NBA I/24; BC A142 18. S. after Trinity (BWV 96, 169)
*1 Corinthians 1:4–9 (Paul's prayer of thanks for the blessings of the Gospel in Corinth) *Matthew 22:34-46 (Jesus identifies the greatest commandments and asks the Pharisees whose Son Christ is)

Librettist: Unknown FP: 8 October 1724 (St. Thomas)

The chorale text, which is rich with biblical allusions, is loosely based on the Latin Christmas hymn "Corde natus ex parentis" by Aurelius Clemens Prudentius

348 to after 405. See more at no. 6. Instrumentation:

Corno or Trombone Flauto piccolo (sopranino recorder) or Violino piccolo Flauto traverso Ob I, II VIn I, II Vla **SATB** Continuo

The ritornello is reminiscent of "In dulci jubilo" and other Christmas songs. Its thematic material is later adopted by the voices accompanying the cantus firmus.

Alfred Dürr writes, "This chorale cantata is based upon the five-verse hymn by Elisabeth Creutziger (1524), which praises Christ—the true Son of God—as the Morning Star and prays for love and knowledge so that the old man may die and the new, who strives only after God, may come alive... The link [to the 18th Sunday after Trinity] occurs in the second part of the Gospel reading, where Jesus asks the Pharisees about the identity of the promised Messiah—how Christ could simultaneously be David's son and David's lord (2 Samuel 7:12-14, Psalm 110:1). The reply of the faithful Christian...is given at the beginning of the hymn: Christ, of David's line according to ancient prophecy, is also the only Son of God...The second half of the cantata (and of the hymn) speaks on behalf of the assembled congregation, praying to the Lord, who is acknowledged as their Saviour, for future guidance upon the path of righteousness." See Alfred Dürr, The Cantatas of J. S. Bach, translated by Richard Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 569.

Cantata No. 96

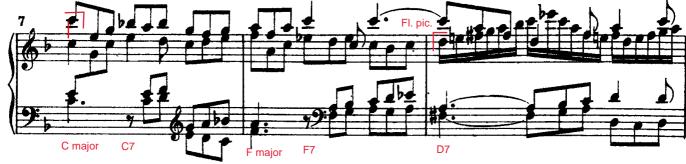
In the opening chorus, the cantus firmus is sung by the alto, rather than the more usual soprano, doubled by the horn (trombone in a later revival). The instrumentation includes the Herr Christ, der einge Gottessohn flauto piccolo, probably representing the twinkling ning star referenced in the text. In a later performance, it Regarding the prominence of the flute was replaced with a violino piccolo. In a still later performance, part in this cantata, see side note. the horn, doubling the cantus firmus, was replaced with a

(Coro.) (Chorale Verse 1) (Cho



Given the implications of the text regarding Christ's identity, the 9/8 meter probably signifies the Trinity but also the pastoral setting of the gait of the riding magi (compare BWV 65, where 12/8 meter is used). The pastoral quality associated with the morning star (compound meter, F major) antidipates BWV 1/1, composed some months later. hlehem star (the morning star), perhaps even depicting the







