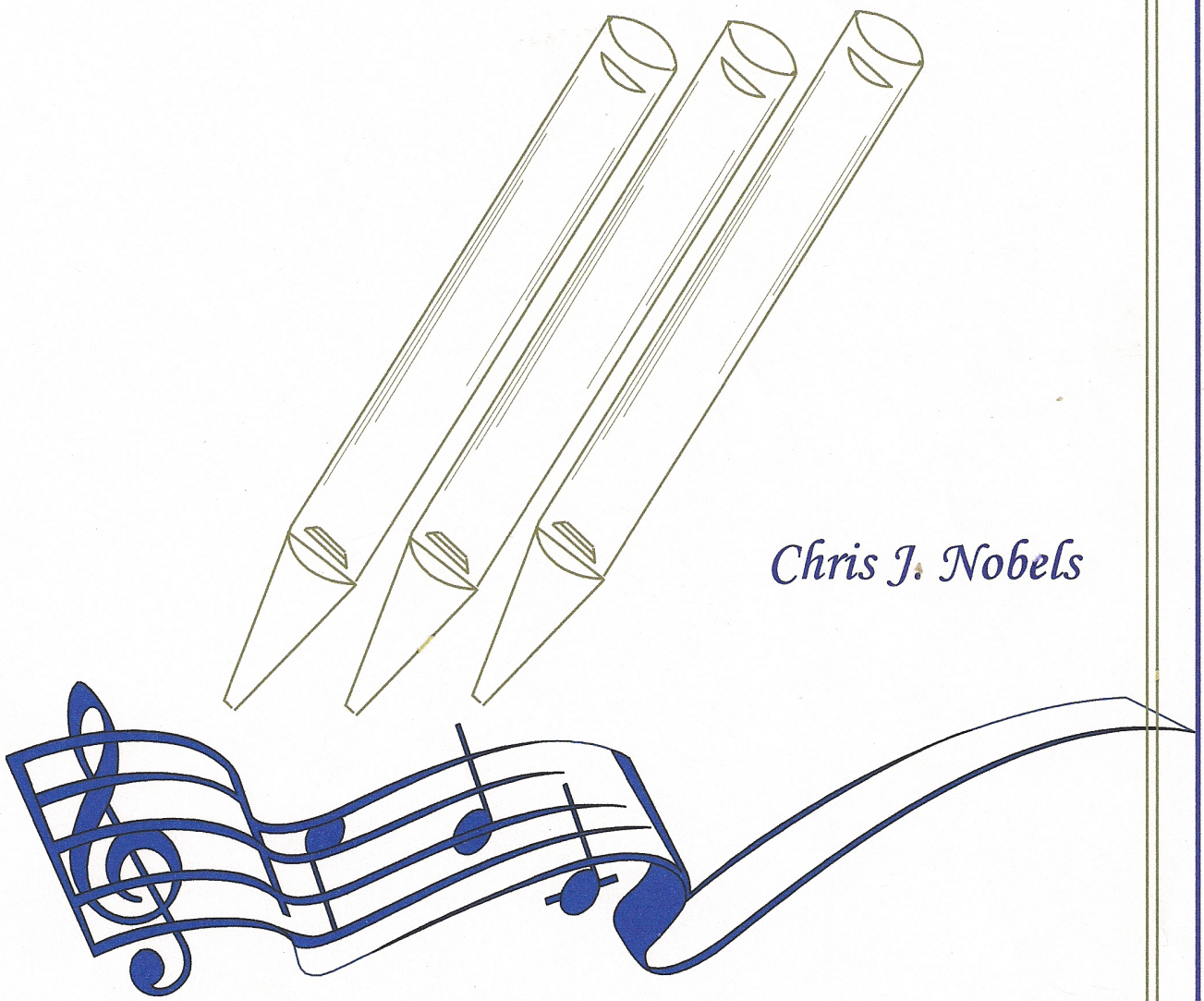
Spirit – Faith – Assurance

Three Compositions for Organ on Three Inter-related Hymns



Chris J. Nobels

To my dear wife Caroline for her unceasing support and encouragement

Composer's Notes: 12 May 2003

The Three Hymns in this book are inter-related as follows Spirit – Faith – Assurance

The Holy **Spirit** works **Faith** and by Faith we have **Assurance** of salvation

The compositions have been written in keys to allow the three pieces to be performed in sequence without awkward key changes.

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1. *Hymn 38* *(Anglo-Genevan Psalter) A hymn about the Holy Spirit* *Tune: Winchester New*

In this composition there are 7 variations preceded by a lively introduction and followed by the chorale a total of 9 elements.
Variation 1 is in the form of a trio. The melody in the right hand, a counter melody in the left while the pedal has its own independent part. This variation represents "The Spirit sent from heav'n above"
Variation 2 has the melody ornamented with triplets and indicates the gifts that are poured out by the Spirit.
Variation 3 changes the mood suddenly. Even when we know the Spirit we can still get down at times when we realize that we really don't know how to pray. This is indicated by a change in the key to the minor, giving a dramatic effect.
Variation 4 maintains the minor key, but the triplets are reintroduced, the tempo is increased and, at the very end of this part, we suddenly are in the major key again.
Variation 5 reflects the joy of realizing that the Spirit perfects our prayers. The melody jumps out in 6/8 time in a dance-like quality.
Variation 6 returns to normal time, but the left hand continues as in variation # 5. Our cause is now the Spirit's cause.
Variation 7 returns to the theme of variation 2 except it is much more robust and is performed at an increased tempo to lead into the finale, the chorale, "O come, Lord Jesus, come, we pray".

The Spirit, sent from heav'n above,
Shows us the way of truth and love.
The Promised One dwells in our hearts;
He light and life to us imparts

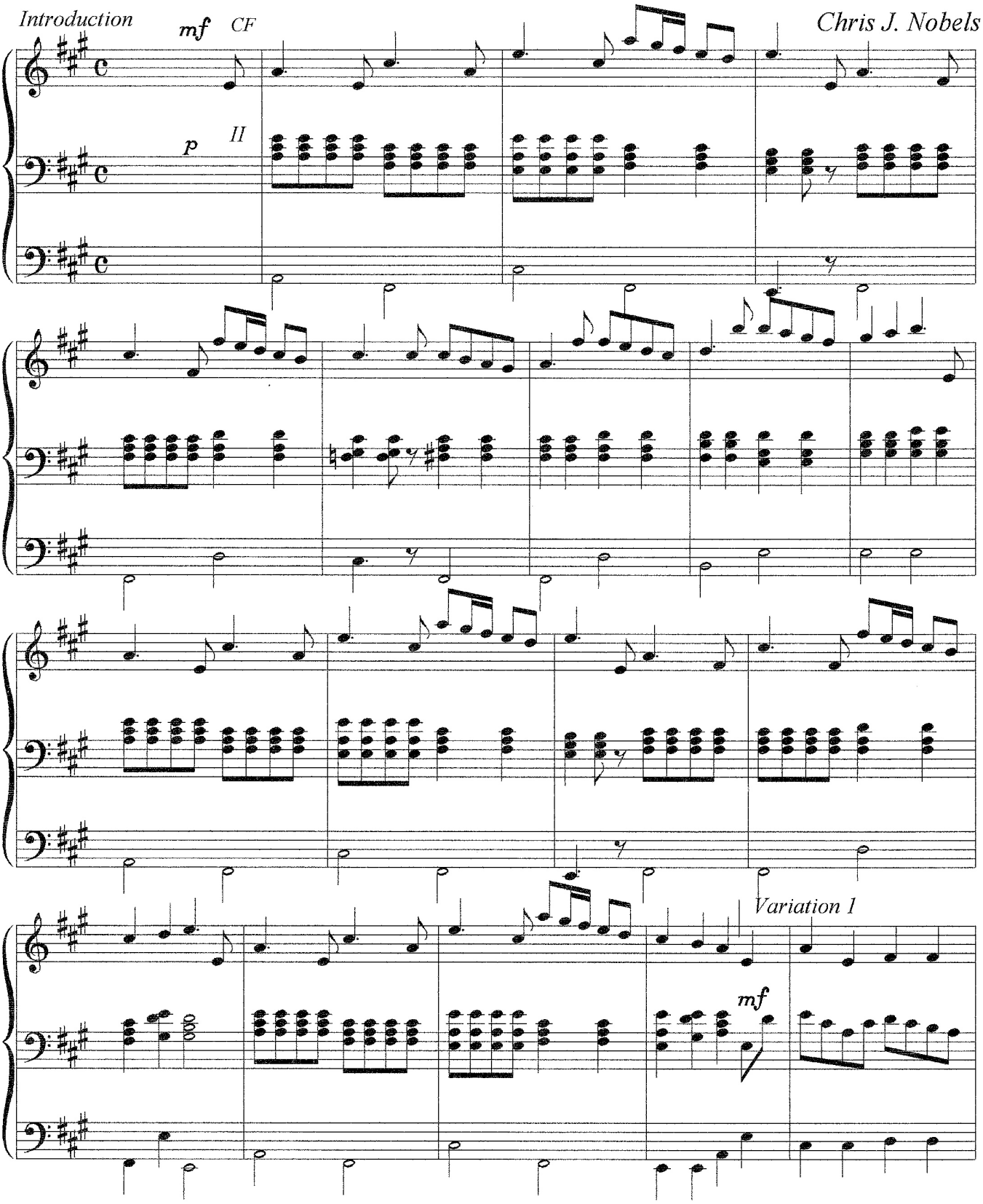
He on the Church of Christ our Lord
His many varied gifts outpoured,
That, without pride or malice, we
Might one another's members be.

