Composer's Notes

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern (How brightly shines the morning star) has long ranked among my favorite Lutheran chorales. The genesis of this piece lies in a conversation with Dr. William Raabe in which he challenged me to consider writing a suite of interconnected movements that would portray the theological imagery of the seven individual stanzas of the original German chorale text.

The form and sonic world of the suite is partially based on the practices of the French Classical organ tradition, such as the opening *plein jeu*, closing *grand jeu*, and the various genre movements (duo, trio, fugue, *récit*) in the interior movements. Several movements also reflect my love of composing imitative counterpoint in the context of a modern approach to tonality and modality.

Individual movements may be extracted for congregational or liturgical use. If desired, the entire work could be performed liturgically by alternating choral or congregational stanzas with organ movements. The entire work may also be performed in recital as a set of extended variations.

Seven Versets was commissioned by Bill and Nancy Raabe and is dedicated to Bruce A. Bengston, who served as the long-time director of music and organist at Luther Memorial Church in Madison, Wisconsin.

The total performance time is approximately 15:30".

Tom Mueller
Lake Forest, California
July 2020

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Catalog No. 9138

To celebrate the gifts and ministry of Bruce A. Bengtson
As commissioned by Bill and Nancy Raabe

Seven Versets on

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern

How Brightly Beams the Morning Star

Tom Mueller (b. 1985)

I. "Wie schön leuchtet . . ."

Sw: Foundations and Mixtures 16', 8', 4'
Gt: Foundations and Mixtures 16', 8', 4', Sw. to Gt.
Ped: Foundations and Solo Trumpet

Translation: How brightly shines . . .

Tune and text: *WIE SCHÖN LEUCHTET*, Philipp Nicolai, 1556–1608, and written in 1599 (PD).

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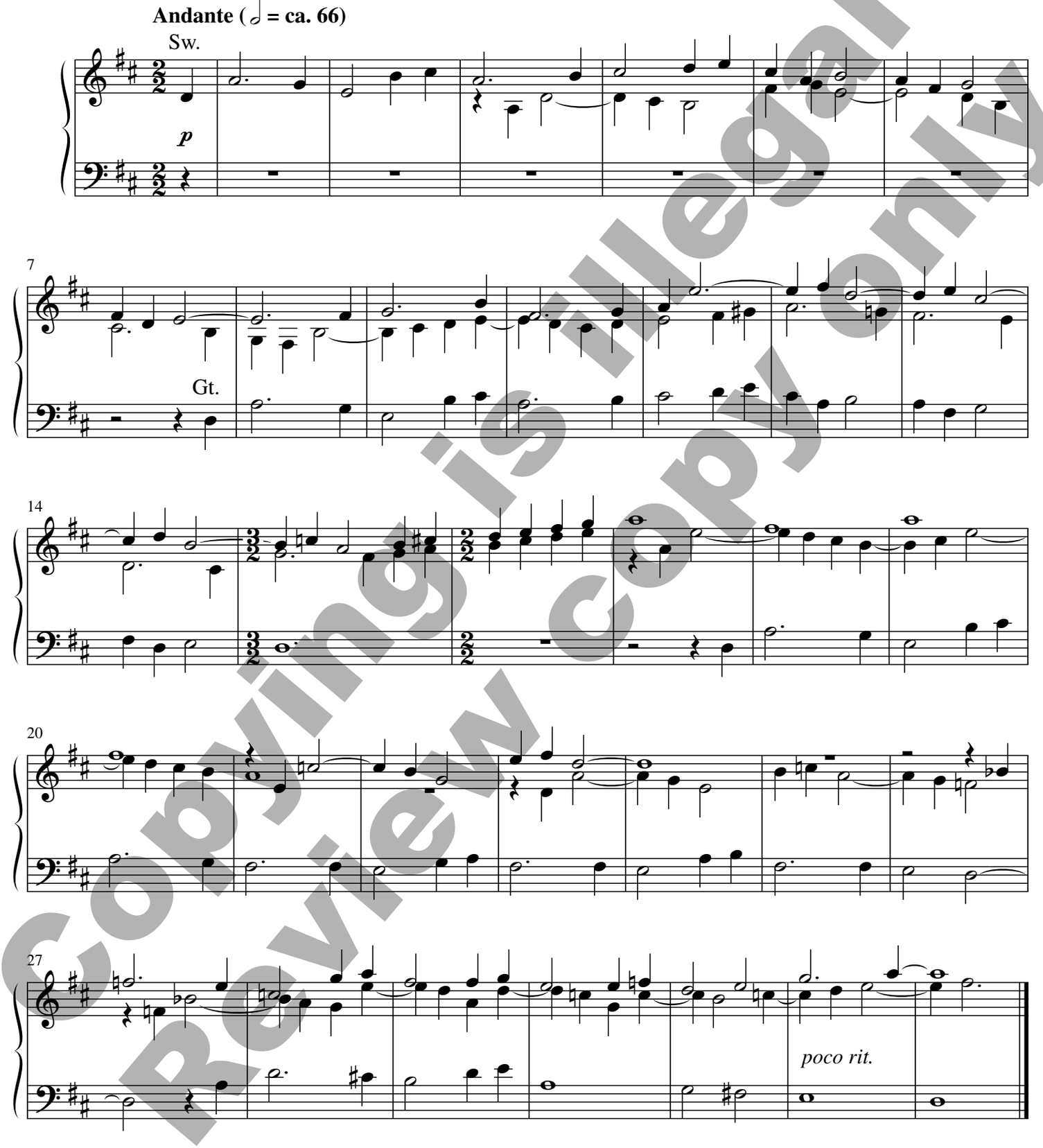
II. “Dein süßes Evangelium . . .”