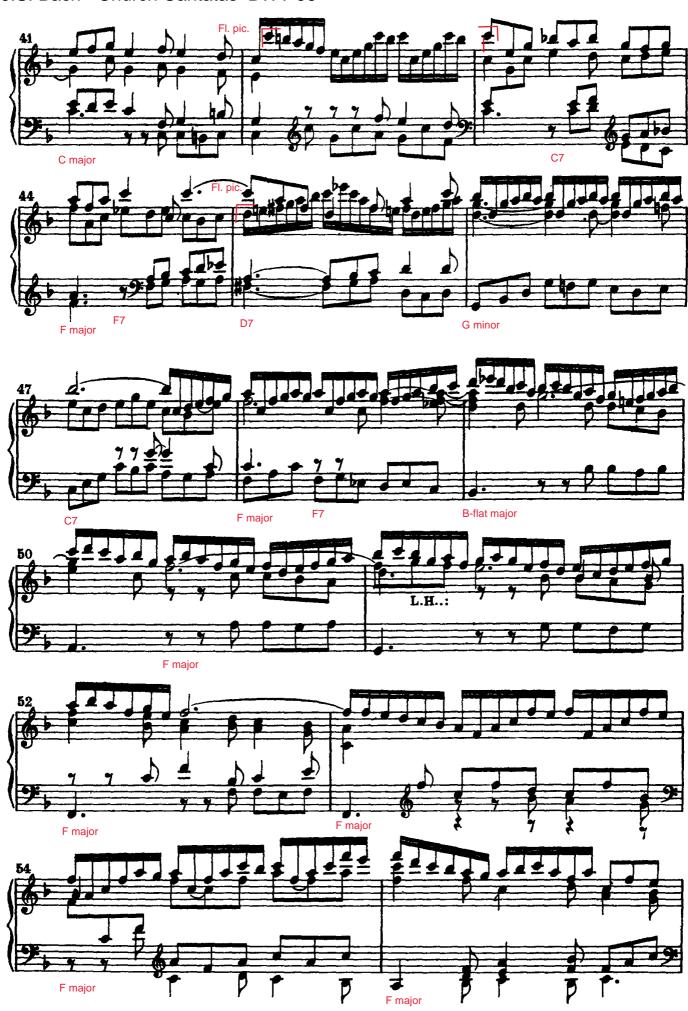


















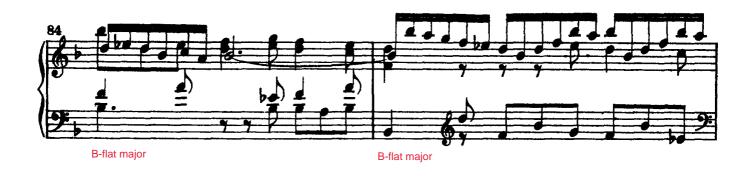




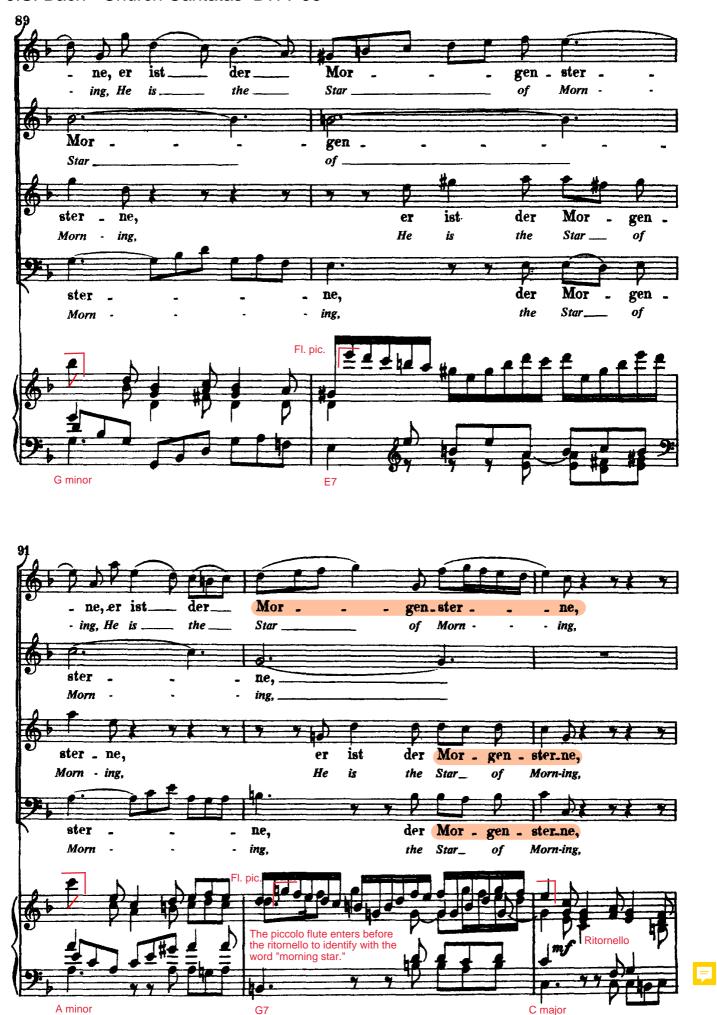






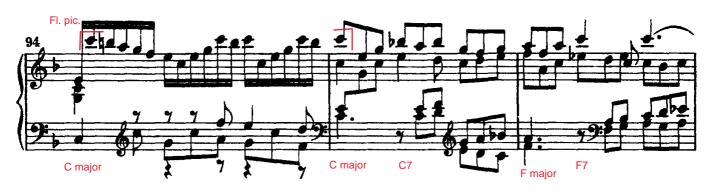


