Fairest Lord Jesus

alternatim for SSA & SS and Basso continuo

Text & melody: anonymous (Münster 1677)
Translation (stanzas 1−4): J.A. Seiss (1873)
Arrangement and translation (stanza 5): Christoph Dalitz (2008)

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alternative setting for two sopranos and Basso continuo

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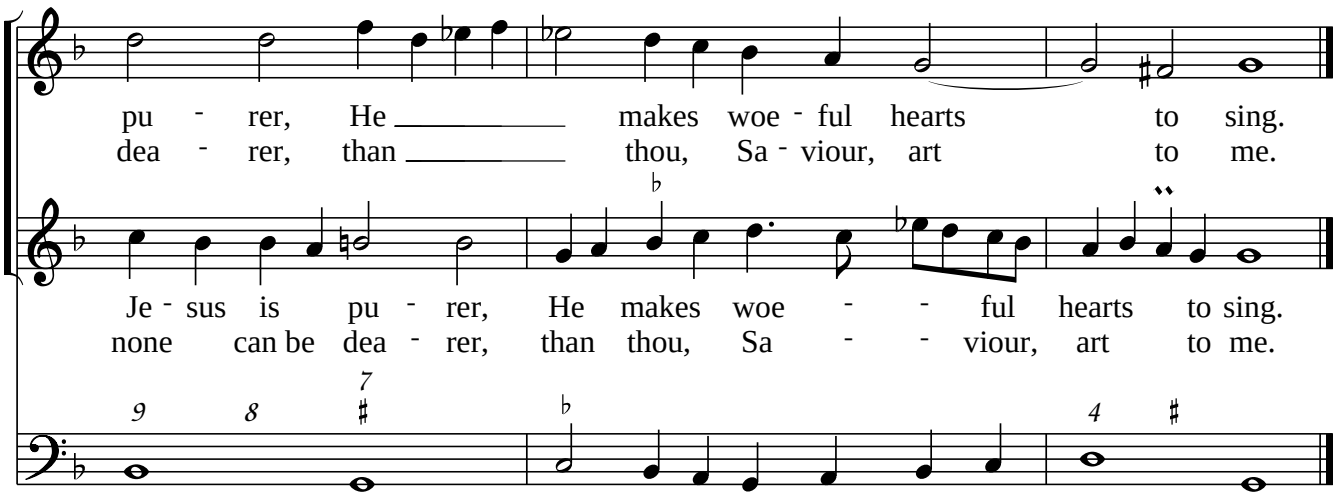

This hymn is today found in American hymnals with a different, much newer (19th century) melody. As the newer melody has a different meter than the original baroque melody, I had to make minor adaptions to Seiss' translation for fitting the text to the older melody. Moreover, I have added a translation of the last stanza (in reference to 1 Cor 11,23−25), which Seiss had dropped for some unknown reason.

The two settings should be sung alternatingly: stanzas 1, 3, 5 with three parts, and stanzas 2 & 4 with two solo voices. The figured bass is most appropriately realized on an organ. If you have no experience in realizing a figured bass, feel free to contact me for an explicit continuo realization.

I have made the observation that modern singers have little experience in the execution of graces and even less in the addition of embellishments. Therefore, I have explicitly written out some embellishments for the repeat of the two part setting. These are meant for singers who do not dare to devise their own embellishments; more ambitious singers can of course feel free to replace them with their own diminutions.

I have only used two sings for graces: a plus (+) for a "trill" and a wavy line for a short "upper mordent". The "trills" must start on the upper auxiliary note and must not leave this note too early! The "upper mordent" starts on the main note and quickly alternates once with the upper auxiliary note.

Christoph Dalitz, 2008

If you enjoy singing this music,
I were glad for feedback!

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