Sw: Flute 4'
Gt: Soft Foundations 4'



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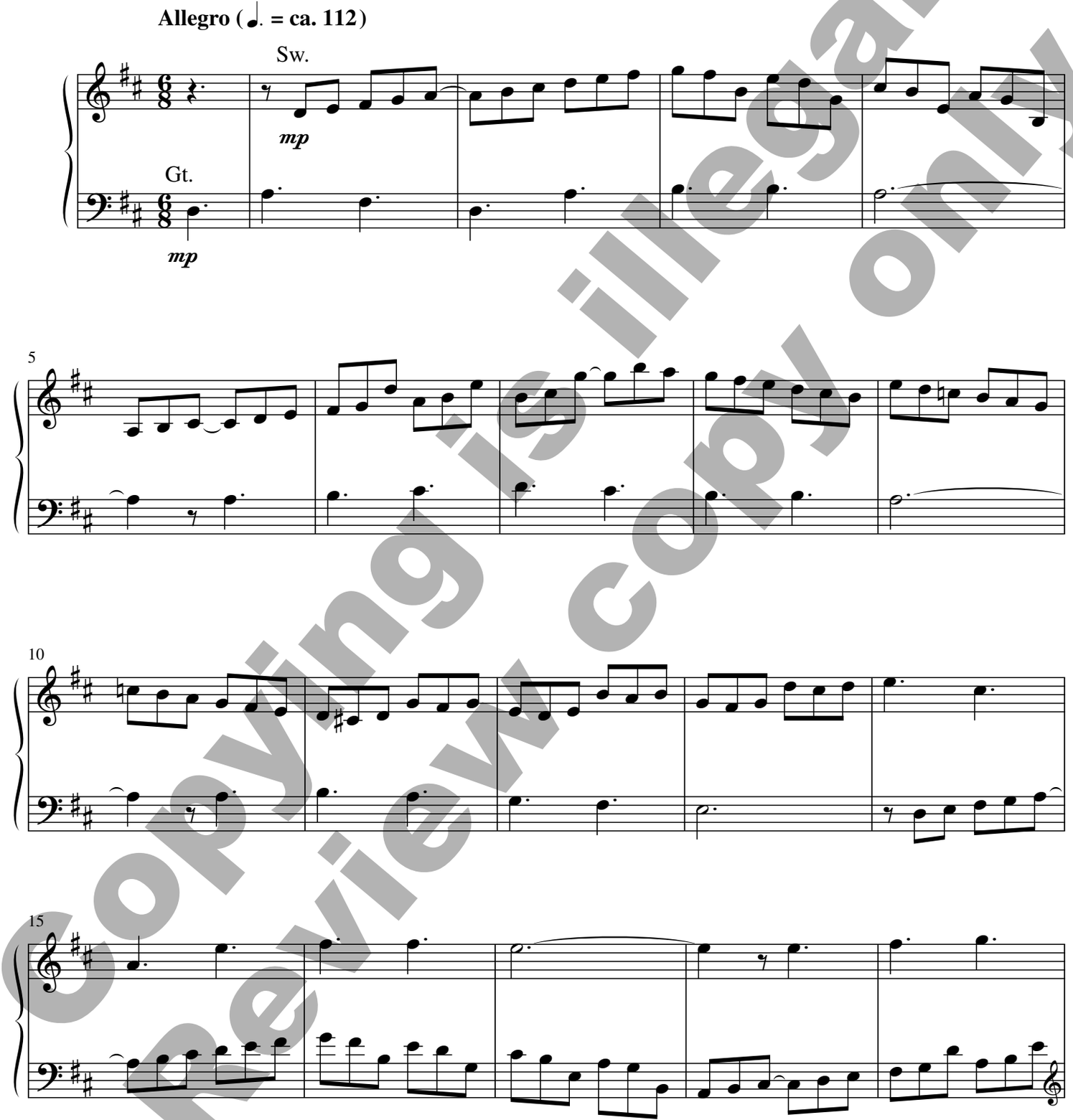
Translation: Your sweet Gospel . . .