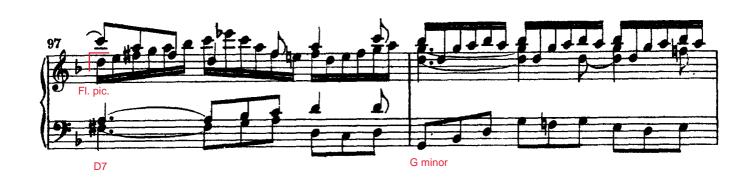


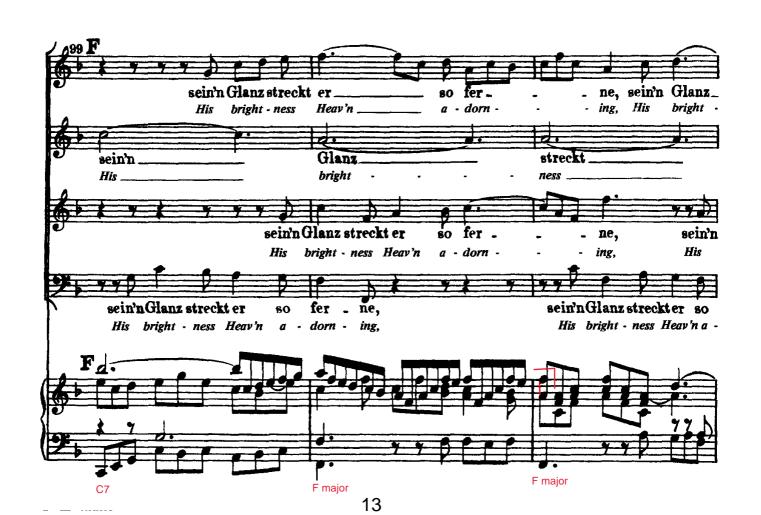


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For the significance of C major, see note.