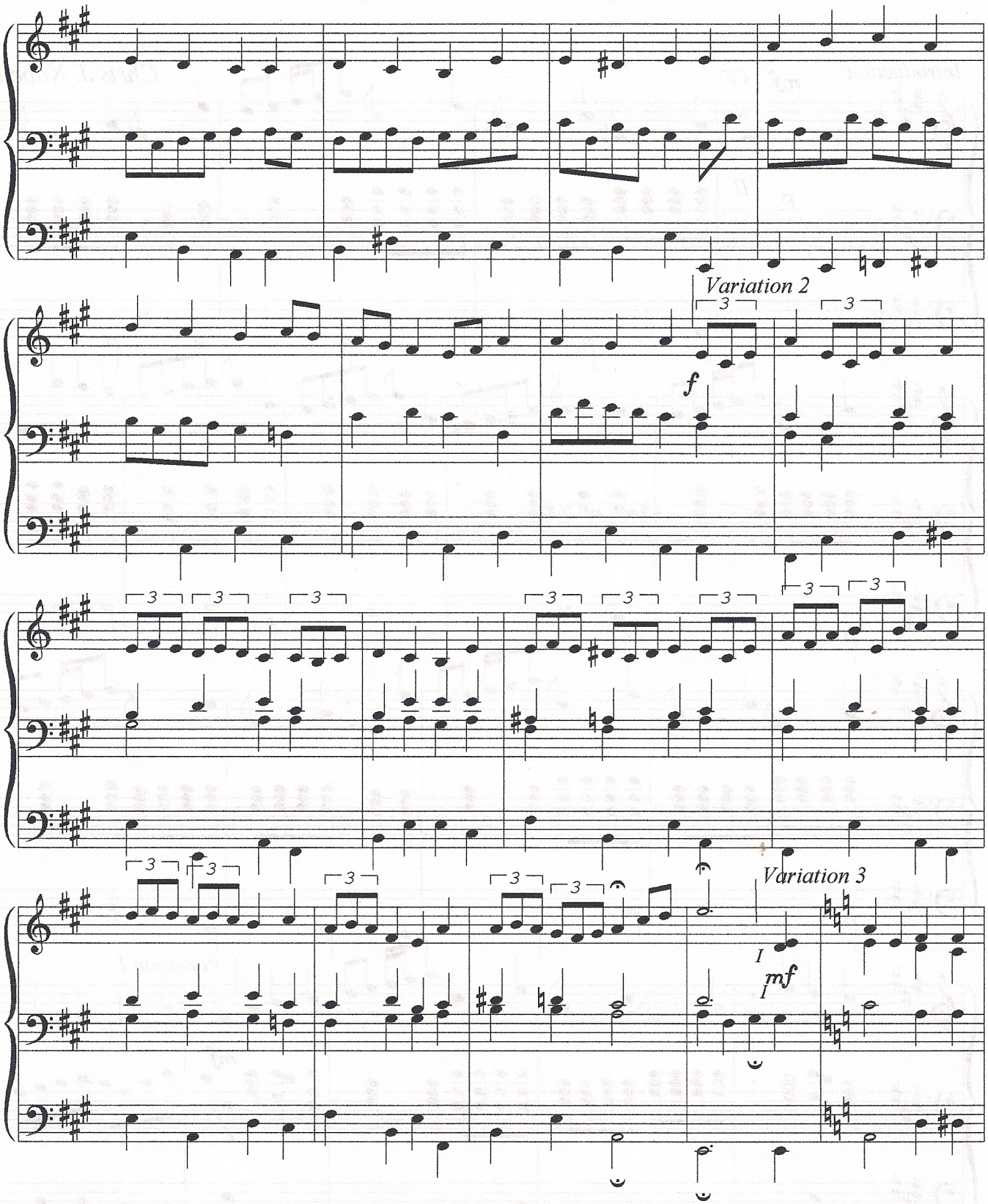
The Spirit, knowing all our needs,
Perfects our prayers and intercedes
As Paraclete before God's throne;
Our cause He makes His very own.

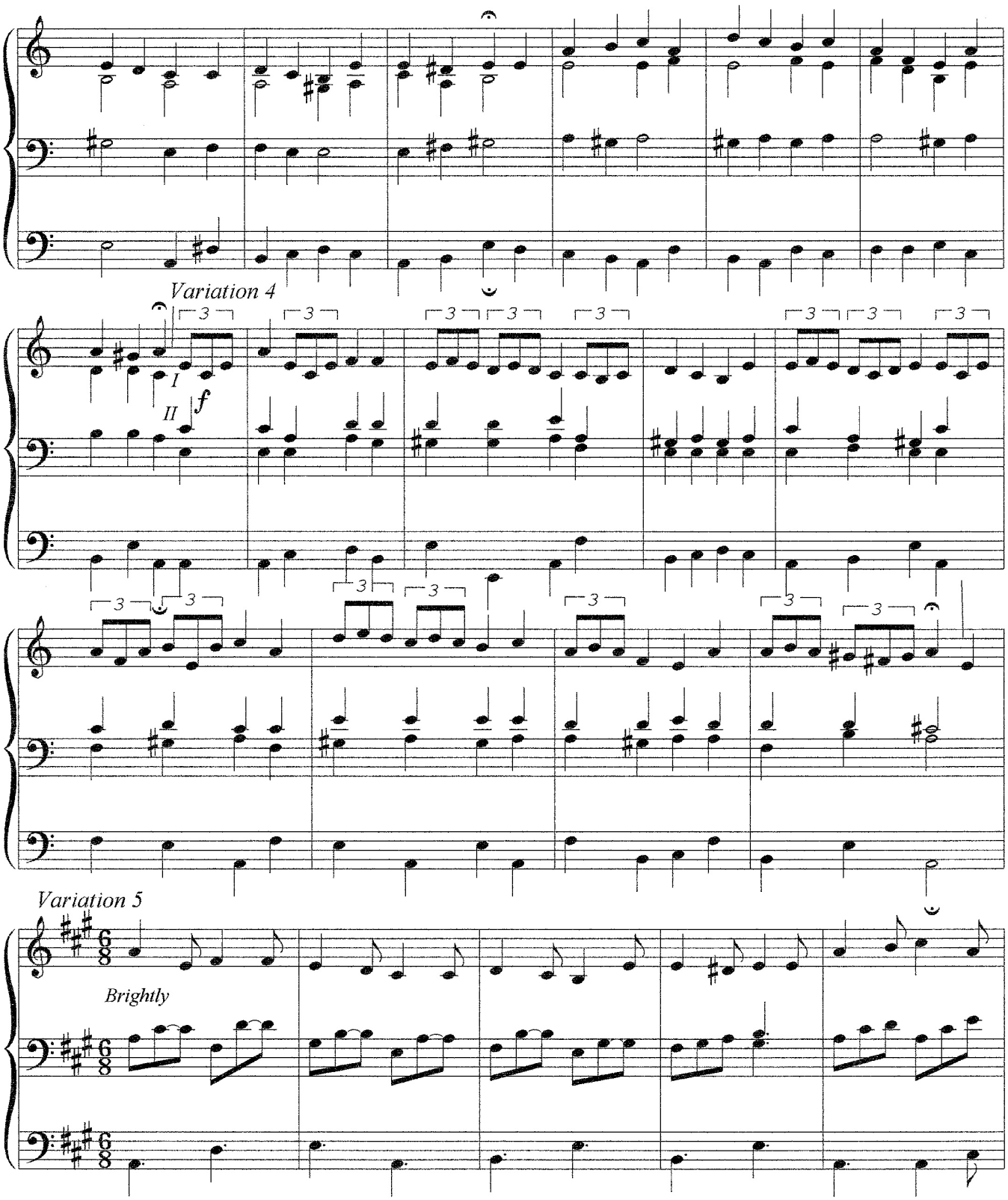
He is Himself the guarantee
That we shall be forever free
When Christ returns on His great Day.
"O come, Lord Jesus, come," we pray.

