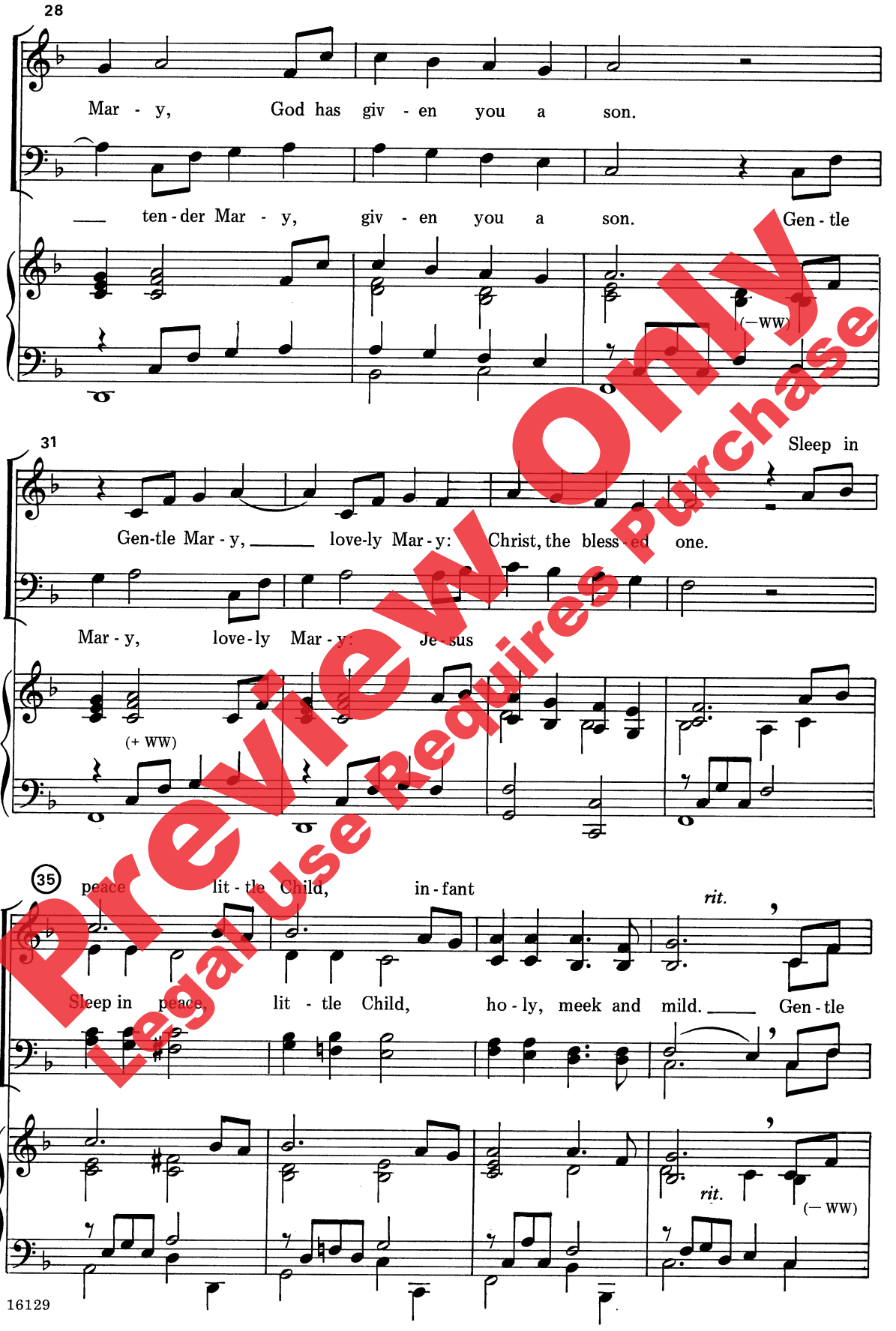

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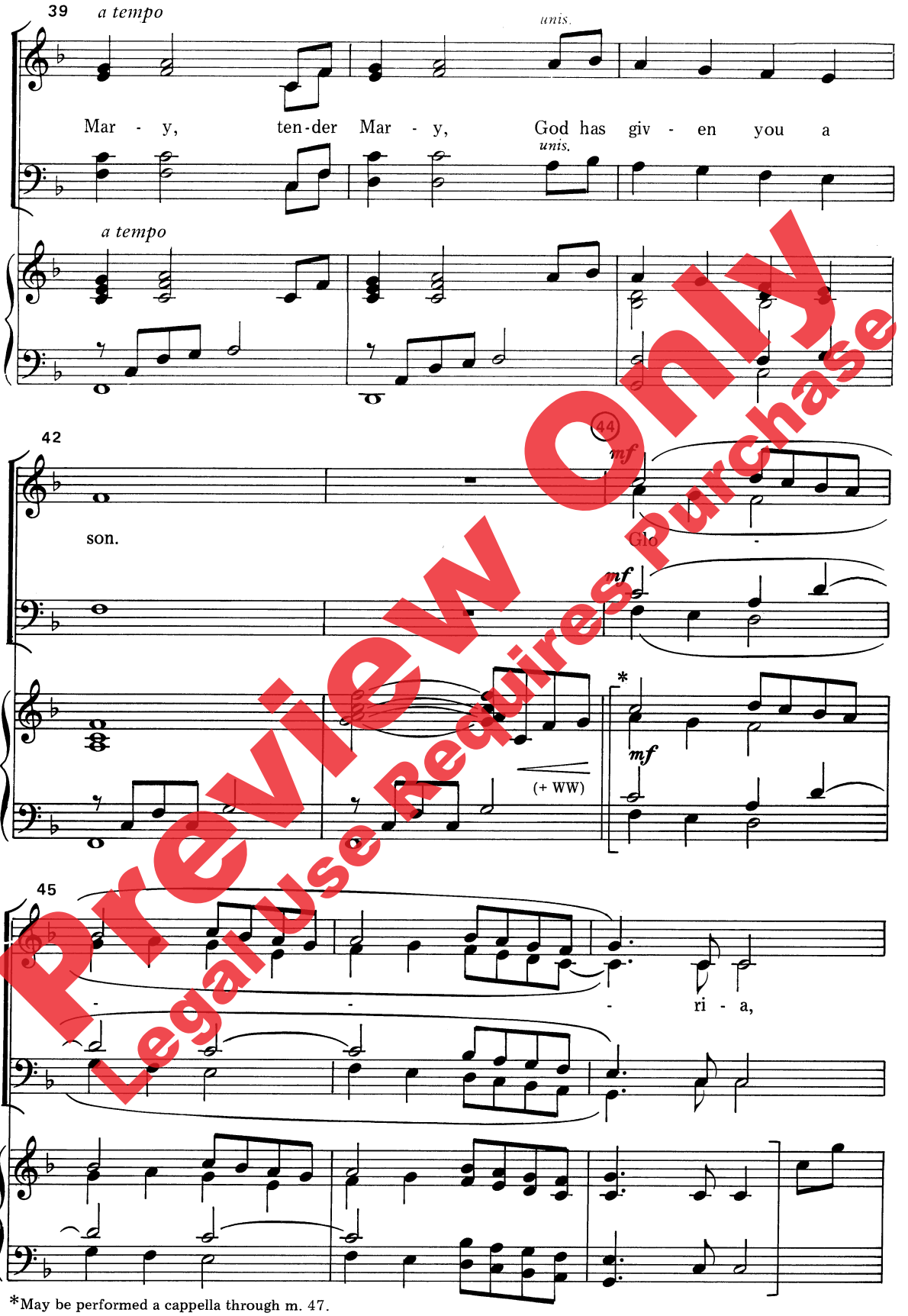