III. “Die Flamme deiner Liebe . . .”

Sw: Cornet or similar solo color
Gt: Flutes 8', 4' or solo color



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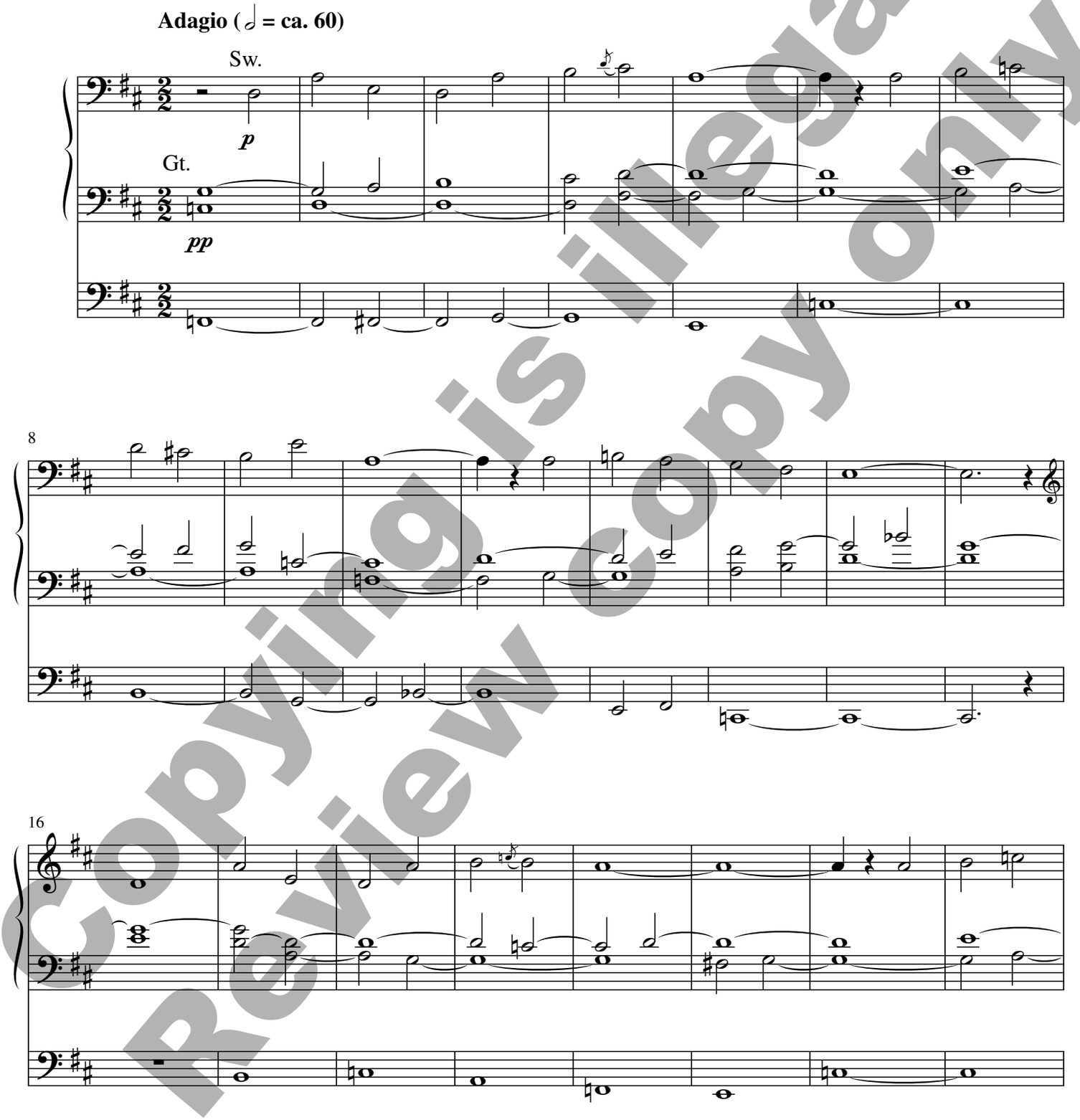
Translation: The flame of your love . . .

