

# J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 28

Form: Aria (S)-Chorus-Arrio (B)-Recit (T)-Duet (A/T)-Chorus. No da capo arias, and a tonal progression that rises from A minor and then returns (a-C-e-G-c-a). Eric Chafe calls this an ascent/descent cantata, the ascent associated with God's glory (see "Tonal Allegory," 209-210. Highly varied formal design: each movement is different. Chafe suggests that the juxtaposition of "modern and archaic styles... [projects] the idea of looking backward to God's past blessings and forward to the hope of their renewal...." ("Analyzing Bach Cantatas," 20.)

Introduction and updates at [melvunger.com](http://melvunger.com).

NBA I/3; BC A20

1. S. after Christmas (BWV 152, 122, 28)

\*Gal. 4:1-7 (Through Christ we come of age and are free from the law)

\*Lk. 2:33-40 (Simeon and Anna prophesy of Christ)

Librettist: Erdmann Neumeister

FP: 30 December 1725 (St. Thomas)

## J.S. Bach Cantata No. 28

### Gottlob! nun geht das Jahr zu Ende

Concertato style featuring 2 groups (oboes & strings). One (or the other leads), followed by tutti for cadence. The motive is derived from the vocal motive following.

Soprano  
1. **Aria.** • Old year comes to close: praise God for blessings (28/1).

Instrumentation:

Ob I, II

Taille

Vln I, II

Vla

SATB

Continuo

Ob I, II  
Taille  
Vln I, II  
Vla  
Continuo

The text underscores gratitude, a theme only indirectly related to the Gospel reading, the joyous affect reinforced by the dance-like triple meter (like a waltz?) with periodic phrase structure.

**Allegro moderato.**  
Orgel. **Oboen.** **Ob. u. Streichinstr.**

A minor C major A minor C major

**5.** Ob. u. Str. Ob. Ob. u. Str.

C major G major G minor D minor A minor

**9.** Ob. Ob. u. Str. Ob. Ob. u. Str.

E7 A minor

13. **Soprano.** Concertato treatment of instruments continues, depicting the contrast between "old" and "new" year. The vocal motive is the same as the instrumental motive introduced in the foregoing ritornello.

**Gottlob, gott \_ lob!** **Gottlob, gott \_ lob!**

**Viol.** **Tutti.** **Orgel.** **Tutti.**

A minor C major A minor C major

**17.** **Viol.** **Tutti.** **Viol.** **Tutti.**

C major G major D minor A minor

This type of aria is called a "Devisenarie" or "motto aria." After the ritornello, the singer presents the first phrase of the aria as a kind of motto. This is followed by a short instrumental bridge before the aria proper begins. The motto sets the tone (and the literary perspective) for the movement.

21.

Text: Old year gives way to new year: Christologically interpreted as represented by the Gospel reading (Simeon and Anna prophecy of Christ).

Gott lob! nun geht das Jahr zu Ende, das neue

Ob. Tutti. Ob.

*piano*

C major A minor

24.

Text painting: Quick notes for the coming of the new year, followed by static notes for "ponder." Exhortation to ponder is related to the admonition "forget not" in the following movement.

rück - ket schon her an. Ge - den - ke,

Tutti. Ob. Tutti. Viol.

*pp*

C major C major G major G7

28.

den - ke, ge - den - ke, mei - ne Sec - le,

Tutti. *p*

A major D minor D minor

31.

dran, wieviel dir dei - nes Got - tes Hän - de im alten Jah - re Gut's ge -

Ob.

D minor G# dim.7 A minor B7 E minor

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35.

than, ge - den - - ke, - mei - - ne See - - le, -

Viol. Ob. u. Viol. Ob. Ob. u. Viol.

*piano*

E minor

B major pedal...

39.

dran, wie viel dir dei - - nes Got - tes Hän - de im al - ten

Viol. Ob.

*pp* *cresc.*

42.

Jah - - re Gut's ge - than, wie viel, wie viel dir deines Gottes Hän - de im al - ten

Orgel.

*legato*

E minor

46.

Jah - - re Gut's ge - than.

Ritornello: Now strings lead.

Viol. u. Ob.

*f*

E minor

G major

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49. Viol. Viol. u. Ob. Viol. Viol. u. Ob.