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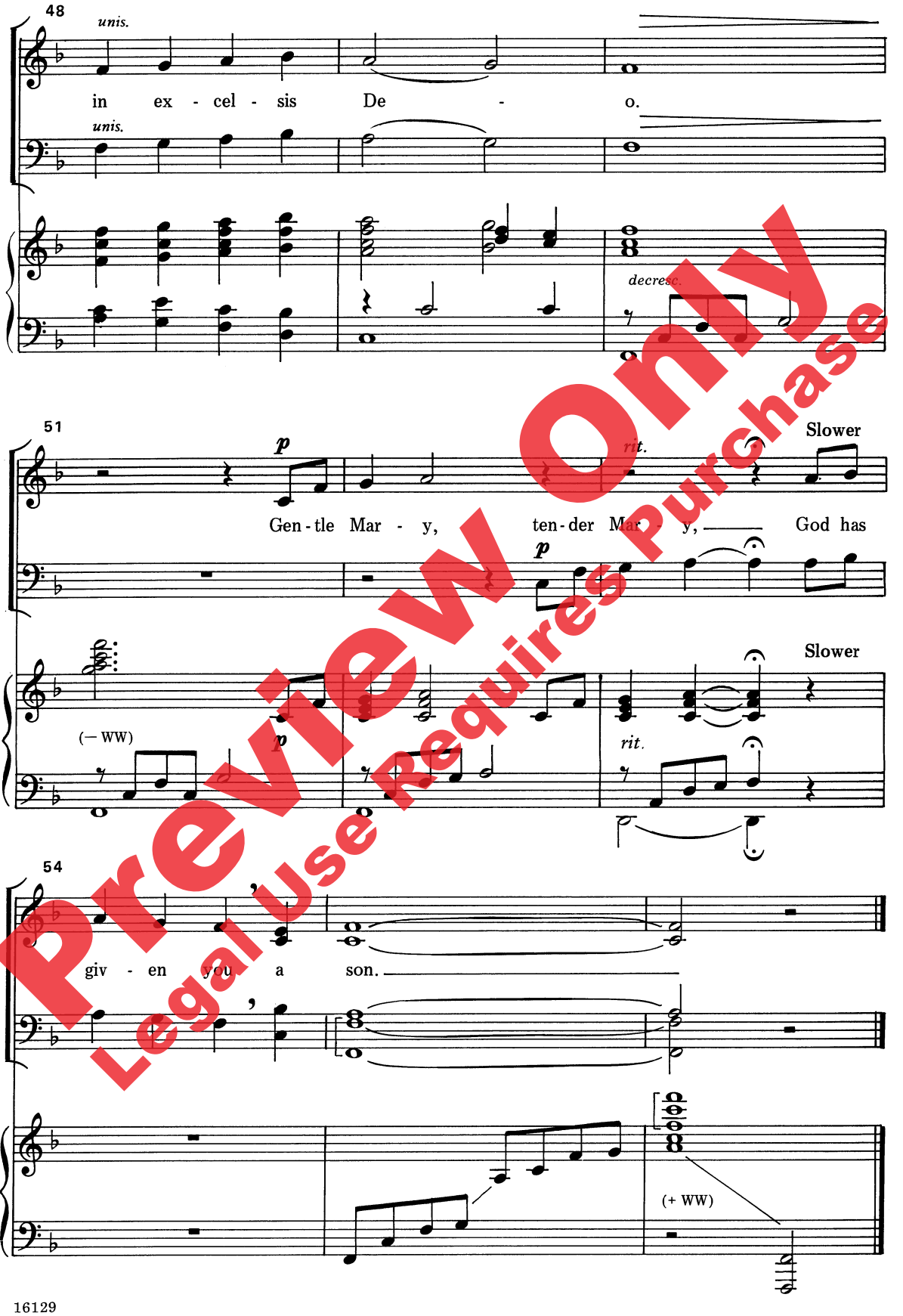
*May be performed a cappella through m. 47.