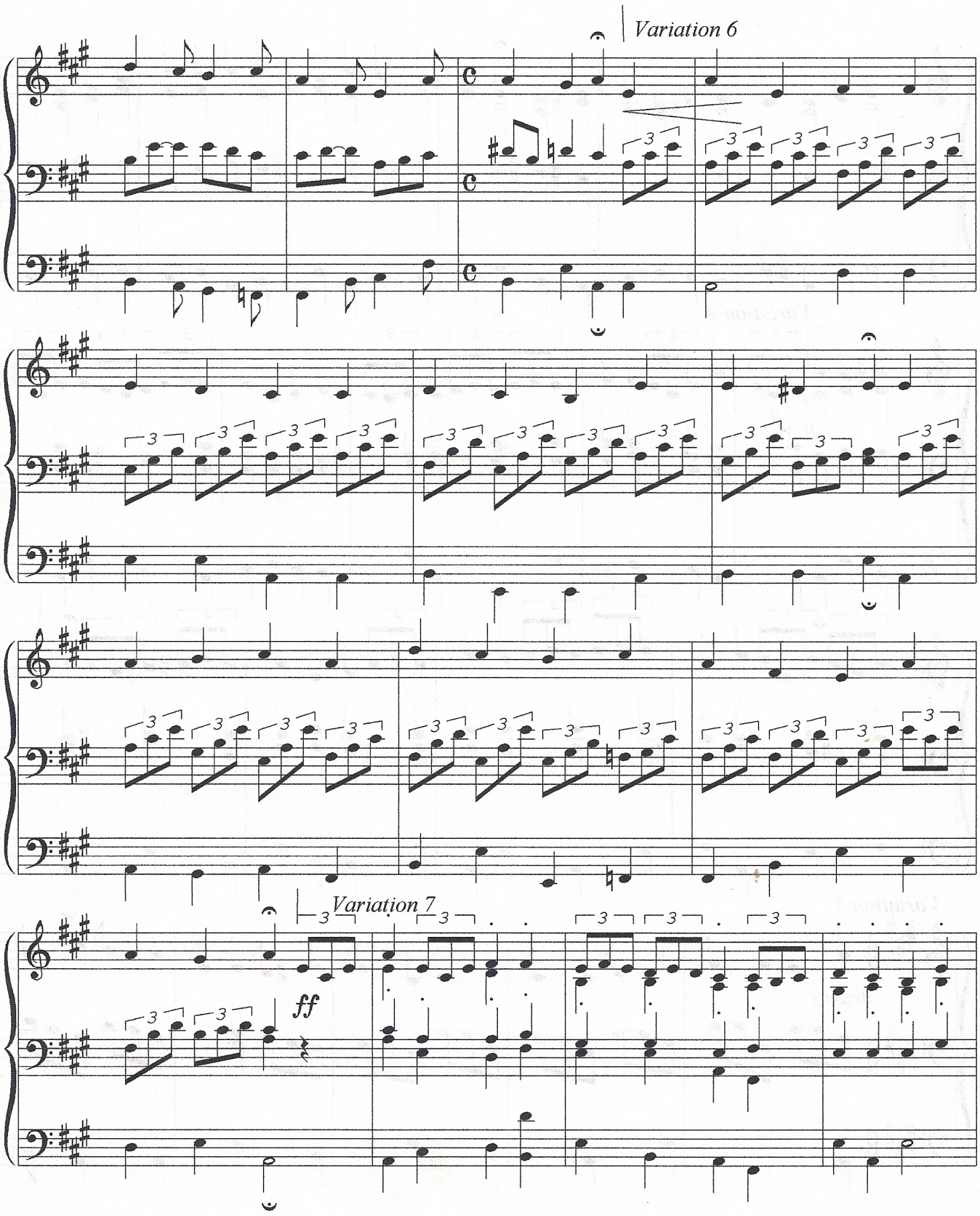
Variations on Hymn 38

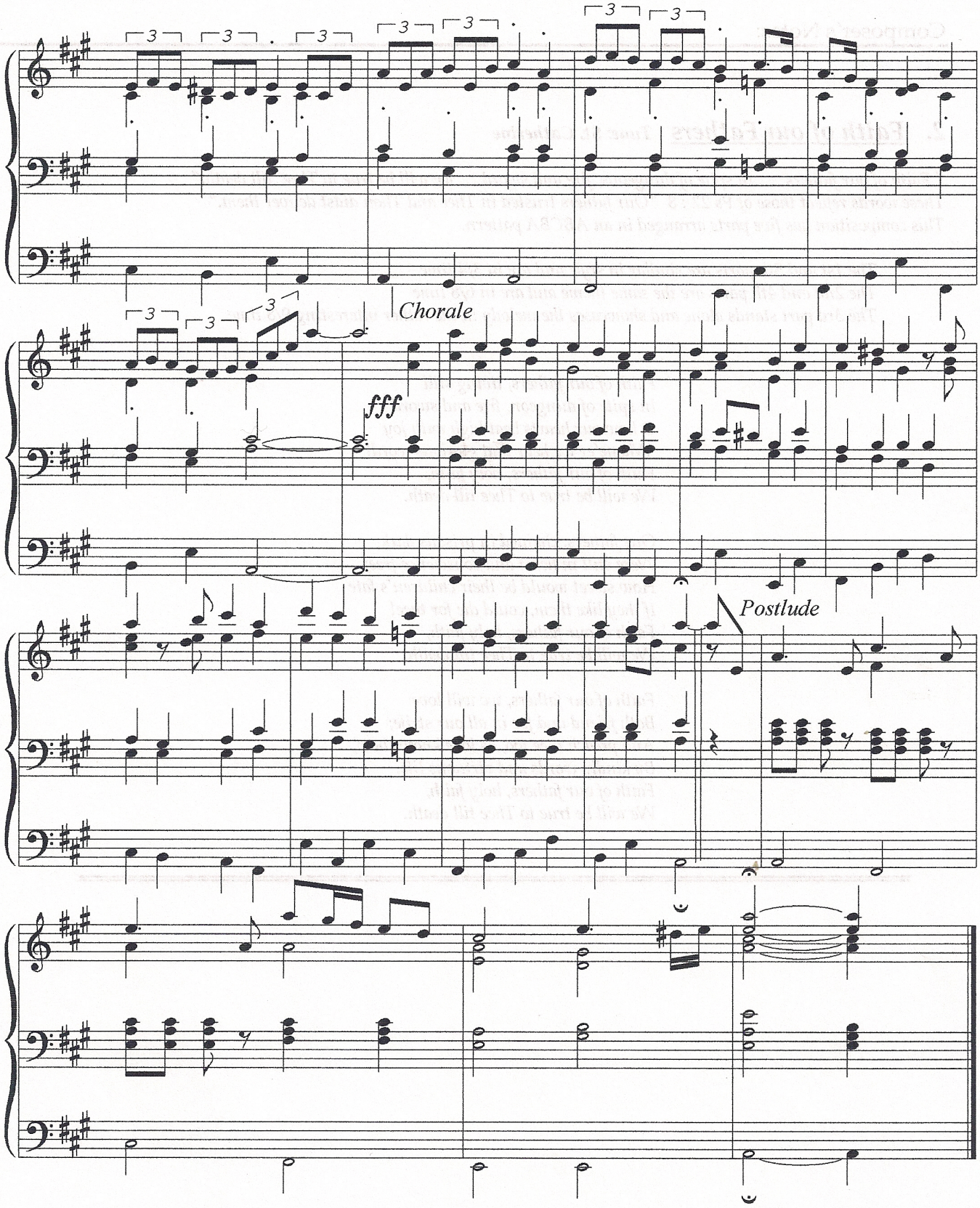
(Anglo Genevan Psalter)