IV. “Werd’ von Gnaden . . .”

Sw: Oboe 8'
Gt: Soft Foundations 8'
Ped: Soft Foundations 8', 4'



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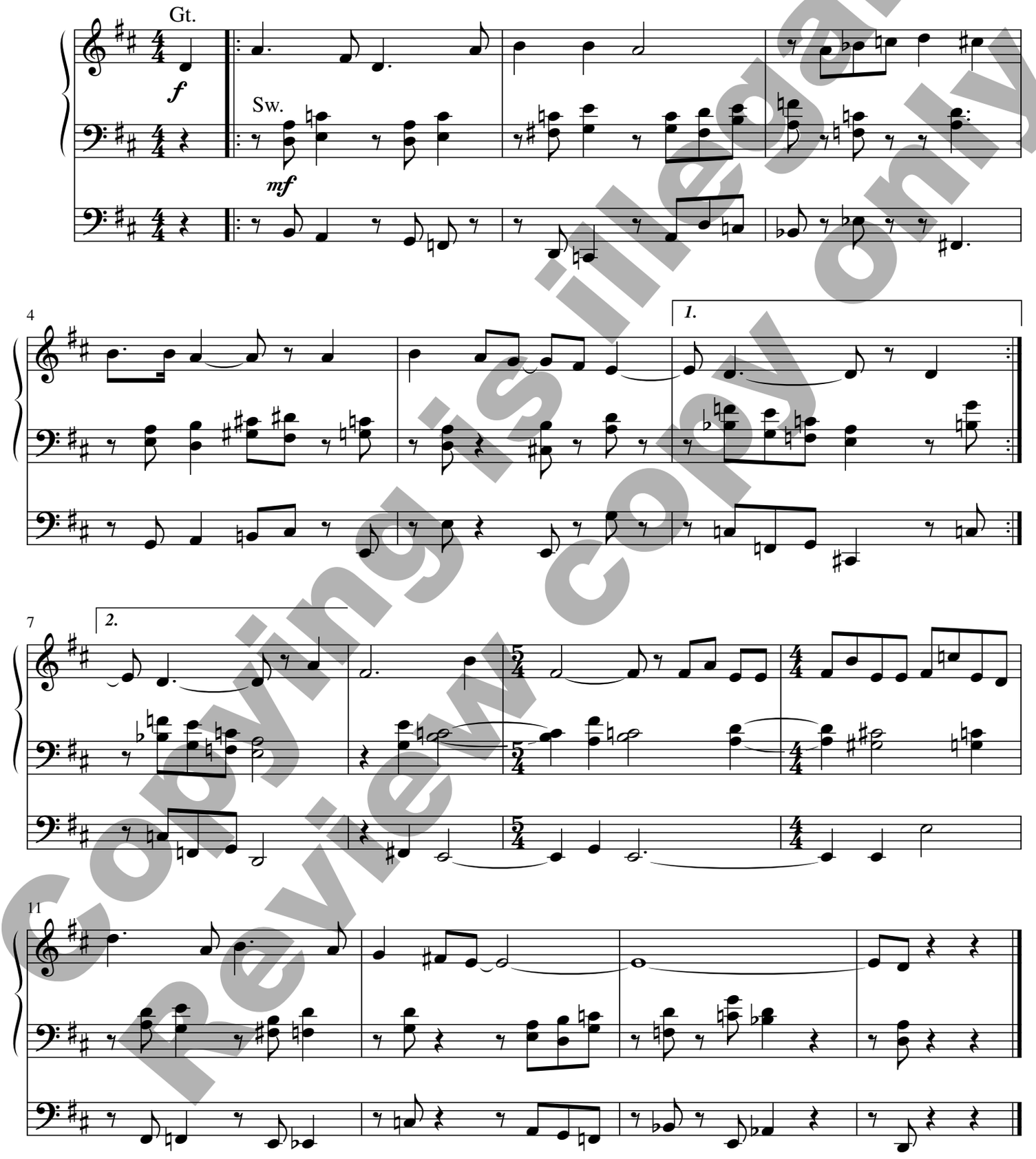
Translation: In your grace . . .

V. ". . .Vater, mein starker Held"

Sw: Foundations 8', 4'
Gt: Solo Trumpet 8'
Ped: Foundations 16', 8', Sw. to Ped.

Moderato, ritmico (♩ = ca. 84)