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FIFTH READING: Luke 2: 8-14

NARRATOR: And there were in the same country
shepherds abiding in the field,
keeping watch over their flock by night.
And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them,
and the glory of the Lord shone 'round about them;
and they were sore afraid.
And the angel said unto them:

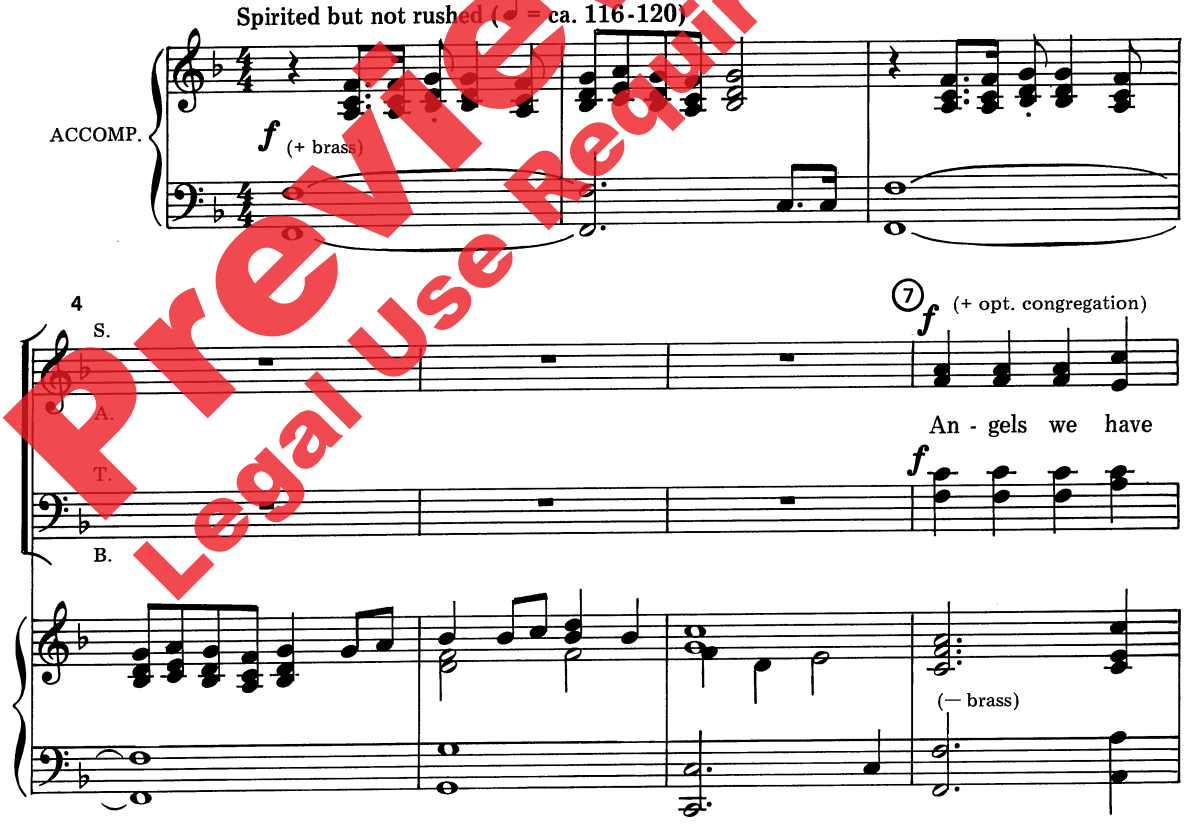
ANGEL: "Fear not: for, behold,
I bring you good tidings of great joy,
which shall be to all people.
For unto you is born this day in the city of David
a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.
And this shall be a sign unto you:
You shall find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes,
lying in a manger.

NARRATOR: And suddenly there was with the angel
a multitude of the heavenly host,
praising God, and saying:

CHOIR: Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace, good will toward men.

6. ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH

TRADITIONAL FRENCH CAROL
Arranged by **JAY ALTHOUSE**



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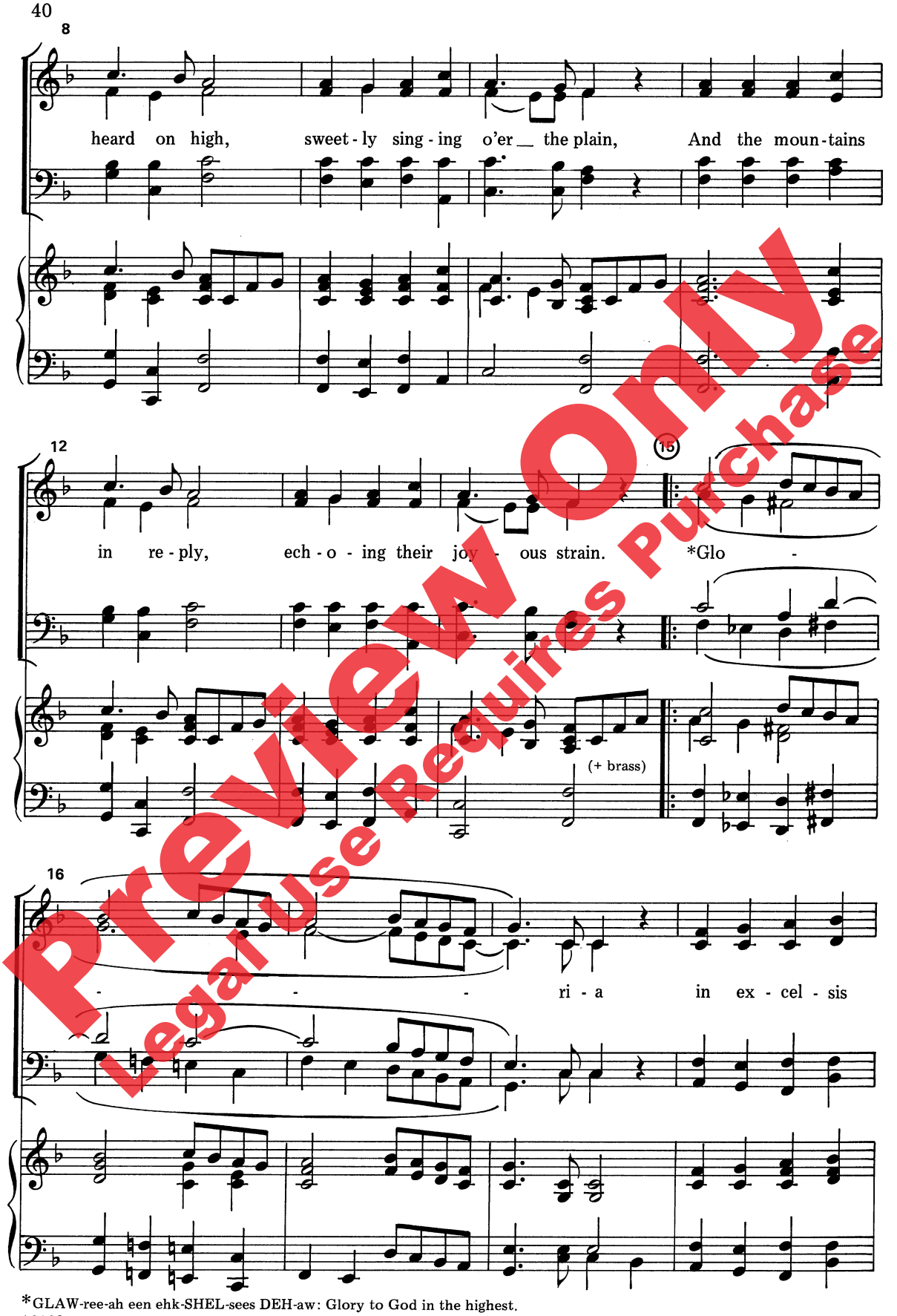

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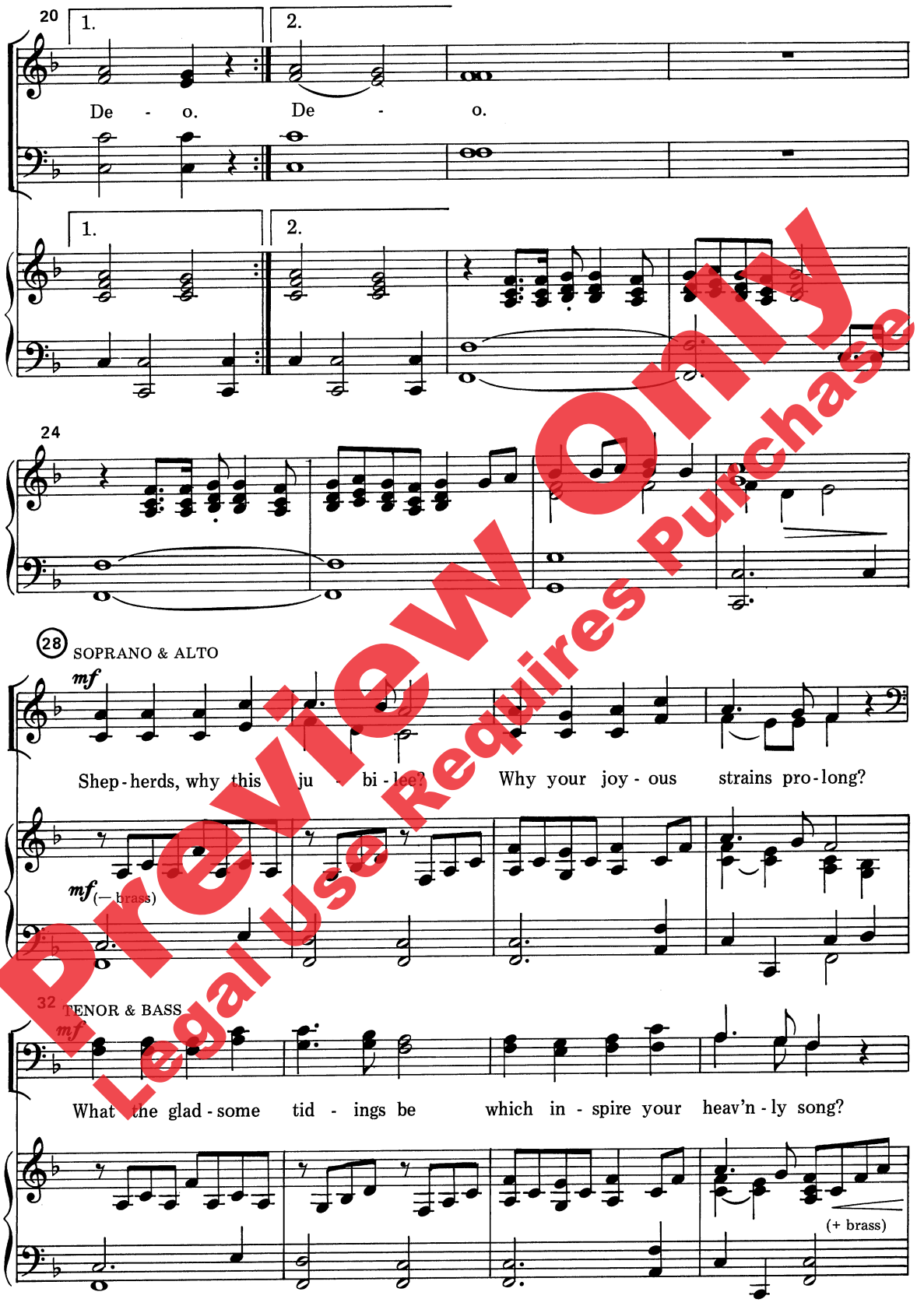
*GLAW-ree-ah een ehk-SHEL-sees DEH-aw: Glory to God in the highest.



