

# As the Watchman

Psalm 63:2-8

Michael Joncas

**REFRAIN:** 1st time: Cantor, All repeat; thereafter: All

*With longing and quiet intensity* (♩ = ca. 76)

**Soprano Alto**

*mp*

As — the watch - man waits — for — the dawn,

**Tenor Bass**

*mp*

C F Em F

**\*Keyboard or Harp**

*mp*

*Fine*

so do I long — for you, — my God. —

*Fine*

Am Em Dm G C

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\*Keyboard or harp tacet first and last time.

**VERSE 1: Cantor***Free, rhythmic chant*

1. O God, you are my God; for you my soul is thirsting.

Cadd9 Am add9 Fadd9 Bbmaj7

1. My bod - y pines for you like a dry, wea - ry land with - out water.

Am add9 Fadd9 Dm7 G Cadd9 D.C.

**VERSE 2: Cantors***S/Melody*

2. So I gaze on you in your ho - ly place to see your strength — and your glo - ry.

Cadd9 Am add9 Fadd9 Bbmaj7

2. For your love is bet - ter than life; — my lips will speak your praise.

Am add9 Fadd9 Dm7 G Cadd9 D.C.

VERSE 3: Cantors

T

B/Melody  
3. So I will bless you all my life, in your name I will lift up my hands.

Cadd9 Amadd9 Fadd9 Bbmaj7

3. My soul shall be filled as with a ban-quet, my mouth shall praise you with joy.

Amadd9 Fadd9 Dm7 G Cadd9 D.C.

VERSE 4: SATB Choir

S *mp* *mf*

A

4. On my bed I re-mem-ber you, on you I muse through the night for you have

T

B *mf*

Cadd9 Amadd9 Fadd9 Bbmaj7 Amadd9

*mp* *p* D.C. al fine

4. been my help; in the shad-ow of your wings I re-joice.

*mp* *p*

Fadd9 Dm7 G Cadd9 D.C. al fine

# As the Watchman

HANDBELLS

Michael Joncas



With longing and quiet intensity ( $\text{♩} = \text{ca. } 76$ ) **REFRAIN**

(Cantor intones) 8 (Assembly)

**VERSE 1**

*Free, rhythmic chant*

1. O God,... my God; for you... is thirsting. My body... for you like a dry... without water

**REFRAIN**
**VERSE 2**

*Free, rhythmic chant*

2. So I gaze... holy place to see... and your glory. For your love... than life; my lips... speak your praise.

**REFRAIN**
**VERSE 3**

*Free, rhythmic chant*

3. So I... all my life, in your name... my hands. My soul... with a banquet, My mouth... praise you with joy.

**REFRAIN**
**VERSE 4**

*Free, rhythmic chant*

4. On my bed... remember you, on you... through the night for you have been my help;

**REFRAIN**

in the shadow... wings I re - joice.

# As the Watchman

(Guitar/Vocal)

Psalm 63:2-8

Michael Joncas

**REFRAIN: Cantor** *With longing and quiet intensity* (♩ = ca. 76)

(Tacet)

*mp*

As the watch-man waits for the dawn, so do I long for you, my God.

§ **\*REFRAIN: All**

*mp*

C F Em F Am Em Dm G C *Fine*

As the watch-man waits for the dawn, so do I long for you, my God.

**VERSE 1**

*Free, rhythmic chant*

C add9 Am add9 F add9 B♭maj7

1. O God, you are my God; for you my soul is thirsting.

Am add9 F add9 Dm7 G C add9 *D.S.*

1. My bod - y pines for you like a dry, wea - ry land with - out water.

**VERSE 2**

C add9 Am add9 F add9 B♭maj7

2. So I gaze on you in your ho - ly place to see your strength and your glo - ry.

Am add9 F add9 Dm7 G C add9 *D.S.*

2. For your love is bet - ter than life; my lips will speak your praise.

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\*Guitar tacet last time.

## VERSE 3

Cadd9 Am add9 Fadd9 B♭maj7

3. So I will bless you all my life, in your name I will lift up my hands.

Am add9 Fadd9 Dm7 G Cadd9 *D.S.*

3. My soul shall be filled as with a ban-quet, my mouth shall praise you with joy.

## VERSE 4

Cadd9 Am add9 Fadd9 B♭maj7 Am add9

*mp* *mf*

4. On my bed I re-mem-ber you, on you I muse through the night for you have

Fadd9 Dm7 G Cadd9

*mp* *p* *D.S. al fine*

4. been my help; in the shad - ow of your wings I re - joice.

## Composer Notes

Psalm 63 is classified as an individual lament, though Mowinckel sees it as a “royal” psalm (after the pattern of Psalm 61). The complete psalm has four sections: 1) a poetic evocation of the yearning to be with God (vss. 2–3), 2) a description of what the Temple service means to the psalmist (vss. 4–9), 3) imprecations against enemies (vss. 10–11), and 4) a prayer for the king and the faithful (vs. 12). Only the first two sections of this text appear in my setting.

Psalm 63 is one of the privileged “morning” psalms associated with Lauds. The Latin Psalter added “from dawn/early morning” to the phrase “for you my soul is thirsting” which became the basis of considering this as a “morning psalm” (as well as the mention of “musing on God through the night”). It is appointed in the Roman Liturgy of Hours for Sunday I Morning Prayer (which is also the festival form for Lauds). In addition it appears often in the Lectionary for Mass, most notably as a Common Responsorial Psalm for the Season of the Year with the antiphon “My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God.” My antiphon, taken from Psalm 130, emphasizes the advental and eschatological character of the opening section of the psalm.

The psalm-setting is one of great simplicity, almost austerity. The refrain is measured and dignified while the verses are sung in free chant, speech rhythm. The accompaniment may be keyboard (organ/piano) or harp.

—Michael Joncas

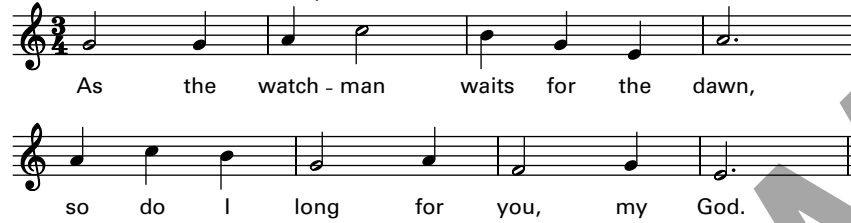
As the Watchman

## Assembly Edition

### AS THE WATCHMAN

Michael Joncas

REFRAIN: 1st time: Cantor, All repeat; thereafter: All



As the watch - man waits for the dawn,  
so do I long for you, my God.

VERSES: Cantor/Choir

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. O God, you are my God;<br/>for you my soul is thirsting.<br/>My body pines for you<br/>like a dry, weary land<br/>without water. <b>(to Refrain)</b></p> <p>2. So I gaze on you in your holy place<br/>to see your strength and your glory.<br/>For your love is better than life;<br/>my lips will speak your praise. <b>(to Refrain)</b></p> | <p>3. So I will bless you all my life,<br/>in your name I will lift up my hands.<br/>My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,<br/>my mouth shall<br/>praise you with joy. <b>(to Refrain)</b></p> <p>4. On my bed I remember you,<br/>on you I muse through the night<br/>for you have been my help;<br/>in the shadow<br/>of your wings I rejoice. <b>(to Refrain)</b></p> |
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