Variation 2
f
Variation 3
I
mf
I


Variation 4
I
II
f
Variation 5
Brightly


Variation 6
Variation 7
ff


Chorale
fff
Postlude

2. *Faith of our Fathers* *Tune: St. Catherine*

" Faith of our fathers … in spite of dungeons, fire and sword … we will be true to Thee 'till death."
These words reflect those of Ps 22 : 8 "Our fathers trusted in Thee and Thou didst deliver them."
This composition has five parts arranged in an ABCBA pattern.

The 1st and 5th parts are similar in style and are in 3/4 time
The 2nd and 4th parts are the same theme and are in 6/8 time
The 3rd part stands alone and showcases the melody in the rather interesting 9/8 time.

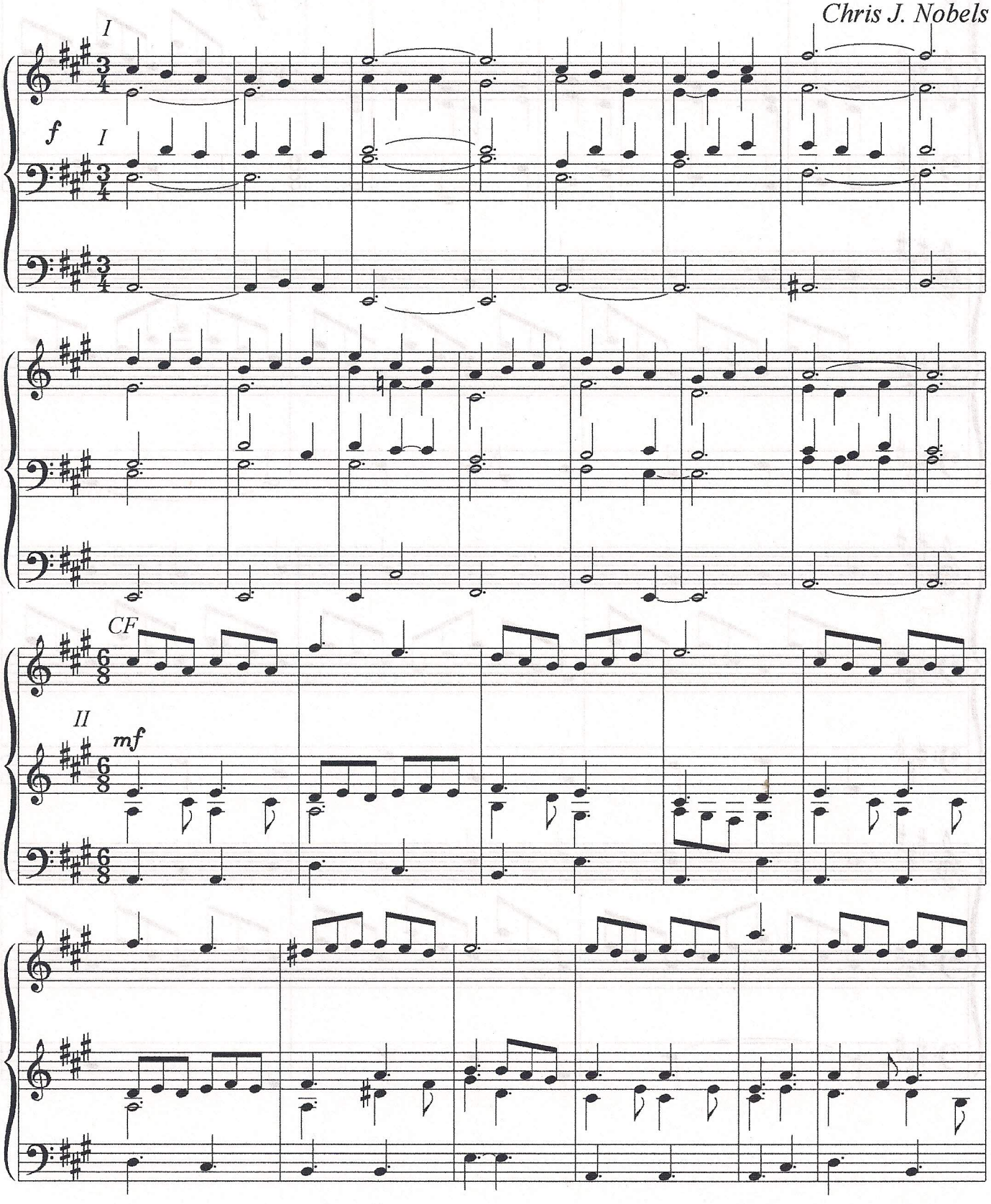
Faith of our fathers, living still
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to Thee till death.