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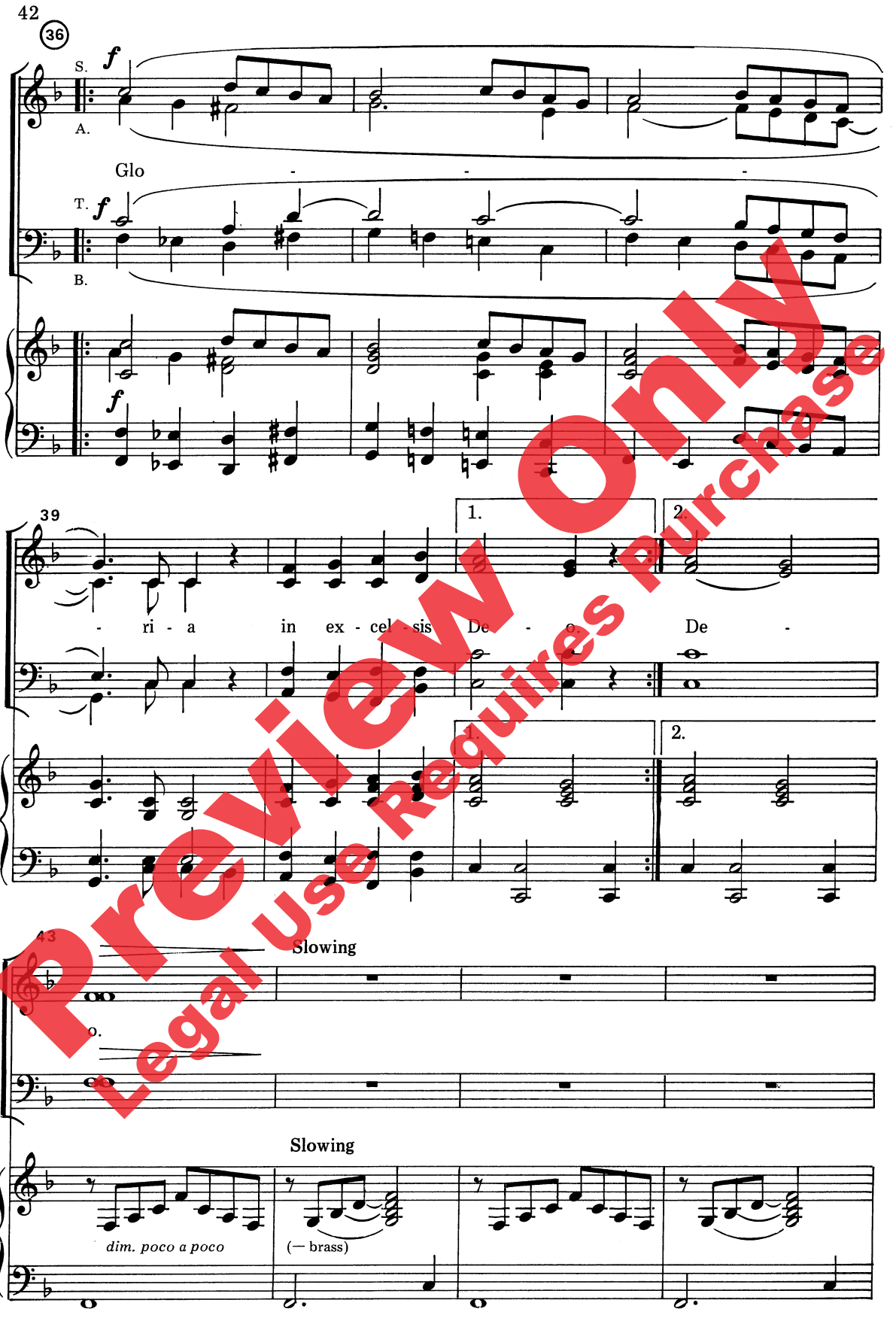