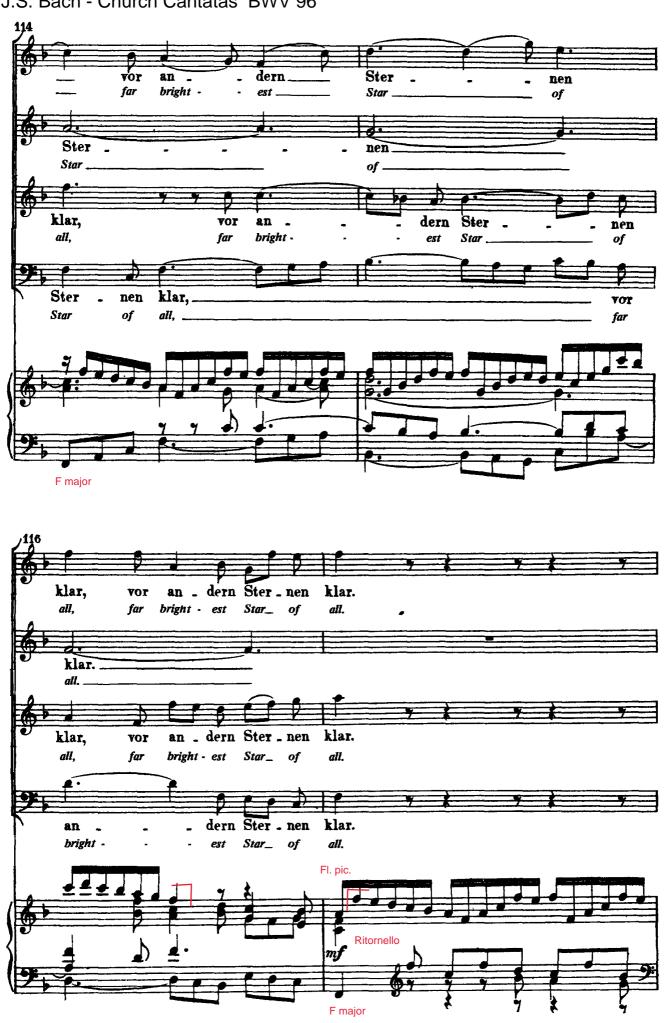




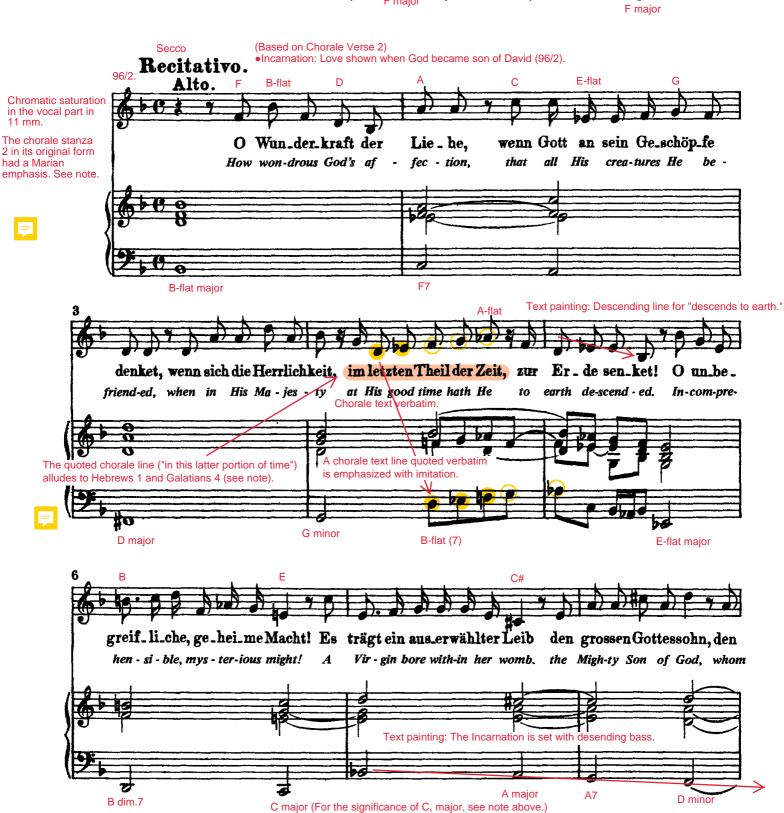




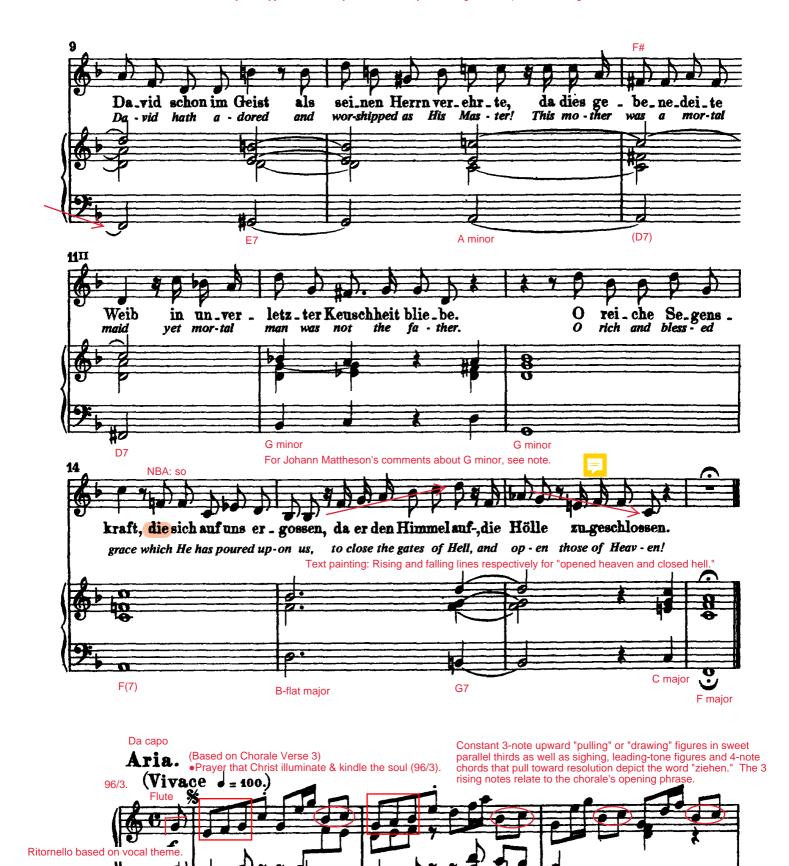






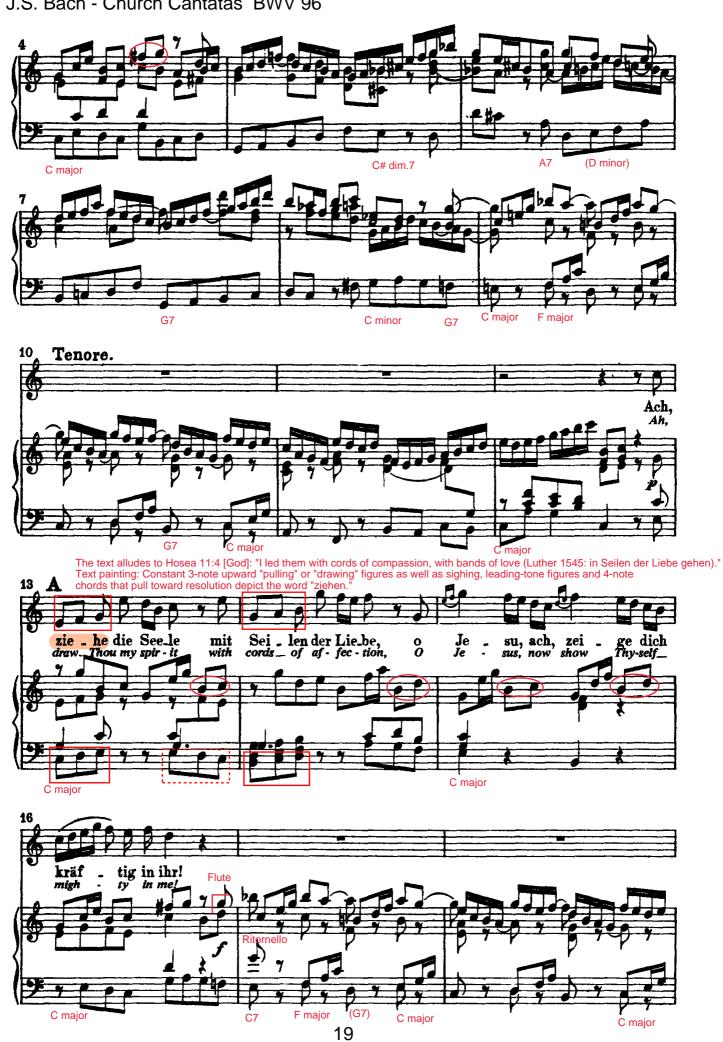