E minor G major G major D major D minor

53. Viol. Viol. u. Ob. Viol.

A minor E minor B major pedal... *p*

56. Viol. u. Ob. Viol. Viol. u. Ob.

*cresc.* *fz* *f* E minor

59. Stimm' ihm ein fro - hes Danklied an, stimm' an, stimm' ihm ein

Viol. Orgel. Ob. u. Viol.

*piano* G major

63. fro - hes Danklied an, ein fro - hes Danklied

Orgel. Ob. Ob. u. Viol.



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Text painting: Melisma for "joyous."

66.

an, stimm' ihm ein fro - - hes Danklied an, stimm'an, stimm' ihm ein

Viol. Orgel Ob. u. Viol.

D major D major A minor A minor

70.

fro - - hes Danklied an, ein fro - - hes Dank - lied, ein fro - -

Orgel. Ob. Ob. u. V.

G7 C major

73.

- - hes Dank - lied, stimm' ihm ein fro - - hes Danklied an;

Orgel. Viol. Orgel. Ob. forte

Ritornello: Oboes lead.

C major C major

77.

Ob. u. Viol. C major C major

80.

so wird er...

Ob. piano

C major C major

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83.

fer - ner dein ge - den - ken,

Viol. Tutti.

86.

so wird er fer - ner dein ge - den - ken und mehr

Ob. Viol. piano

A minor

(C7) F major

89.

zum neu.en Jahre schen - ken, so wird er fer - ner dein ge - den - ken

Tutti. Ob. Viol. Ob.

A major D minor

G7

C major

93. Text painting: Long melisma represents God remembering. In contrast to the exhortation for people to remember (characterized by stillness, in mm. 25-26), God's remembering is active. Petzoldt suggests it represents the blessings promised for the new year. See Petzoldt 2:270-71.

Viol. Ob. Viol. Ob.

G# dim.

E7

A minor

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97.

ken und mehr zum neu en Jah re

*Tutti.* *Viol.* *Tutti.*

G major G minor D minor A minor

100.

schen ken, so wird er fer ner dein ge den ken und mehr zum

*Ob.* *Tutti.* *Ob.* *Tutti.*

*pp* *cresc.*

E major pedal... A minor

103.

neu en Jah re schen ken, und mehr zum neu en Jah re schen

*fz* *mf* *Orgel.*

A minor A7 D minor

106.

ken, so wird er fer ner dein ge denken und mehr zum neu en Jah re schen ken.

*mf* *Ob.*

E7 A minor Dal Segno. A minor

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This movement is perhaps taken from an older work. But see side note.

•Exhortation: Bless the Lord, O my soul: Paraphrase of Psalm. 103:1-6 (28/2); the text is first stanza of the hymn "Nun lob, mein Seel." The choral ensemble now responds and internalizes the soprano's exhortation to praise God for his blessings, which provides hope for future blessings, as promised in the dictum of the next (3rd) movement. The style of the movement (archaic, alla breve motet style, including instrumental doubling) contrasts sharply with the modern dance style of the foregoing movement. The 12 chorale phrases are prepared in the lower voices in different ways.



## (Coro.) No. 2. 1. Alla breve. (Andante con moto.)

Cornetto, Ob I, Vln I  
Tbn I, Ob II, Vln II  
Tbn II, Vla, Taille  
Tbn III

**Soprano.**  
Chorale text phrase 1. Text painting: Rising diatonic fourths to depict ascending praise. Nun

**Alto.**  
Tenor line prefigures the soprano chorale line

**Tenore.**  
Nun lob', mein' Seel', den Her - ren, den Her -

**Basso.**  
Nun lob', mein' Seel', den Her - ren, nun lob', mein' Seel', den

The rising diatonic fourth plays a central role in "Gratias"/"Dona nobis" movements of the B-minor Mass.

The chorale is different from the one that ends the cantata. Each of the 12 lines of text are prepared in the lower 3 voices, before the chorale phrase appears in the soprano, but each line is prepared differently. In some cases, the material is derived from the chorale tune, in others, it is not.