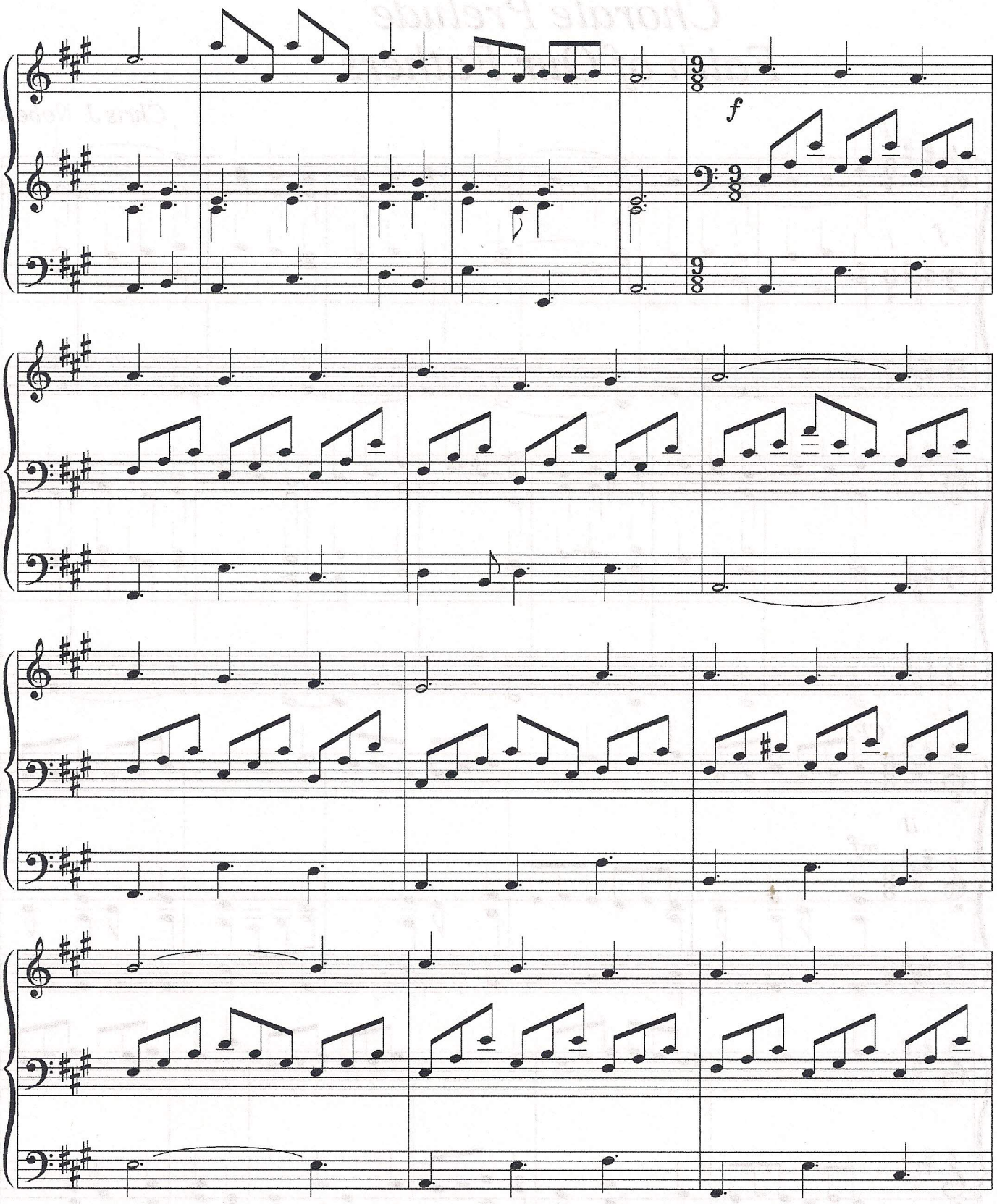
Our fathers, chained in prisons dark,
Were still in heart and conscience free;
How sweet would be their children's fate
If they like them, could die for thee!
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to Thee till death.

Faith of our fathers, we will love
Both friend and foe in all our strife;
And preach thee too, as love knows how,
By kindly words and virtuous life.
Faith of our fathers, holy faith,
We will be true to Thee till death.