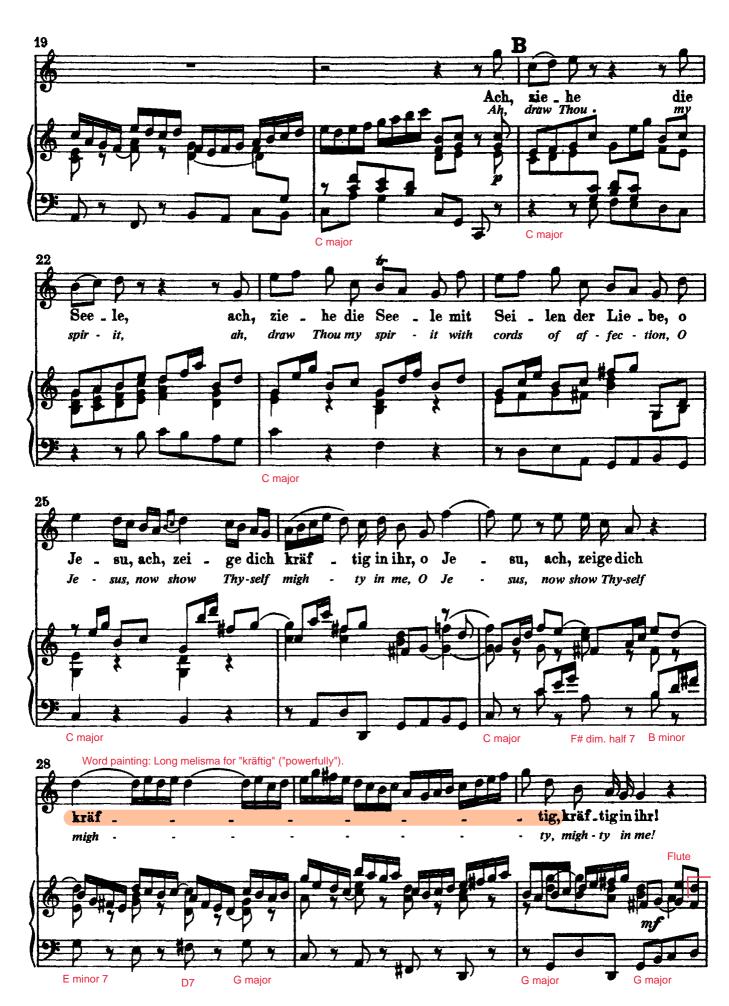
Allusion to Lk. 1:41-42. ... Elizabeth... exclaimed [to Mary] with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women (Luther 1545: gebenedeit bist du unter den Weibern!"