**Alla breve.** Nun lob', mein' Seel', den Her - ren, den Her -

**Streichorch., Ob., Tromp., Pos.**  
Ascending diatonic 4th is inversion of chorale opening (in diminution).

C major C major

7. lob', mein' Seel', den Her - ren, ren, nun lob', mein' Seel', den Her - ren, den Her - Her-ren, den Her - ren, nun lob', mein' Seel', den Her - ren, den Her - ren, nun lob', mein' Seel', den

C major E7 A minor

13.

**Chorale text phrase 2.**  
Descending thirds related to chorale tune.

ren, was in mir ist, den Na - men, den ren, was in mir ist, den Namen sein, den Na - men sein, was in mir ist, Her - ren, was in mir ist, den Na - men sein, was in mir ist, den

espr. (D7) G major G7 C major



19.

Descending third

was in mir ist, den Na - men sein!  
 Na - - men sein, was in mir ist, was in mir ist, den Na - - men  
 - den Namen sein, was in mir ist, was in mir ist, den Na - men  
 Na - men sein, was in mir ist, den Na - men sein, den Na - men

*dim.*

C major G7

25.

**A**

A minor

Second of the Stollen of bar form: Music of mm. 1-25 is repeated (mm. 25-49).

Sein

sein! *Chorale text phrase 3.* Sein Wohlthat thut er meh -  
 sein! Sein Wohl - that thut er meh - - ren, sein Wohlthat thut er -  
 sein! Sein Wohlthat thut er meh -

*p*

**A** Ascending diatonic 4th is inversion of chorale opening (in diminution).

D7

31.

C major

Wohlthat thut er meh - - ren,  
 ren, sein Wohl - that thut er meh -  
 meh - - ren, sein Wohlthat thut er meh -  
 ren, sein Wohlthat thut er meh - ren, sein Wohlthat thut er

*p*

C major E7 A minor



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55.

Alto prefigures chorale line.

dir dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben, hat dir dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben, dein' Sünd'

ge - ben, hat dir dein' Sünd', dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben, hat

ge - ben, hat dir dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben, hat dir dein'

Ascending chromatic tetrachord

Deceptive cadence

Deceptive cadence

G minor

G major

A major

A minor

G minor

G7

C major

D major

B7

E minor

B7

C major

E7

61.

Hat dir dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben

ver - ge - ben, hat dir dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben, dein' Sünd'

dir dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben, dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben, dein' Sünd' ver - ge -

Sünd' ver - ge - ben, hat dir dein' Sünd' ver - ge - ben, dein' Sünd' ver -

Deceptive cadence

67.

A minor

C7

D dim.

C major

(D7)

E7

G major

F major

A7

D minor

Chorale text phrase 6. Text painting: Chromaticism and limping rhythm with leaps to depict "Schwachheit" (weakness).

ver - ge - ben und heilt dein' Schwach - heit gross, und heilt dein' Schwach -

ben und heilt dein' Schwach - heit gross, dein' Schwachheit

Independent material in contrary motion.

ge - ben und heilt dein' Schwach - heit, dein' Schwachheit

*dolce*

D major

D7

G minor

A7

(D7)

(E7)









111.

D

—nimmt dich in sei-nen Schoss, mit reichem Trost be - schüt - tet, mit reichem Trost be -  
 dich - in - sei - nen Schoss, mit reichem Trost be - schüt - tet, mit reichem  
 Schoss, in - sei - nen Schoss, mit rei - chem Trost be -

C# dim.7 D minor D minor G major C major

119.

mit rei - chem Trost be - schüt - tet,  
 schüt - tet, mit rei - chem Trost be - schüt - tet, mit reichem Trost  
 Trost be - schüt - tet, mit reichem Trost be - schüt - tet, mit rei - chem  
 schüt - tet, mit rei - chem Trost be - schüt - tet

125. C7 F major

Chorale text phrase 10. Lower voices prefigure the soprano statement with the chorale's melodic material.

be - schüt - tet, ver - jüugt dem Ad - ler gleich, ver - jüugt dem Ad - ler  
 Trost be - schüt - tet, ver - jüugt dem Ad - ler gleich, ver - jüugt dem  
 - - - tet, ver - jüugt dem Ad - ler gleich, -

F major G major C major D7 G major

133.

ver - jü ngt dem Ad - ler gleich,  
gleich, verjü ngt dem Ad - ler gleich, verjü ngt dem Ad - ler, dem  
Ad - ler gleich, verjü ngt dem Ad - ler gleich, verjü ngt dem Ad - ler, dem  
dem Adler gleich, verjü ngt dem Ad - ler gleich, verjü ngt dem Ad - ler, dem

E7 E minor D7 G major G7 C major

140.