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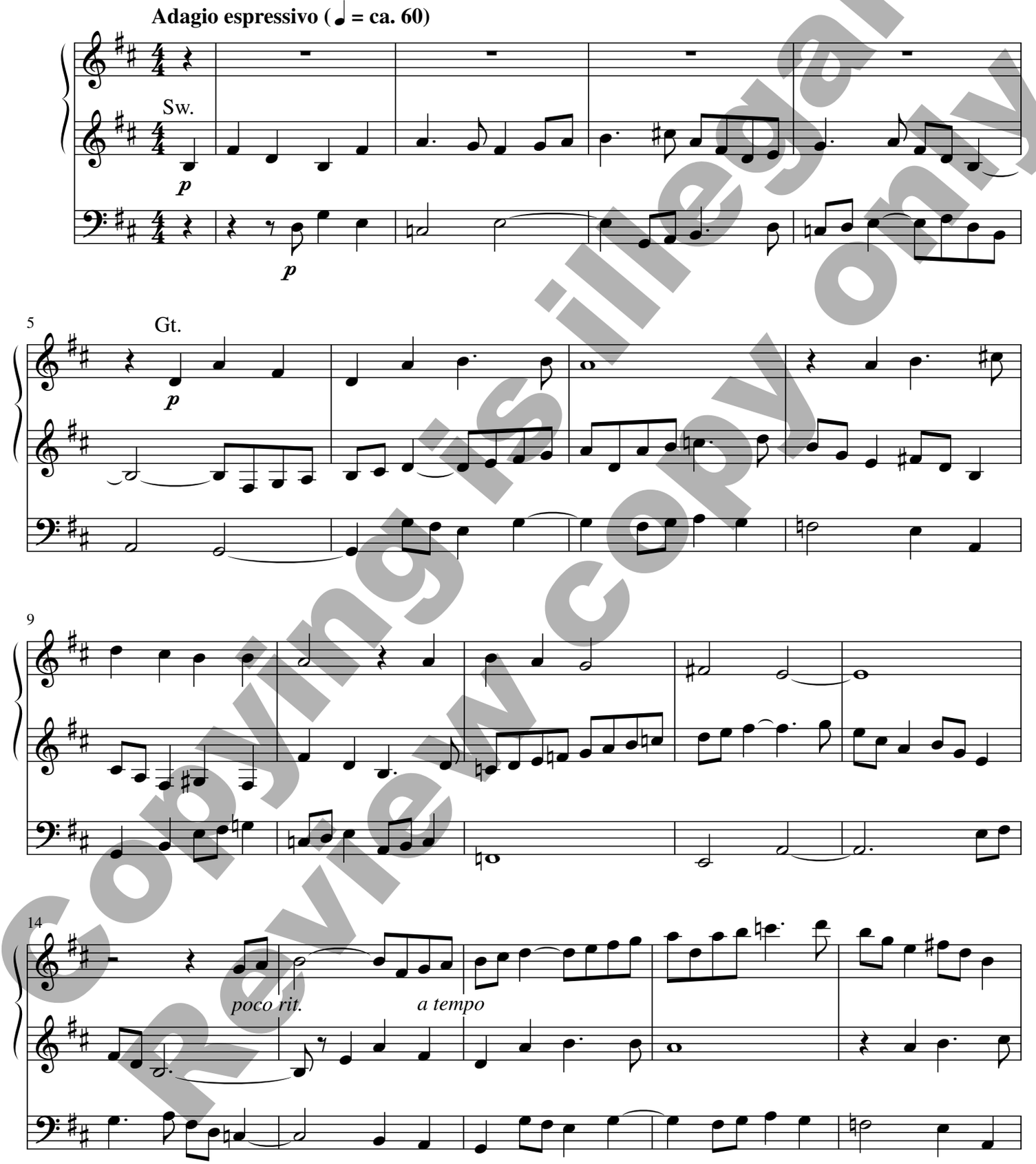
Translation: . . . Father, my mighty hero

VI. ". . . die süße Musika"

Sw: Principal or Foundation 8'
Gt: Flute 8'
Ped: Flutes 16', 8'