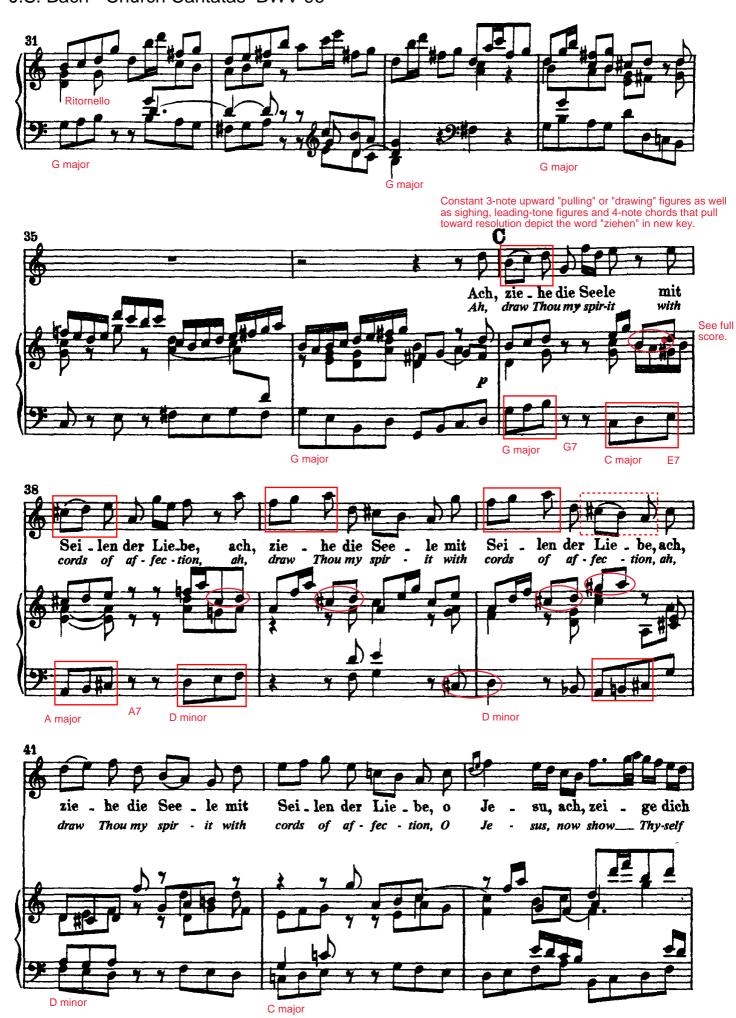


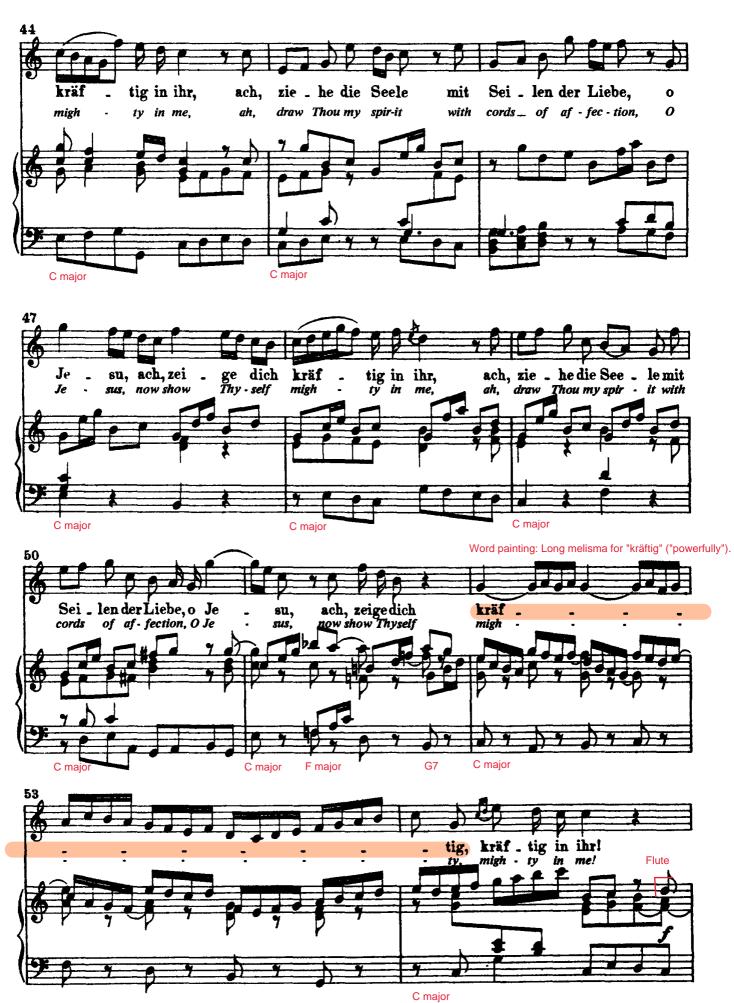
C major For the significance of C major, see earlier note.

The slow harmonic rhythm, major tonality, use of the transverse flute, melody-dominated texture, clear periodic phrase structure, and patter diction all point to the galant style.