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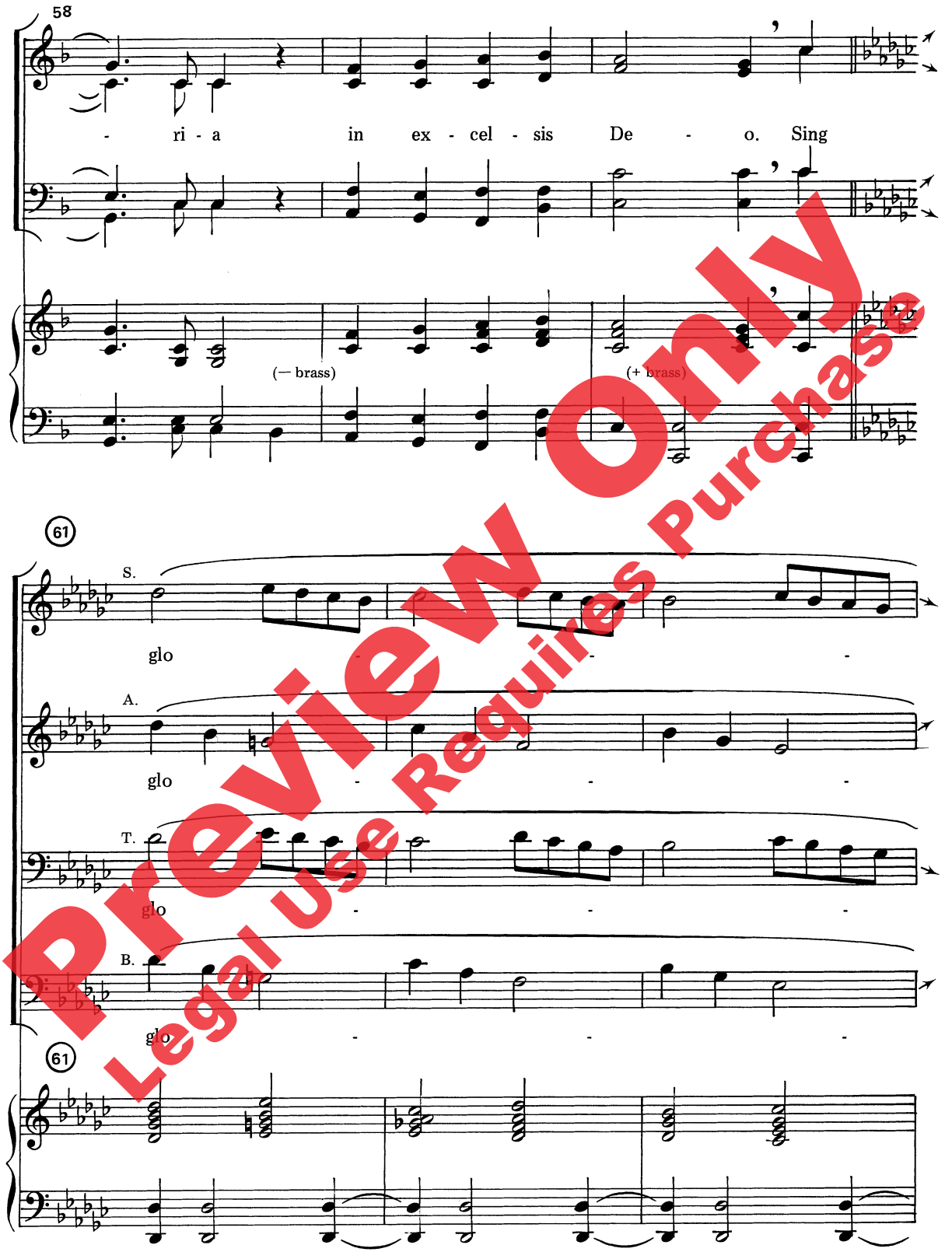