Lower voices prepare the soprano statement with material derived from the chorale line, in canon.

Ad - ler gleich. Der Kön'g schafft Recht, be - hü - tet, der  
Ad - ler gleich. Der Kön'g schafft Recht, be - hü - tet, der Kön'g schafft Recht, be -  
Ad - ler gleich. Der Kön'g schafft Recht, be - hü - tet, der Kön'g schafft

E

148.

Der Kön'g schafft Recht, be - hü - tet,  
Kön'g schafft Recht, be - hü - tet, der Kön'g schafft Recht, be - hü -  
hü - tet, be - hü - tet, der Kön'g schafft Recht, be - hü -  
Recht, be - hü - tet, der Kön'g schafft Recht, be - hü - tet, be - hü -

C major D7 G major







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## Nº 3. Recitativo.

(Langsam feierlich.)

Basso.

•Vox Dei: God's promise of blessing: Jer. 32:41 (28/3). This divine promise, made originally to the exiled Hebrews through the prophet Jeremiah, is applied to the Christian church.

Operatic-like patter declamation.

**Arioso, ma un poco allegro.** (♩ = ♩)

The movement is unified by a motive (rising 4th or 3rd), often heard in the continuo, and modified, especially in the voice, to capture the nuance of the text.

Neumeister has added these words in his libretto. They occur earlier and later in the biblical account. Bach sets them as recitative, the actual prophesy as arioso.

1. **So spricht der Herr:** Es soll mir ei-ne Lust sein,

Orgel. *ff*

B major

Rising 4th, E minor reminiscent of movement 2.

Text painting: "Lust" (delight/pleasure) embellished with 32nd notes.

4. soll mir ei-ne Lust sein, dass ich ih-nen Gu-tes thun soll, es soll mir ei-ne

E minor G major G major

7. Lust sein, dass ich ih-nen Gu-tes, ih-nen Gu-tes thun soll,

G major

10. und ich will sie in die-sem Lan-de pflan-zen

*legato*

G major

13.

Motive modified to stress that it will be God himself who does this.

treu - lich, und ich will sie in die - sem Lan - de - pflan -

E major

A minor

16.

zen treu - lich,

A minor

A minor

19.

von gan - zem Her - zen und von gan - zer

A minor

D major

G major

21.

Text painting: Ascending line of about an octave to emphasize "with all my soul and heart."

See - len, von gan - zem Her - zen und von gan - zer. See - len, von ganzem Herzen

C major

B7

E minor

24.

und von gan - zer See - len. a - tempo

*espr.*

E minor

E minor

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## Nº4. Recitativo.

● God is fountain, light, treasure, and Lord to his followers, who must love, honor, heed him and turn from evil ((28/4). Four metaphors for God (paired with analogous blessings) are followed by four human responses requisite to experiencing God's blessings.

Chromatic saturation in the vocal part in 10 mm., perhaps to illustrate the text that follow: "He who has God has every possible thing."

1. **Tenore.** D B E A C

Gott ist ein **Quell**, wo lau-ter **Gü-te** fleusst, Gott ist ein

*Streichorch.*  
Strings provide a kind of halo.  
*piano*

3. G major C# F# G D# F

**Licht**, wo lau-ter **Gna-de** schei-net, Gott ist ein **Schatz**, der lau-ter **Se-gen**

The metaphors for God are paired with analogous blessings.

5. A7 D major D# dim.7 B7

heisst, Gott ist ein **Herr**, der's **treu und herzlich** meinet. Wer ihn **im Glauben** liebt, in

Requisite human responses for blessing are enumerated.

8. E minor G# G major G7 C major B-flat G# dim.7

Liebe **kindlich ehrt**, sein Wort **von Herzen hört** und sich **von bösen Wegen kehrt**, dem giebt er

Chromatic saturation achieved in the vocal part, corresponding to the following sentiment: he who has God has every possible thing.