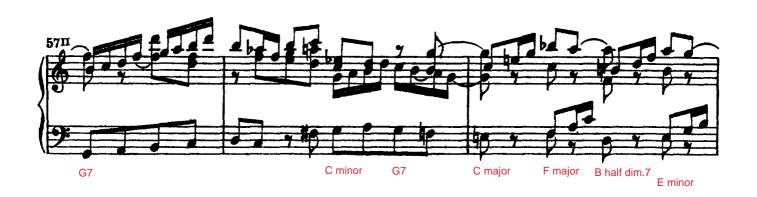


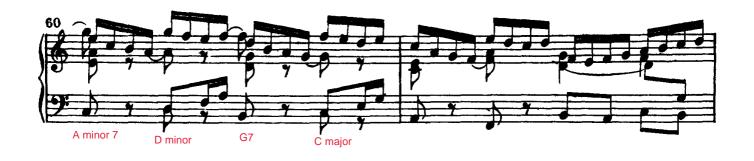


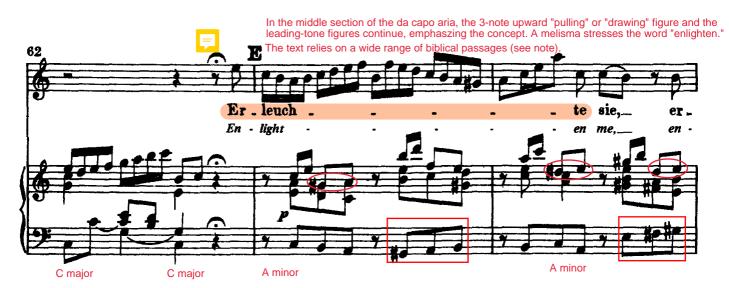










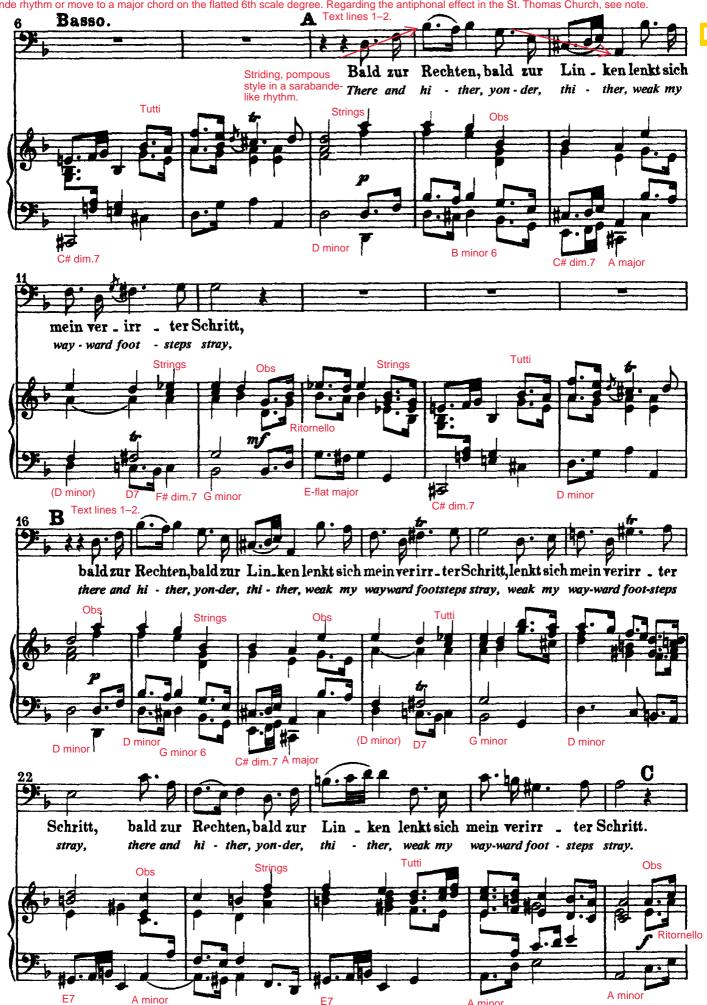


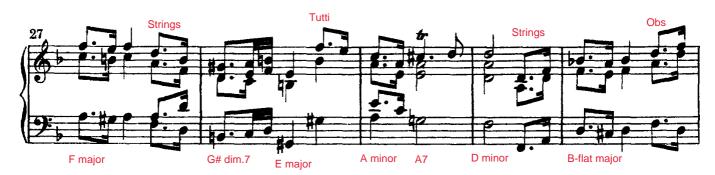




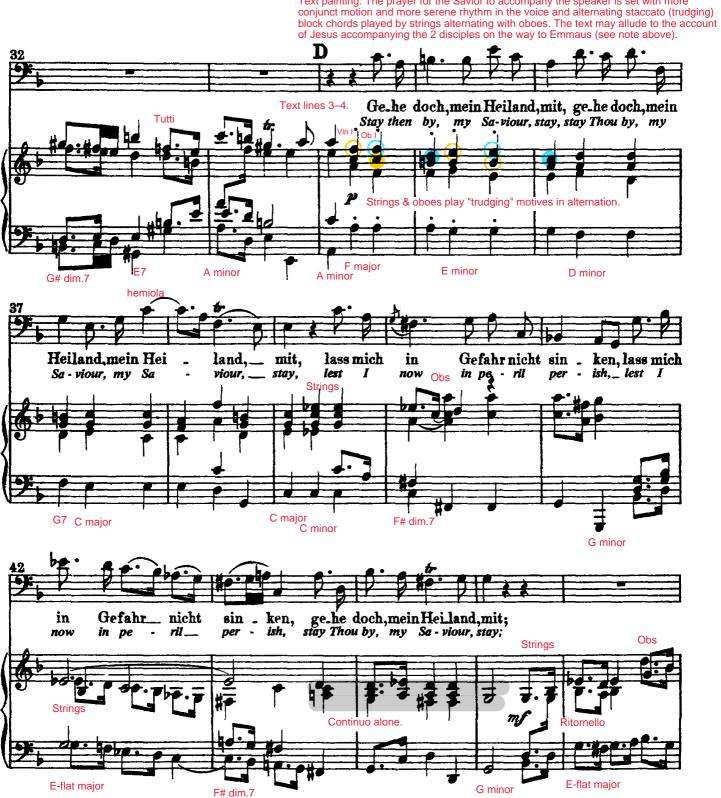
For the significance of D minor, see note.

The poet's admission that his wayward steps turn alternately to the right and left are depicted with alternation between oboes and strings, with "wavering" motives that alternate between high and low registers, a lurching rhythm, many dissonant chords, and harmonic progressions that involve resolutions on the second beat of the sarabande rhythm or move to a major chord on the flatted 6th scale degree. Regarding the antiphonal effect in the St. Thomas Church, see note.