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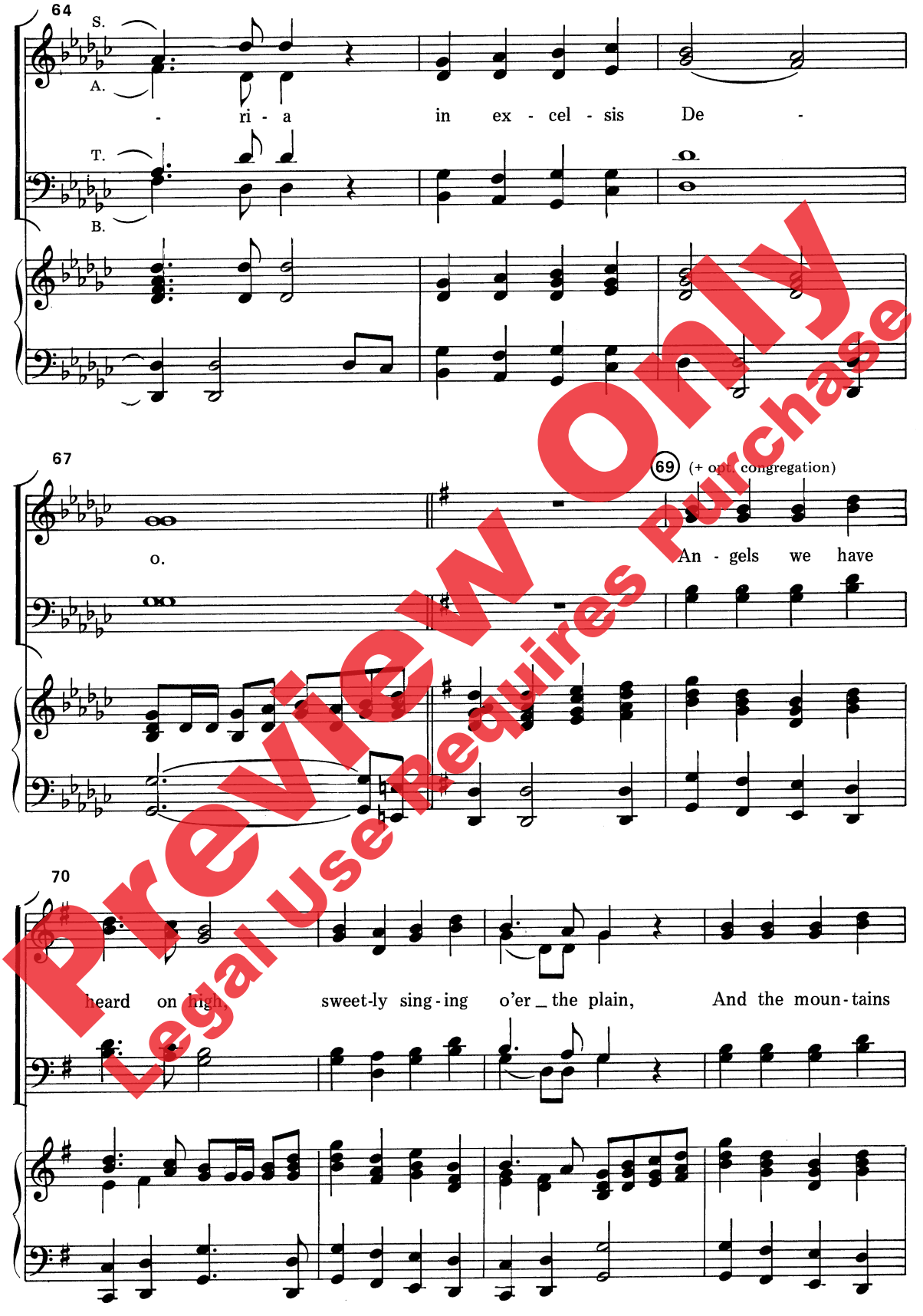

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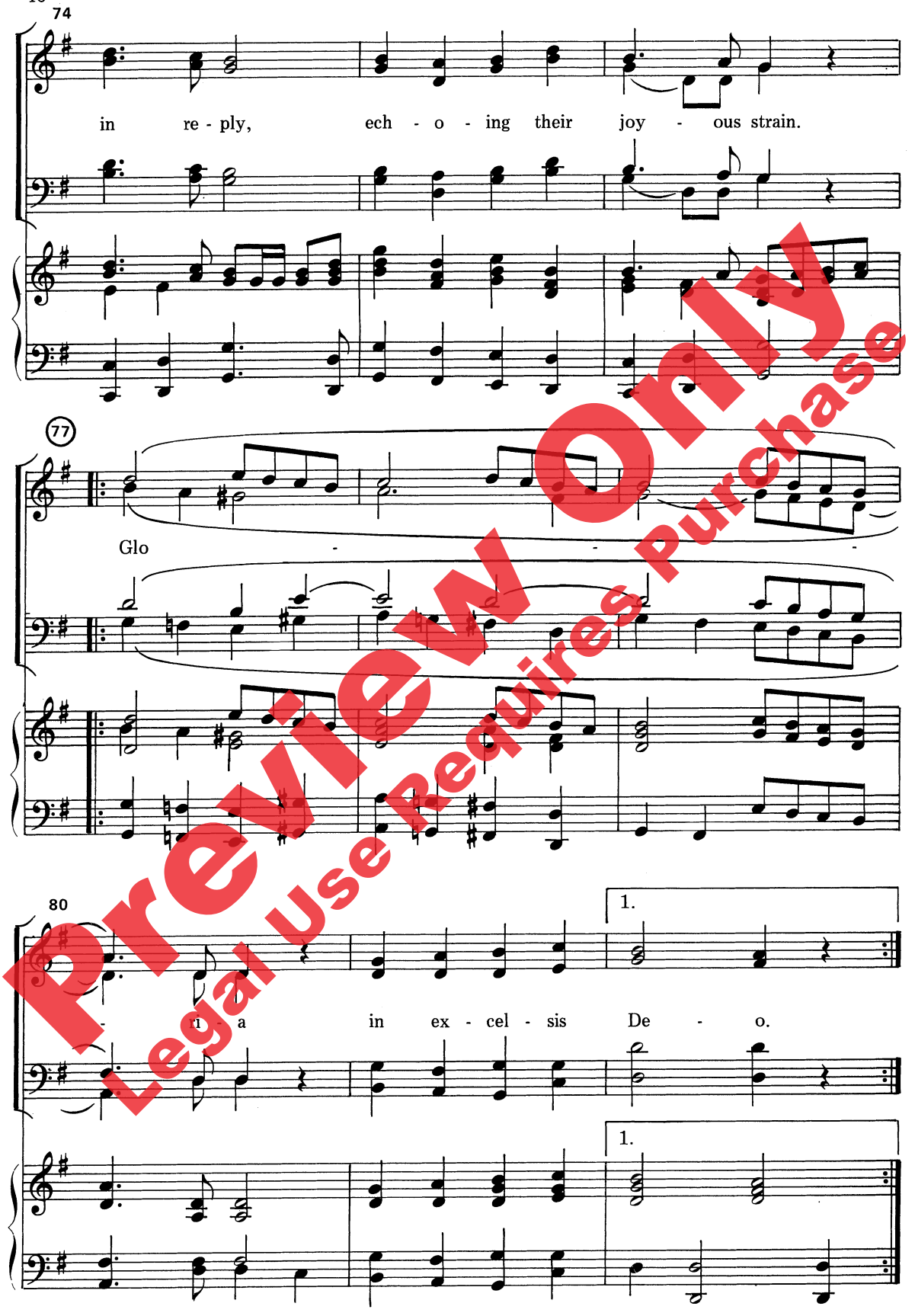