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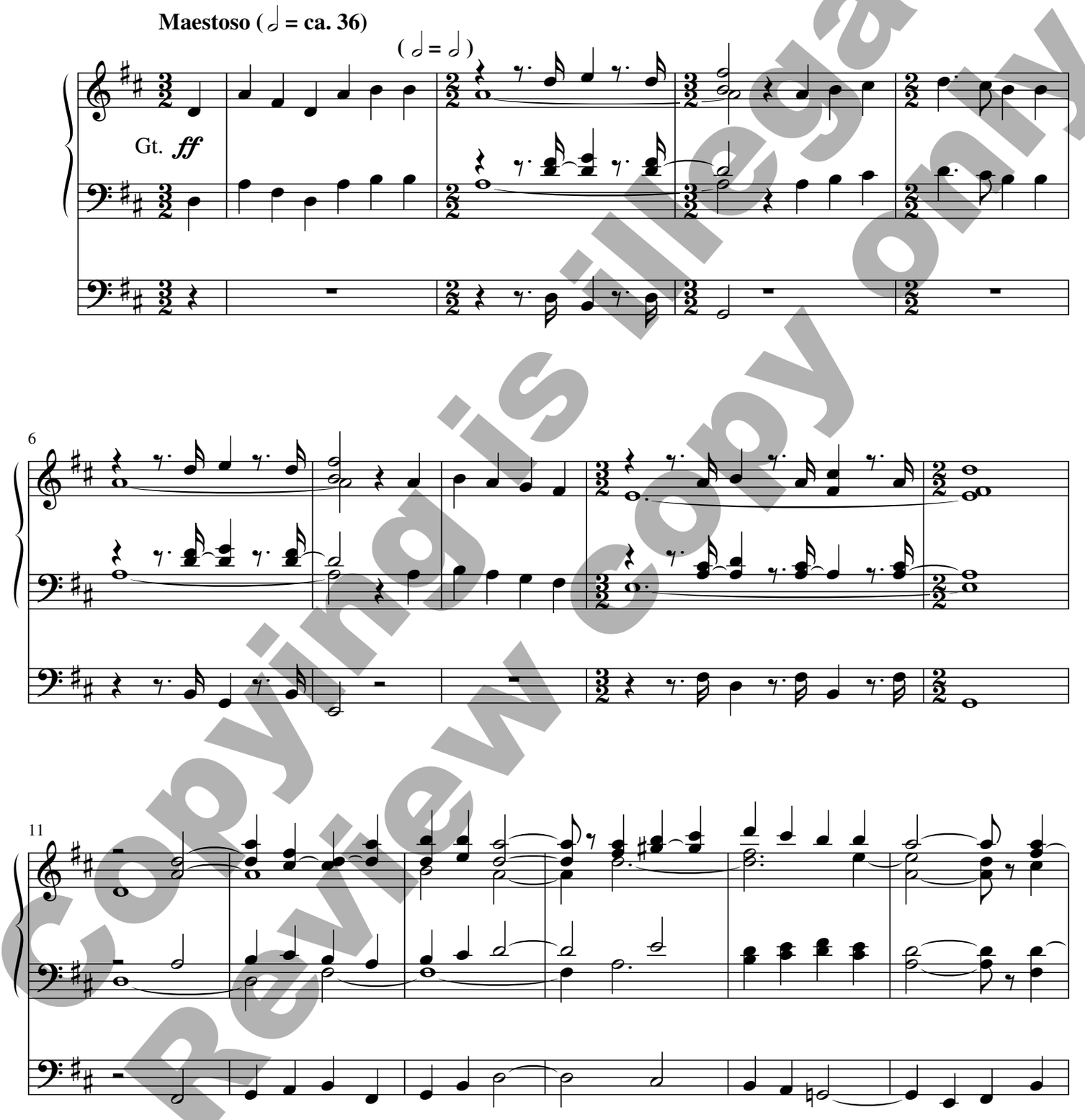
Translation: . . .The sweet music

VII. “Wie bin ich doch so herzlich froh”

Sw: Foundations and Reeds 16', 8', 4', Cornet
Gt: Foundations and Reeds 16', 8', 4', Cornet, Sw. to Gt.
Ped: Foundations and Reeds 16', 8', Gt. to Ped, Sw. to Ped.



