

Commissioned by Eddie Wilkin and the Sanctuary Choir of Grace Church of Rutland, Vermont,  
to honor interim Music Director Diane Chartrand on the occasion of her retirement.  
Premiered on June 25, 2017 – Eddie Wilkin, interim Choir Director

# A Prayer of Compassion

for SATB Chorus unaccompanied

Psalms 4:8 and 5:8  
John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892)  
G. Walker, alt.

Gwyneth Walker

This **Prayer** combines traditional texts (Psalms 4:8 and 5:8) with the closing lines of John Greenleaf Whittier's poem, "Divine Compassion." The biblical passages ask for the Lord's guidance that we may walk in the *paths of peace*. Extending the supplication, the poignant Whittier lines ask for human compassion.

*Let me keep a heart that still can feel, and eyes that still can weep.*

In today's world of increasing violence, and increasing global awareness of atrocities, we are often challenged to remain sensitive to suffering, to respond with *a heart that still can feel, and eyes that can still weep*.

Slowly, prayerfully ♩ = 108

*p*

Soprano  
Lead me, Lord, lead me in the paths of peace.

Alto  
Lead me, Lord, lead me in the paths of peace.

Tenor  
Lead me, Lord, lead me in the paths of peace.

Bass  
Lead me, Lord, lead me in the paths of peace.

Piano

Slowly, prayerfully ♩ = 108

5

S  
Make Your way plain be - fore my eyes.

A  
Make Your way plain be - fore my eyes.

T  
Make Your way plain be - fore my eyes.

B  
Make Your way plain — be - fore, be - fore my eyes.

9

S *mp* For it is You, Lord, *mf* who can

A *mp* For it is You, Lord, *mf* You, and You, a - lone, who can

T *mp* For it is You, Lord, *mf* You, and You, a - lone, who can

B *mp* Lord, — *mf* You, and You, a - lone, who can

21

S *cresc.*  
when I come to a place of rest on - ly by Your grace,

A *cresc.*  
when I come to a place of rest on - ly by Your grace,

T *unis. cresc.*  
when I come to a place of rest, and *cresc.*

B  
when I come to a place of rest, and

*cresc.*

24 *rit.* **Slower, grandly** *f* *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

S *f*  
no praise be mine,

A *f*  
no praise be mine,

T *(cresc.) f unis.*  
not by my mer - it, no praise be mine,

B *(cresc.) f p sub., gently*  
not by my mer - it, no praise - be - mine, but let me

*rit.* **Slower, grandly** *a tempo* (♩ = 108)

*(cresc.) f p*

6

35 *f*

S per - il ... for you ... a heart that still can

A per - il ... for you ... a heart that still can

T 8 per - il ... for you, let me keep a heart that still can

B per - il ... for you, let me keep a heart that still can

39 *rit. to end* *p*

S feel ... and eyes that still can weep.

A feel ... for you ... eyes that still can weep.

T 8 feel ... and eyes that still can weep. *unis. p*

B feel ... and eyes that still can weep. *p*

*rit. to end*