Chorale Prelude
Faith of Our Fathers

Chris J. Nobels

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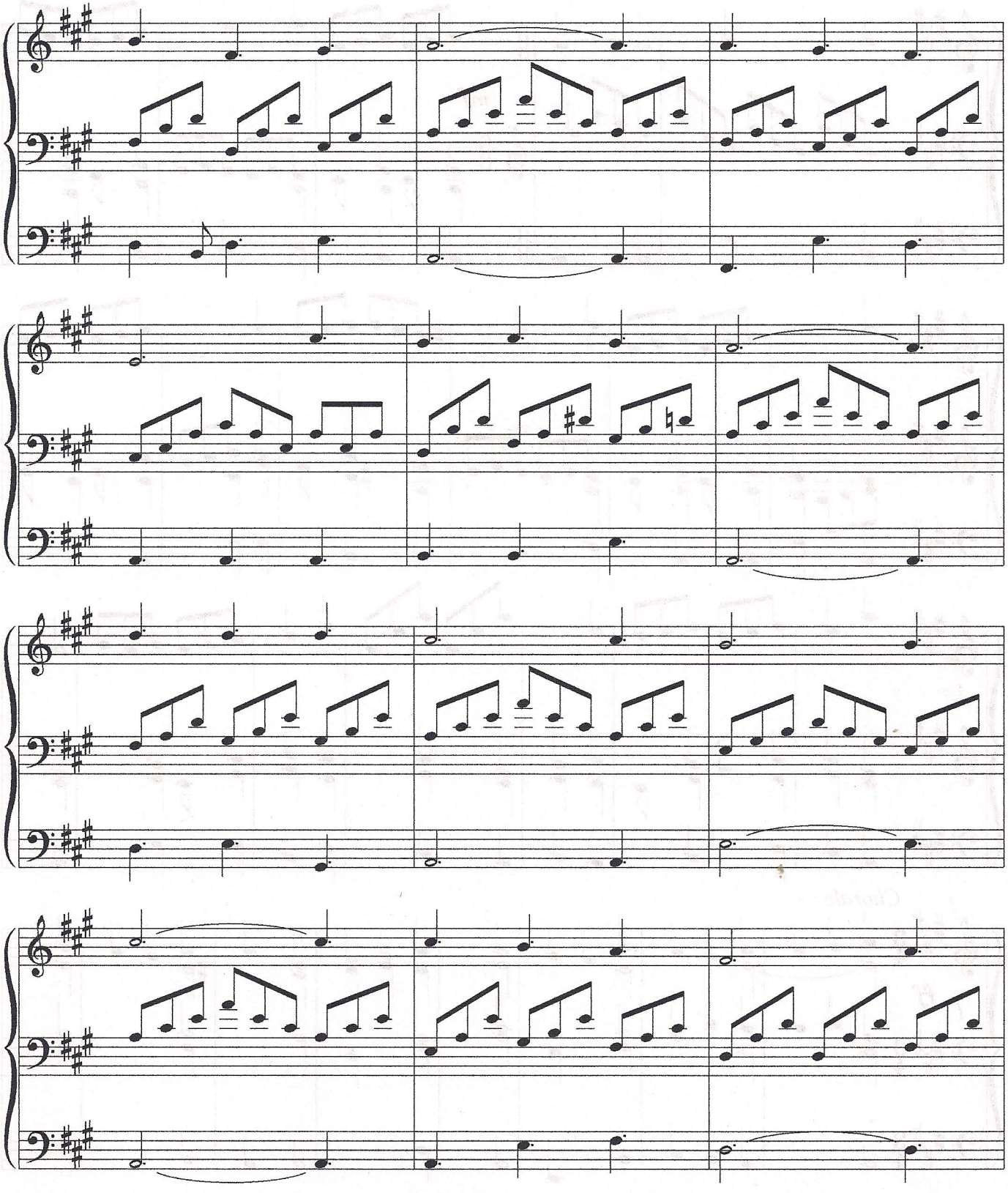
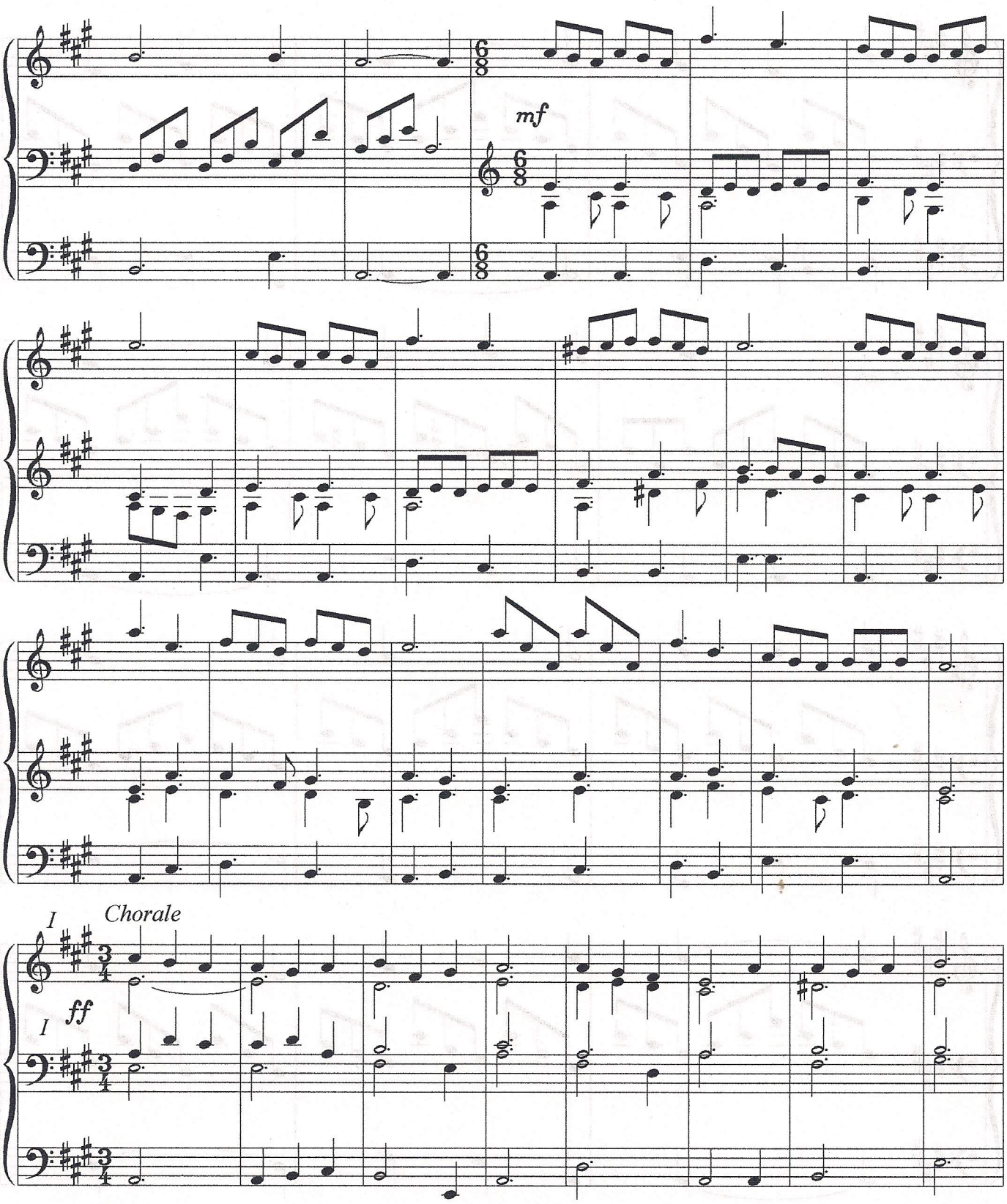
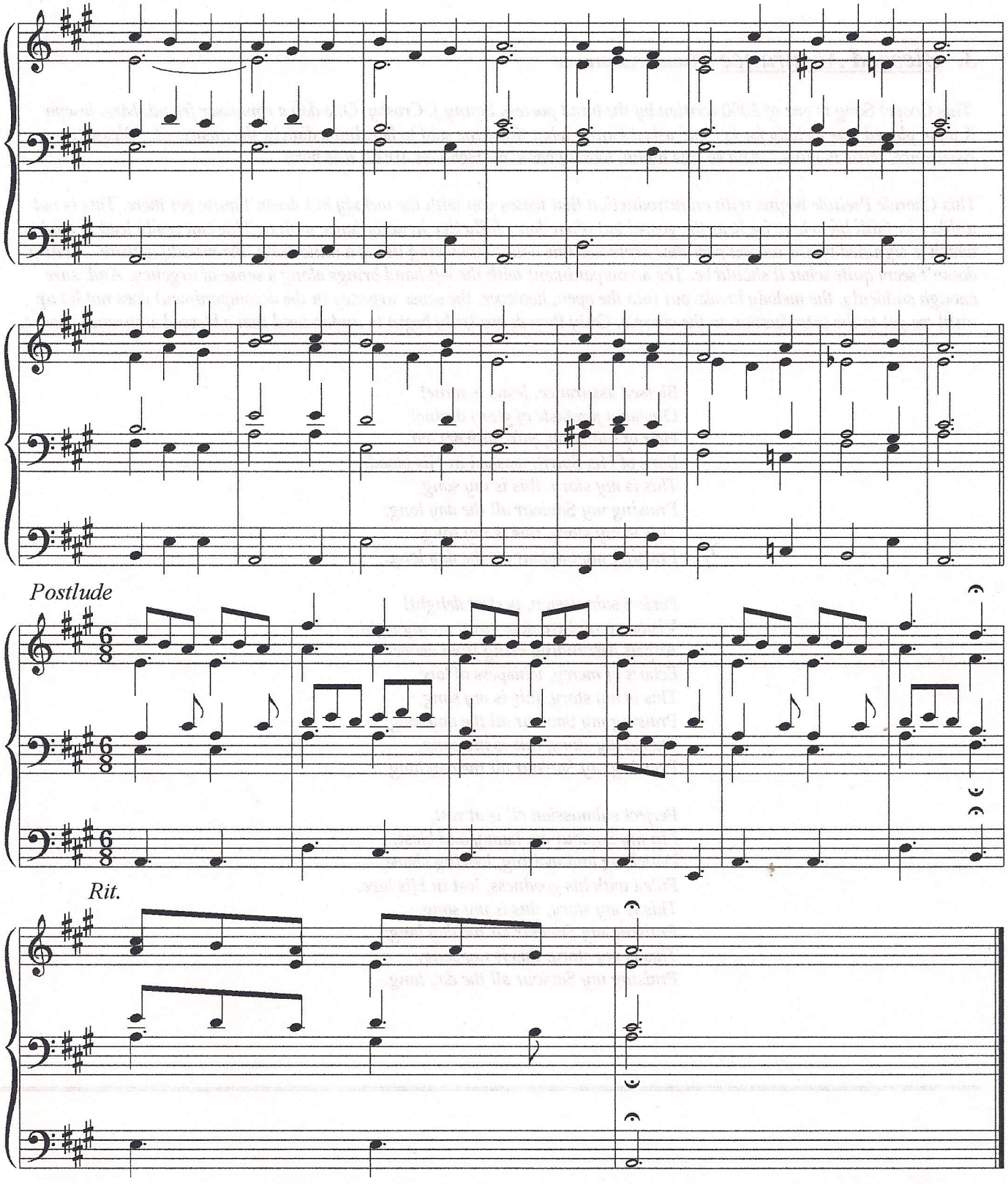



mf
I
Chorale
ff
I


Postlude
Rit.

3. ***Blessed Assurance*** *Tune: Assurance*

This Gospel Song is one of 8000 written by the blind poetess Fanny J. Crosby. One day a composer friend, Mrs. Joseph Knapp, played this melody for her and asked Fanny what this tune said to her. Immediately she answered, "Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine." And so this hymn, loosely based on Hebrews 10:22, was born.

This Chorale Prelude begins with an introduction that teases you with the melody but doesn't quite get there. This is not unlike our faith life where we hear the gospel but often don't fully live in accordance with it. This can easily lead to doubts, which is signified by the second part that expresses this doubt by making use of a minor key: the melody is there … but it doesn't seem quite what it should be. The accompaniment with the left hand brings along a sense of urgency. And, sure enough suddenly, the melody breaks out into the open, however, the sense urgency in the accompaniment does not let up until we get to the introduction to the chorale. Only then do we truly begin to understand that a blessed assurance is ours.

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.

Perfect submission, perfect delight!
Visions o rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels descending bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.

Perfect submission all is at rest,
I in my Saviour am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with his goodness, lost in His love.
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.

