

Special thanks to these choirs and directors for commissioning *A Vision Unfolding*:

Festival Singers of Florida, directed by Dr. Kevin Fenton; Tennessee Tech University, directed by Dr. Craig Zamer;
VocalEssence, directed by Dr. Philip Brunelle and Dr. G. Phillip Shoultz, III;
University of Dayton, directed by Dr. Steven Hankle; University of Mississippi, directed by Dr. Donald Trott;
Northwest Missouri State University, directed by Dr. Adam Zrust; Florida State University, directed by Dr. Kevin Fenton

Program Note

Reach Down, Lord is the first movement of Pederson's five movement work, *A Vision Unfolding*, for SATB chorus, piano, and spoken word, with optional violin, trumpet, and snare drum. The work is centered broadly around themes of social justice, inviting the listener on an exploration of community, inclusivity, freedom, and justice.

In *Reach Down, Lord* the poet is asking God's spirit to reach down and lift us up—lift us out of the pit, out of the darkness, and lift us to the light...lift us up to justice and wholeness. The rise and fall of the music throughout the piece reflects the text—reaching down, and lifting up. The repetition of the text and melody almost becomes mantra-like, washing over the listener as the piece builds to its dramatic conclusion.

Optional Spoken Word: In *A Vision Unfolding*, this piece is preceded by a spoken word prologue. In this prologue the narrator asks not only God to reach down—but the narrator challenges the listener to reach down...to get into the mess with those who are hurting and to lift them up. So when the choir sings the refrain, "Reach Down, Lord," we hear not only a cry to God, but also an invitation to all of us, to reach down—and out—to another. If you'd like to incorporate the spoken word in your performance of this piece, you can find the text and piano underscore on the ECS website as a free download. Alternatively, you are welcome to craft your own introduction to the piece with original poetry, speech excerpts, etc.

Text

Reach down, Lord.
Reach your justice down.
When we walk on the broken road,
Reach your justice down.

If we stumble into the pit
And the dark is all we see,
Reach below and lift us up;
Reach your justice down.

Reach down, Lord.
Reach your justice down.
When we walk in the shadow of death,
Reach your justice down.

—Robert Bode

Catalog No. 1.3683

Dedicated to all who have the vision and courage to build bridges of care and connection

Reach Down Lord

*from A Vision Unfolding
for SATB Chorus and Piano*

Robert Bode

Kyle Pederson

Contemplatively (♩ = 78)

Piano introduction in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The music is marked *p* (piano). The right hand features a melody of quarter and eighth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes.

Red. harmonically throughout

Continuation of the piano introduction, starting at measure 5. The music is marked *rit.* (ritardando). The right hand has a melodic line with a long note, and the left hand has a bass line with chords.

A *a tempo*
9 *unis. mp*

S
A
T
B

Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken

Vocal entry for the SATB chorus. The Soprano and Alto parts are marked *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *unis.* (unison). The Tenor and Bass parts are silent. The lyrics are: "Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken".

A *a tempo*

mp

Piano accompaniment for the vocal entry, starting at measure 9. The music is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The right hand has a simple harmonic accompaniment, and the left hand has a bass line with chords.

12

S
A

— road. —

T
B

unis. *mp*

Reach down, Lord, reach your jus - tice down, when

15

Solo

accel. **With a sense of urgency** (♩ = 85)

opt Solo or Sop. section *mf*

If we stum - ble

S
A

p

Oo, oo,

T
B

p

Oo, oo,

we walk on the bro - ken road.

accel. **With a sense of urgency** (♩ = 85)

18

Solo

in - to the pit, _____ and the dark _____ is all we see, _____

S
A

oo, _____ oo, _____

T
B

oo, _____ oo, _____

21

Solo

reach be - low and lift us up; _____ reach your jus - tice down, _____

(legato thru m. 23)

p _____ *mp*

S
A

Reach be - low and lift us up; oh, reach your jus - tice,

p _____ *mp*

T
B

Reach be - low and lift us up; oh, reach your jus - tice,

24

Solo

reach your jus - tice down.

reach your jus - tice down. *f* *unis.* Reach down, Lord, reach your

reach your jus - tice down. *f* *unis.* Reach down, Lord, reach your

26

S
A

jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road.

T
B

jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road.

29

S
A

Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken

T
B

Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken

32

Solo

opt Solo or Sop. section *p*

When we walk in the

S
A

road.

T
B

road.

p

35

Solo

shad - ow of death, the shad - ow of death, the shad - ow of death,

38

S
A
T
B

p
When we walk in the shad-ow of death, the shad-ow of death, the shad-ow of death,

p
When we walk in the shad-ow of death, the shad-ow of death, the shad-ow of death,

42

S
A
T
B

mp
Reach be - low, lift us

p *mp*
Reach be-low and lift us up, reach be - low and lift us up,

mp
reach be - low and lift us

p *mp*
reachbe-low and lift us up, lift us up, lift us

46 *cresc.* *molto rit.* C *a tempo*
unis. f

S up, lift us up! Reach down, Lord, reach your

A lift us up, lift us up! Reach down, Lord, reach your

T up, lift us up! Reach down, Lord, reach your

B up, lift us up, lift us up! Reach down, Lord, reach your

mf *f*

molto rit. C *a tempo*

49

S jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road.

A jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road.

T jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road.

B jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road.

52 *mf*

S1 Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, Oh,

S2 Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken

A Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken

T *unis.* Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken

B

55 *f*

S1 oh your jus - tice down, _____

S2 _____ road. Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when

A _____ road. Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when

T _____ road. Reach down, Lord, reach your jus-tice down, when

B

58

S1 jus - tice down, oh, Lord, oh, Lord. Oh, your

S2 we walk on the bro - ken road. Reach down, Lord, reach your

A we walk on the bro - ken road. Reach down, Lord, reach your

T B we walk on the bro - ken road. Reach down, Lord, reach your

61

S1 jus - tice down, jus - tice down, oh, Lord, oh, Lord.

S2 jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road!

A jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road!

T B jus-tice down, when we walk on the bro - ken road!

64 **D**

S
A
T
B

mp

Reach, reach, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

mp

Reach, reach, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

D

mp

66 *unis.*
mp

S
A
T
B

Reach down, Lord, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

reach, reach, reach, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

reach, reach, reach, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

68 *mf*

S reach down, Lord, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

A *mf*
Reach, reach, reach, your jus - tice down, oh —

T *mf*
reach, reach, reach, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

B *mf*
reach, reach, reach, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

mf

70 *cresc. poco a poco*

S oh, — your jus - tice down, —

A *cresc. poco a poco*
reach, down, Lord, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

T *cresc. poco a poco*
reach, reach, reach, reach your jus - tice down, — your jus - tice down, — oh,

B *cresc. poco a poco*
reach, reach, reach, your jus - tice down, oh, —

cresc. poco a poco

72 *f*

S reach your jus-tice down, _ reach your jus-tice down, _

A reach your jus-tice down, _ reach your jus-tice down, _

T reach your jus - tice, reach your jus - tice,

B reach your jus - tice, reach your jus - tice,

74 *cresc.* *rit.* *ff*

S lift us up, Lord! Reach your jus - tice down! *ff*

A lift us up, Lord! Reach your jus - tice down! *ff*

T lift us up, Lord! Reach your jus - tice down! *ff*

B lift us up, Lord! Reach your jus - tice down! *ff*

cresc. *rit.* *ff* *8va*