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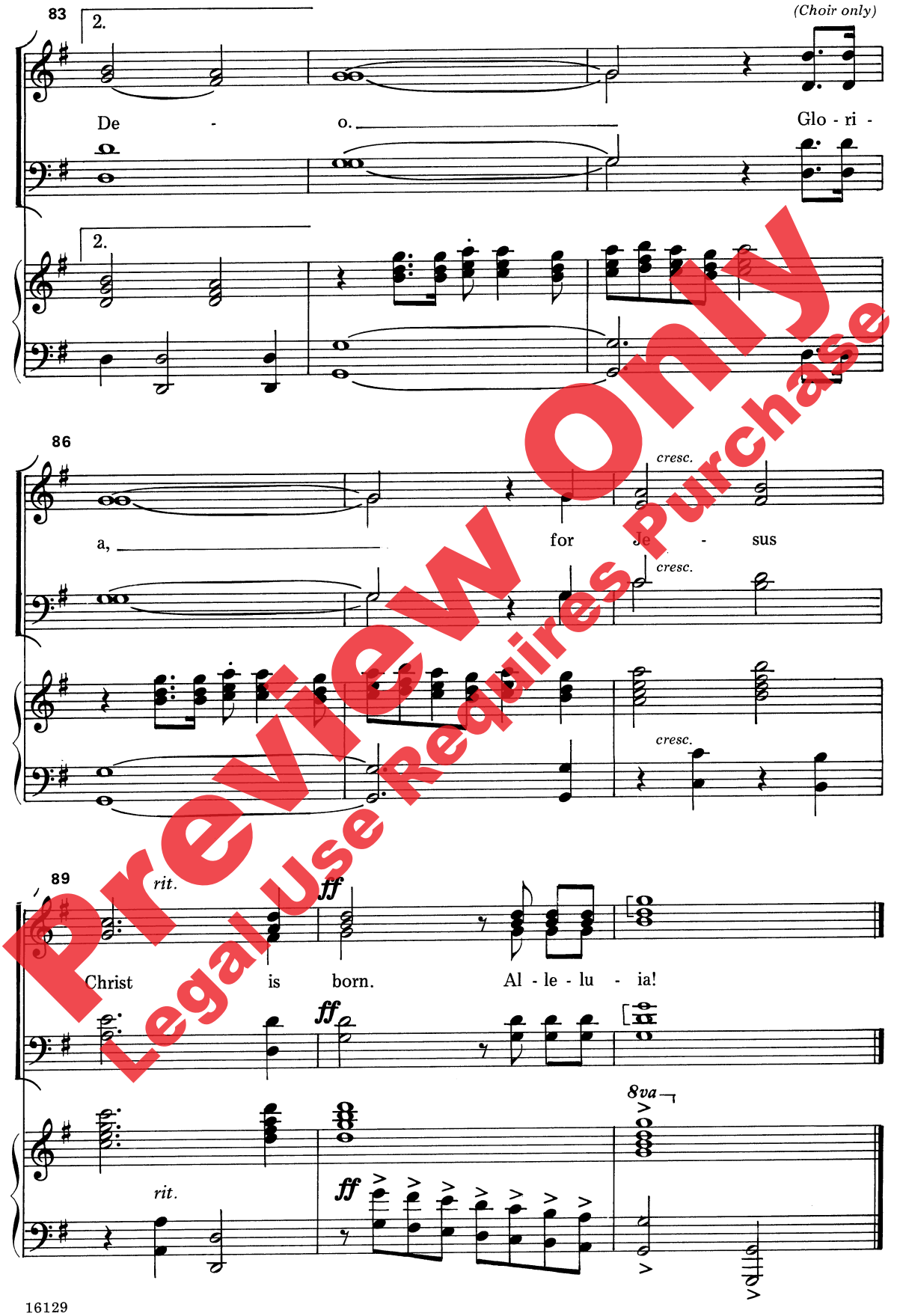

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NIGHT OF WONDER

A Cantata for Advent or Christmas

Words and Music by
JAY ALTHOUSE *and* **SALLY K. ALBRECHT**

Program

1. CHORUS: On a Night of Wonder

FIRST READING: Luke 1: 26-31

2. CHORUS: Let the Christ Child In

SECOND READING: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
9th century Latin text, translated by John M. Neale (1818-1866)
(may be spoken or sung as a vocal solo)

3. CHORUS: Listen Here, Listen Here

THIRD READING: Luke 2: 1-7

4. CHORUS: Once in Royal David's City

FOURTH READING: What Child Is This?
19th century text by William C. Dix (1837-1898)
(may be spoken or sung as a vocal solo)

5. CHORUS: Gentle Mary, Tender Mary

FIFTH READING: Luke 2: 8-14

6. CHORUS: Angels We Have Heard on High
(congregation may join in singing verses 1 & 4)

Verse 1
(choir & congregation)
Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plain,
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strain.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Verses 2 & 3
(choir only)

Verse 4
(choir & congregation)
Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plain,
And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strain.
Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Postlude
(choir only)

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