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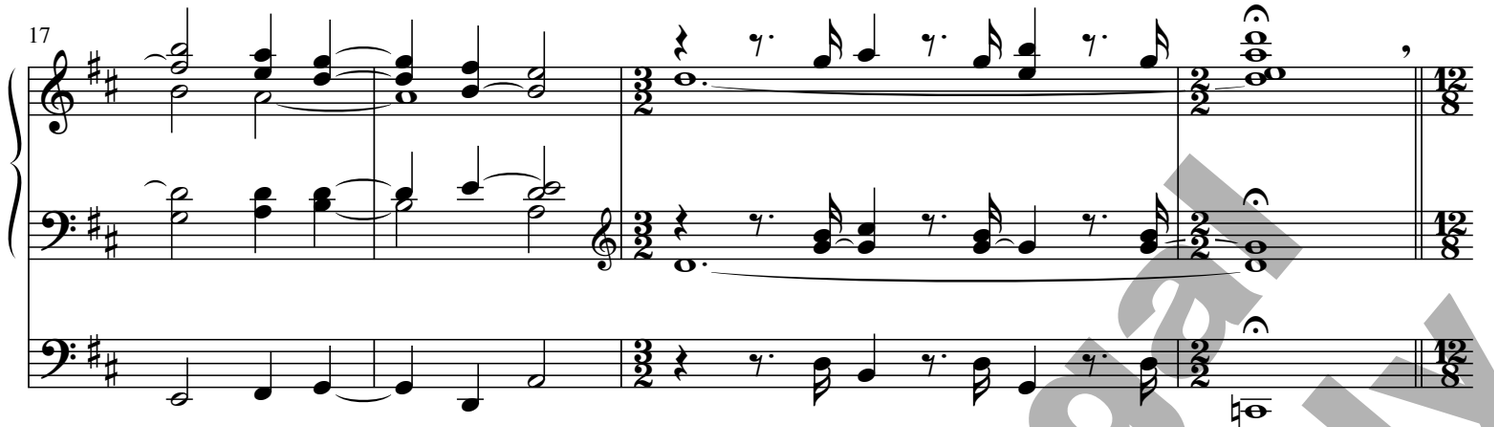
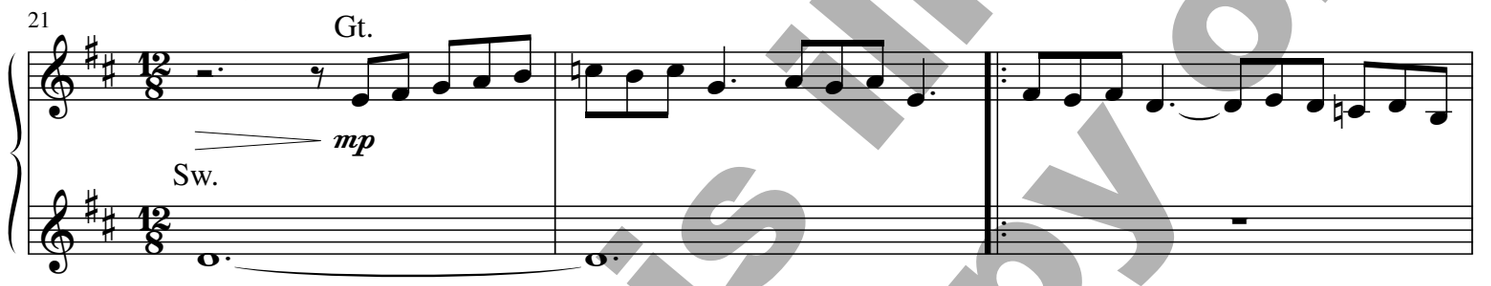
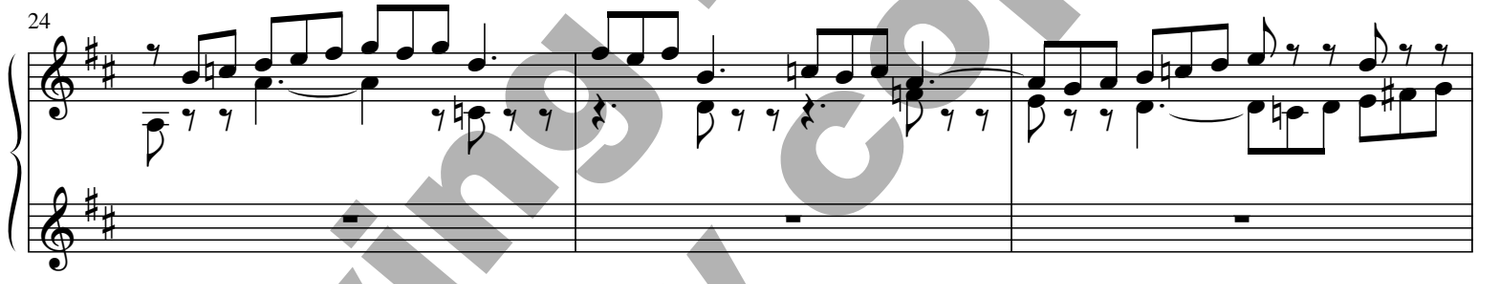
Translation: How truly joyful I am...