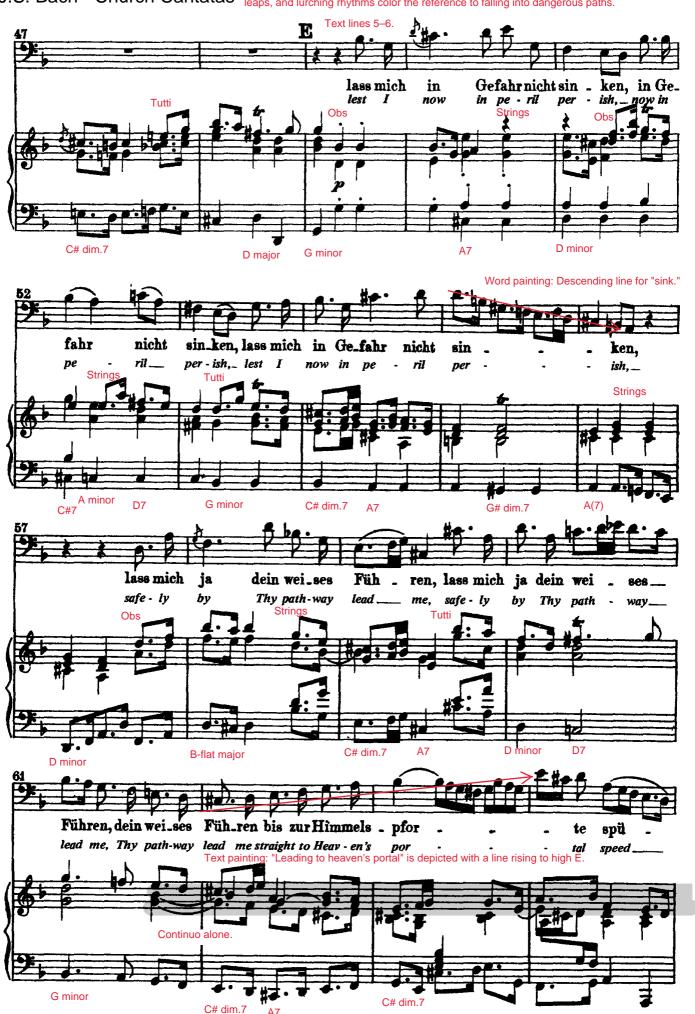


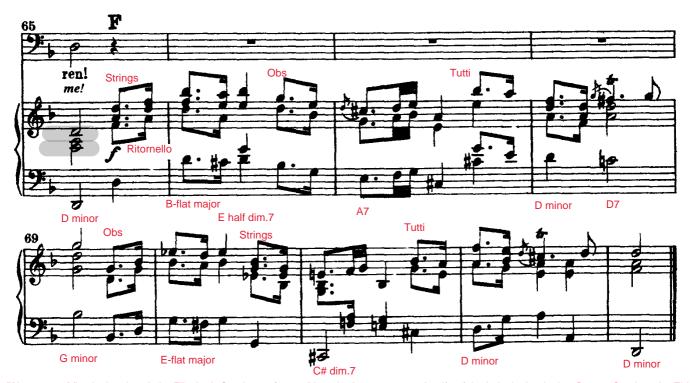


Text painting: The prayer for the Savior to accompany the speaker is set with more

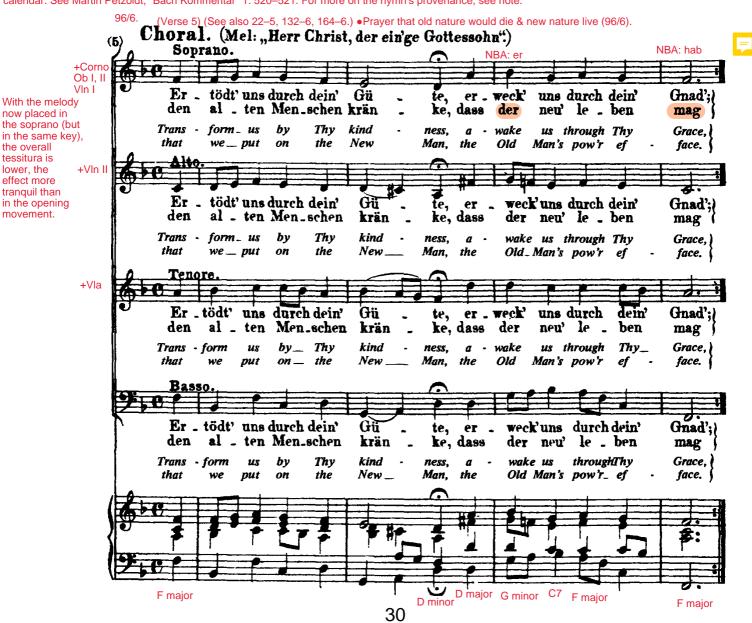


J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas The two previous ritornello motives ("wavering" & "trudging") are combined, while chromaticism. leaps, and lurching rhythms color the reference to falling into dangerous paths.





This is the fifth stanza of five in the chorale by Elisabeth Cruciger, née von Meseritz (ca. 1500–1535), wife of the Leipzig theologian Caspar Cruciger the Elder (1504–1548), a co-reformer with Philipp Melanchthon and Martin Luther. In hymnals of the day, the chorale was recommended for many different Sundays in the liturgical calendar. See Martin Petzoldt, "Bach Kommentar" 1: 520–521. For more on the hymn's provenance, see note.



The chorale stanza is summative: The believer's response to the divine embodiment of the Incarnation is to embody the "new nature" in Christ. The movement's reference to "letting the old man die so that the new man may live" alludes to biblical passages such as Ephesians 4 and Colossians 3 (see note). This posture is prompted by God's love, which was demonstrated in the Incarnation (the subject of movements 1 & 2).