Chorale Prelude
Blessed Assurance

Suggested Registration:
I - 8' + 4' Flutes, Nazard 2 2/3,Cpl II to I, add as indicated
II - 8' Flute, 8' Viola Gamba, 8' Vox Celeste
Pedal - 16' Subbass, 8' Diapason,8' + 4' Flutes

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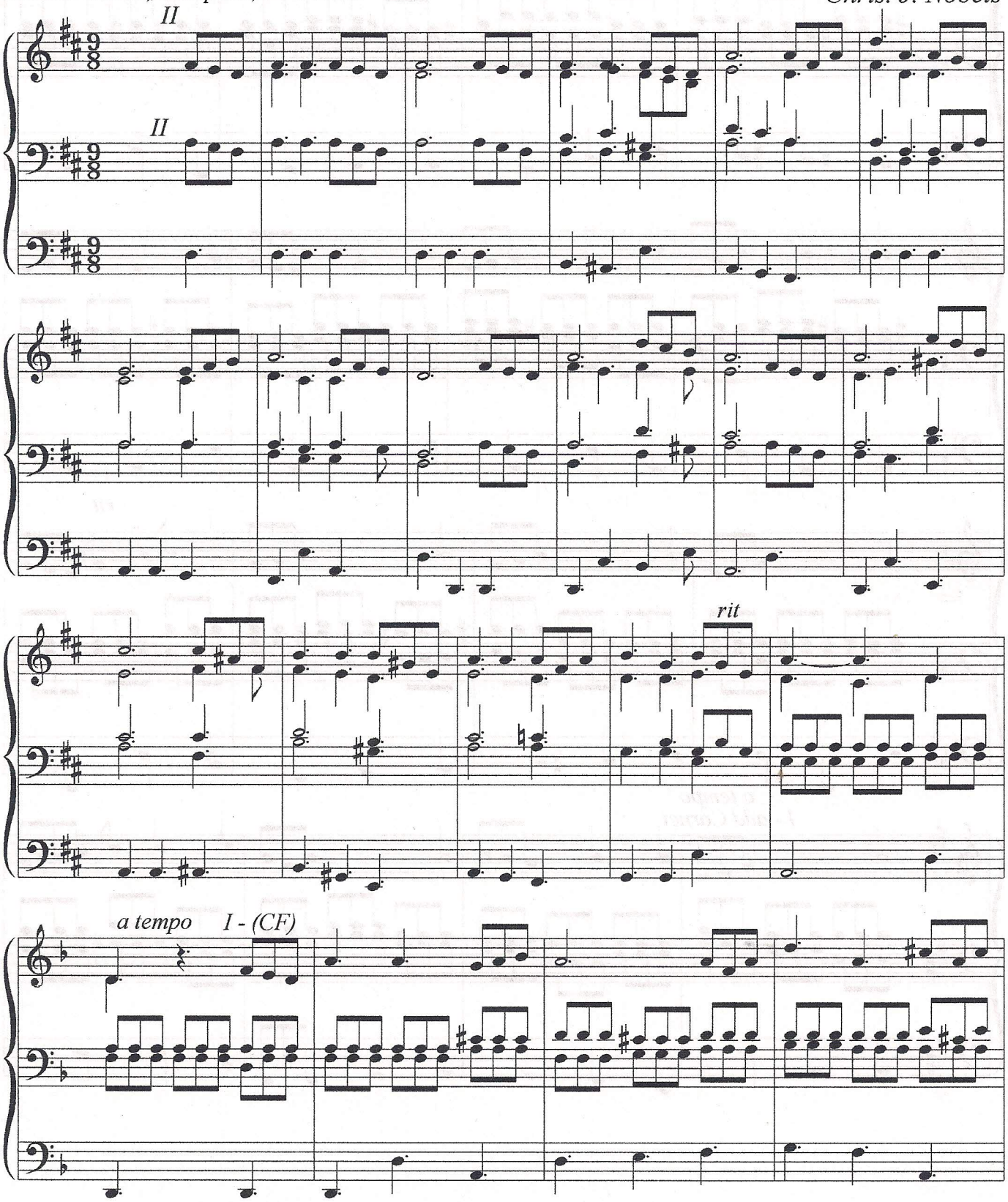
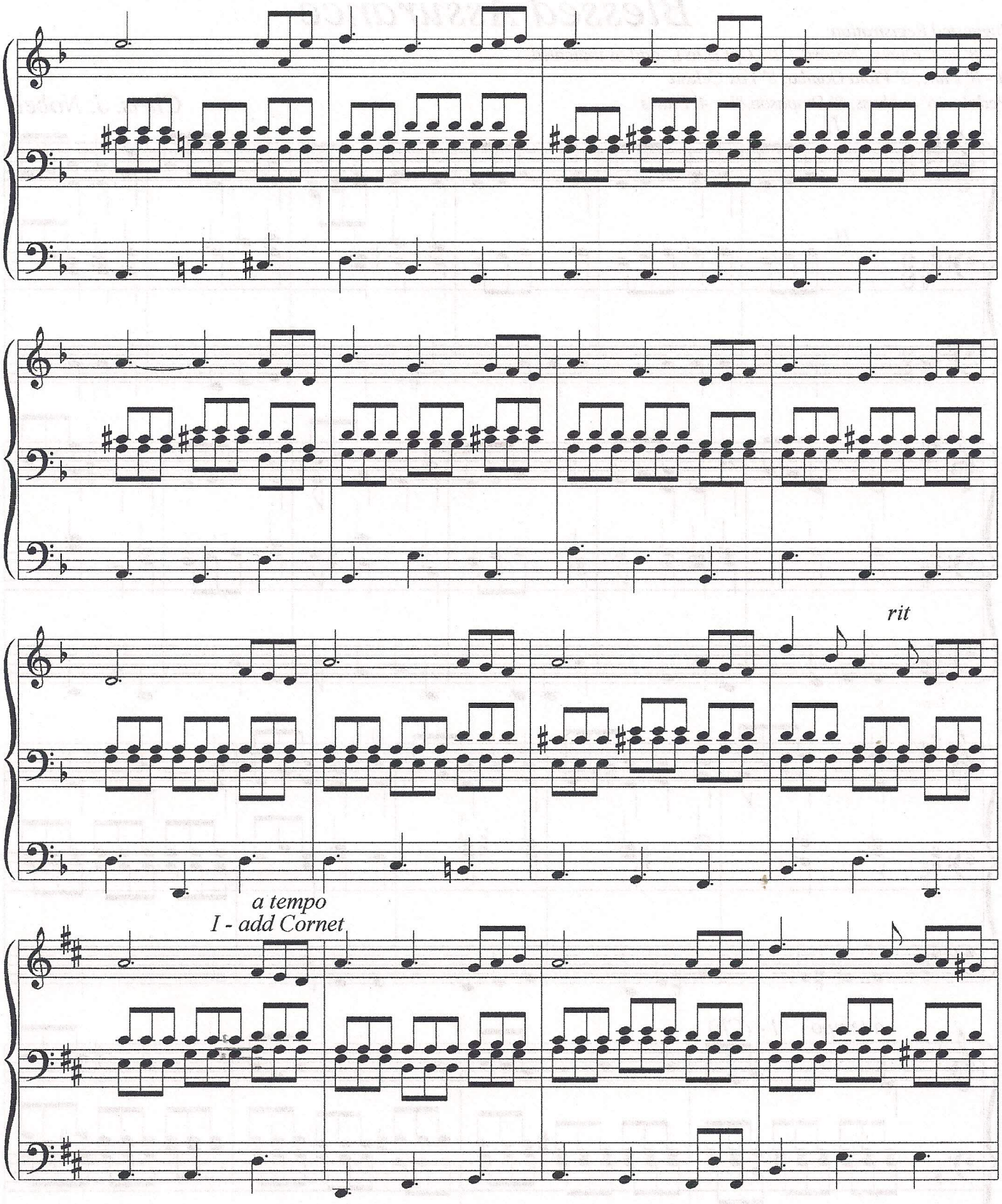
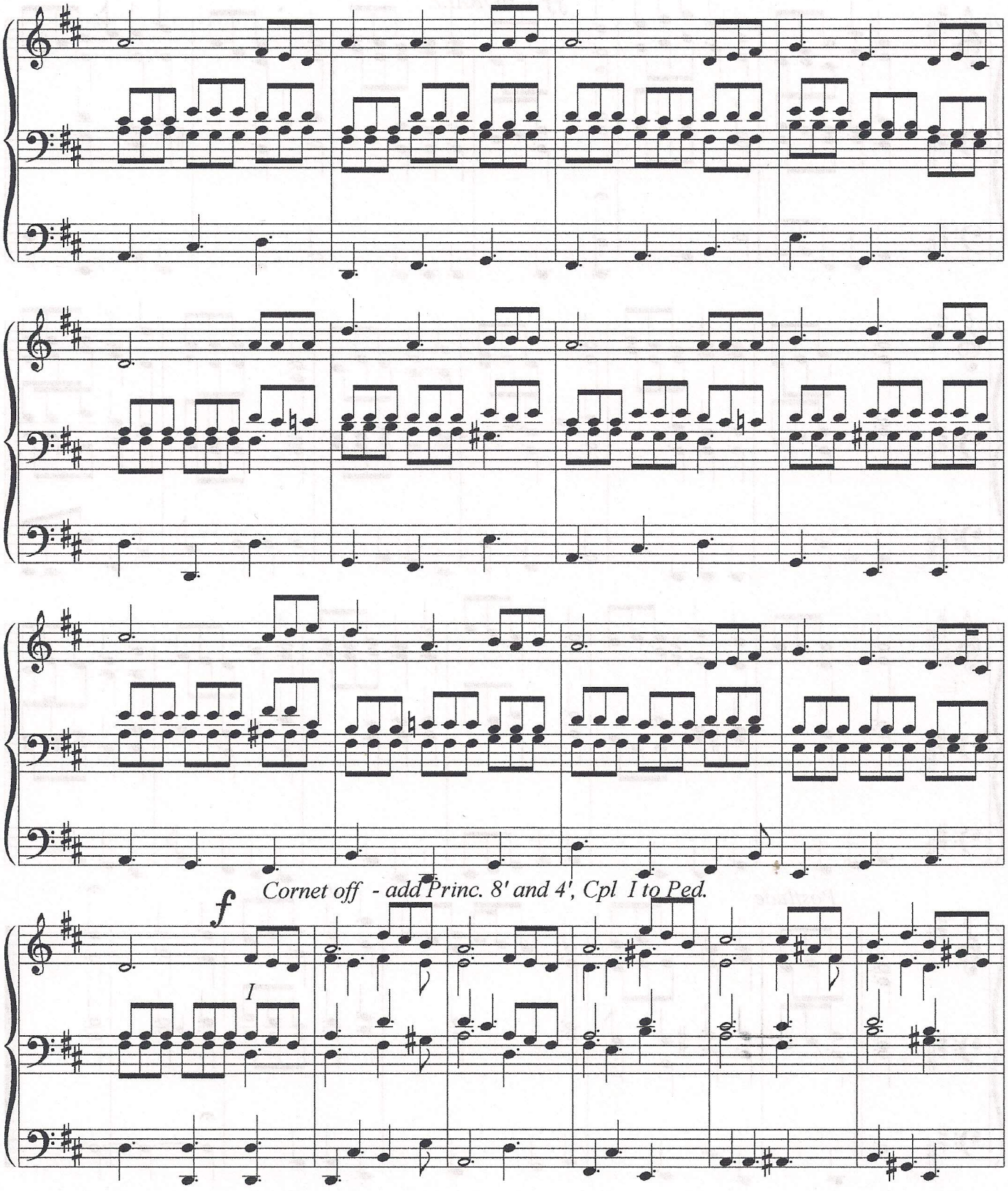
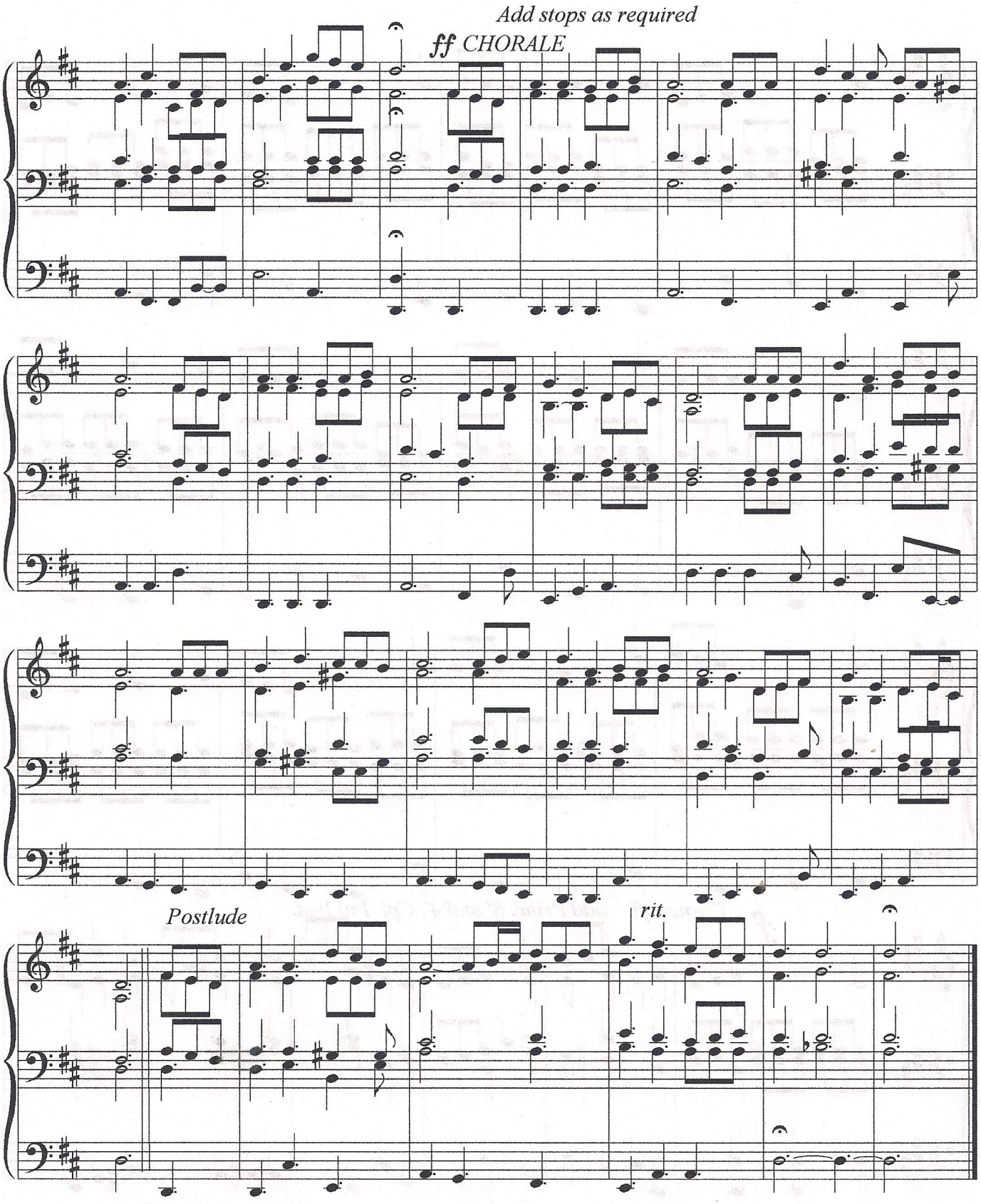



rit
a tempo
I - add Cornet


f
Cornet off - add Princ. 8' and 4', Cpl I to Ped.
I


Add stops as required
ff CHORALE
Postlude
rit.

Chorale Preludes by Chris J. Nobels

1. Psalm 25 - Genevan — Unto Thee, O LORD, my Saviour, I lift up my waiting soul.
2. Psalm 27 - Genevan — God is my Light.
3. Psalm 89 - Genevan — I will extol Thee LORD.
4. Psalm 116 - Genevan — I love the LORD.
5. Psalm 147 - Genevan — Come praise the LORD, 't is good and pleasant.
6. Spirit – Faith – Assurance: Three Inter-related Hymns
   - The Spirit Sent from Heav'n Above - Hymn 38, Anglo-Genevan Psalter
     Tune: Winchester New
   - Faith of Our Fathers
     Tune: *St. Catherine*
   - Blessed Assurance
     Tune: *Assurance*

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