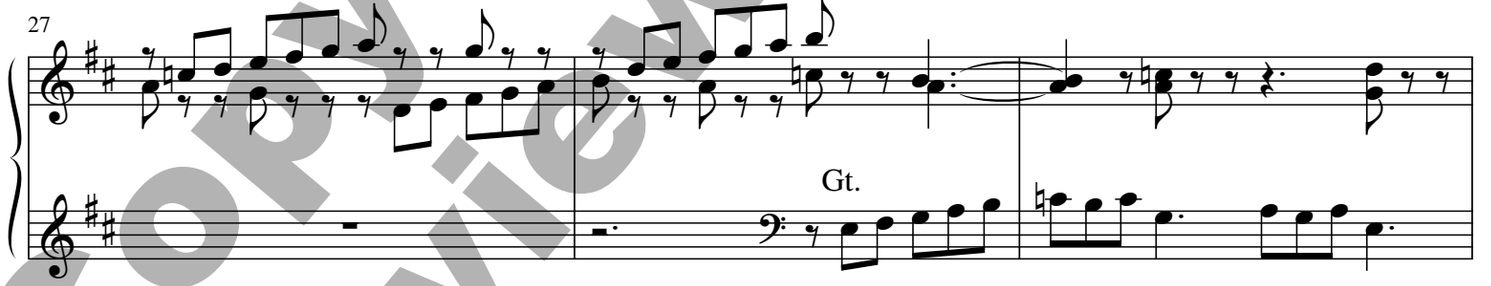


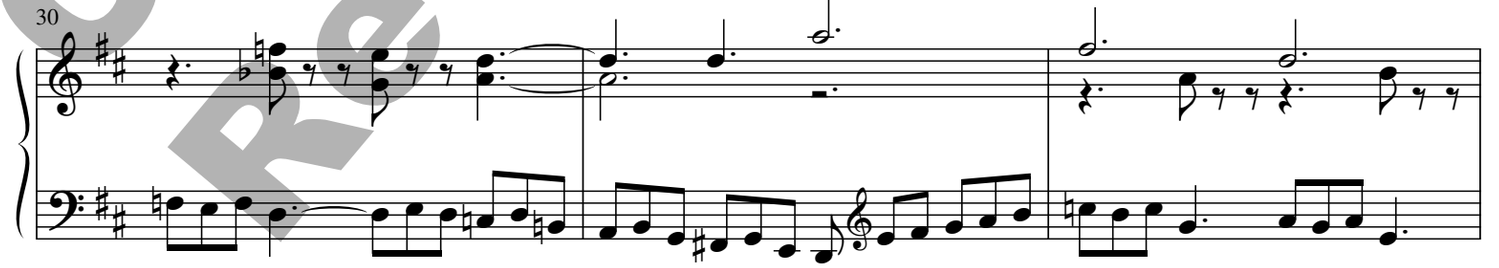
Sw: As before, close box to reduce
Gt: Principals 8', 4', 2', Sw. to Gt.
Ped: Foundations 16', 8', Sw. to Ped.

Vivace (♩. = ca. 138)









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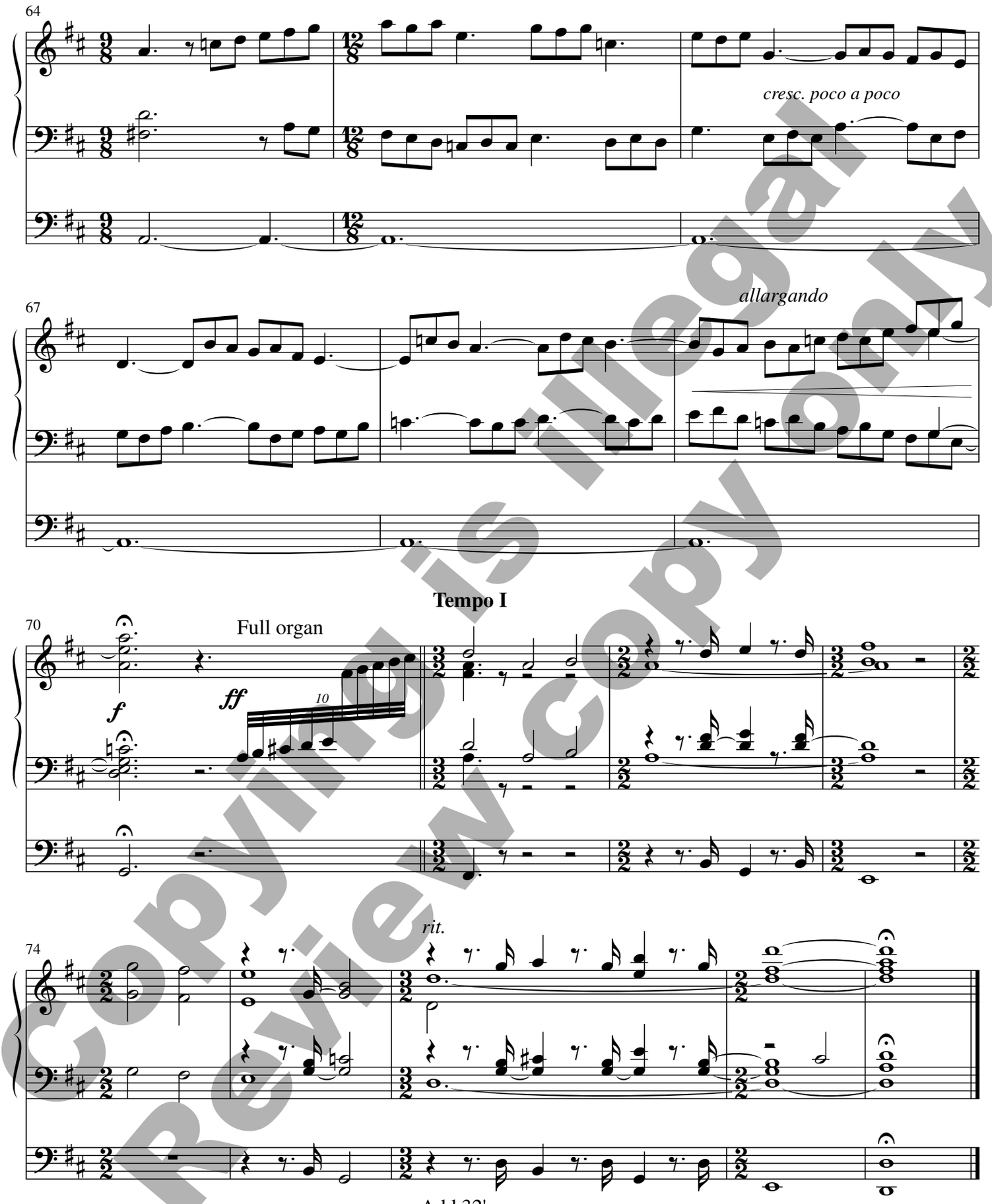

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15:30