Text painting: Dim. 7 chord for "evil paths"

11. A minor C major C# dim.7 D minor

sich mit al-len Ga-ben. Wer Gott hat, der muss Al-les ha-ben.

Conclusion: Whoever has God, has everything. Text Painting: Melisma and highest note for "Alles."

G7 C major D7 C major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 28 • New Year's prayer for blessing as in the past year (28/5). Bach's probably decided to set this text as an A/T duet because it is in the first person plural, reflecting the two persons depicted in the Gospel lesson (Simeon and Anna), together acknowledging God's goodness and faithfulness. Proceeding in the Italian manner, each of the three vocal sections (separated with ritornello statements) begins imitatively, continues in free polyphony, and ends note-against-note. (See Dürr/Jones, 144.) Each section covers 2 lines of text (rhyming couplets).

**Nº 5. Duetto.**

**Allegretto.** against-note. (See Dürr/Jones, 144.)

The first section modulates from C major to G major.

Orgel u. Streichbässe.

Gigue-like dance rhythm.

Text painting: Descending arpeggios may represent downpouring of blessing (continuation of previous idea). See Petzoldt 2:273.

C major  
Continuo bass is derived from the vocal theme of the first section (varied in the second section), and is repeated as a quasi-ostinato. The descending arpeggios may represent downpouring of blessings (a continuation of the previous idea).

**5. Alto.**

**8.** Text painting: Melismas emphasize "Gesegnet" (has blessed) and the rhyming word "begegnet."

Text painting: The frequent parallel motion of the two voices depicts the text: "Wohlthun" and "Wohlsein" meet. The text is an allusion to Psalm 85:11-12: "Steadfast love (Luther 1545: Güte) and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky. Yea, the Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase."

C major  
Continuo bass treated as a quasi-ostinato.

G pedal... C major



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14.

an-der be-geg-net, Gott

D7 G major

17.

- net, dass Wohlthun und Wohlsein ein -  
hat uns im heu-ri-gen Jah-re ge-seg-net, dass Wohlthun und Wohlsein ein -

G major  
Continuo bass repeats (quasi-ostinato).  
D pedal...

20.

an-der be-geg-net.  
an-der be-geg-net.

Text painting: Voices come together to depict the text: "goodness and faithfulness will meet". See above for biblical reference.

espr.  
G major

The second section modulates from G major to A minor.

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23.

Continuo bass repeats (quasi-ostinato).  
D pedal...  
Theme is a variation of previous vocal material.

27. **Tenore.**

Wir lo - - - -

hemiola

G major G major

**B** Theme is a variation of previous vocal material.

30. **Alto.** Text painting: Melisma for "praising."

Wir lo - - - -

- ben ihn herz lich und bit - ten da - ne - ben, er

G7 A minor E major

deceptive cadence

33.

- - - - - ben ihn herzlich und

woll' auch ein glück - li - ches neu - es - Jahr ge - ben, wir lo - ben ihn herz - - -

A minor G7 C major

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36.

bit-ten da - ne - - - - - ben, er woll' auch ein glück - li - ches  
 - lich und bit - - - - - ten da - ne - - - - - ben, er woll' auch ein

39. Continuo bass repeats (quasi-ostinato). D7 E7 A minor

neu - es Jahr ge - - - - - ben.  
 glück - li - ches neu - - - - - es Jahr ge - - - - - ben.

Ritornello begins *espr.*

G# dim.7 A minor A minor  
 Continuo bass repeats (quasi-ostinato)

The third section modulates from A minor back to C major.

42.

neu - es Jahr ge - - - - - ben.  
 glück - li - ches neu - - - - - es Jahr ge - - - - - ben.

E pedal...

45.

Wir hof - - - - - fen's von sei - - - - - ner be -

Text painting: Ascending chromatic line to depict hope ("hoffen") for continued blessings from God in the new year.

Tenor now leads, the imitation (which is in quicker succession) flowing into a quasi-reprise.

hemiola

A minor A7 D minor G minor C major F major

Neumeister original had the more archaic "im Vorrath." Bach modernizes the language. See Petzoldt, 2:272.

49.

fen's von sei-ner be-harr-li-chen Gü-te und prei-sen's im Vor-aus mit  
 harr-li-chen Gü-te und prei-sen's im Vor-aus mit

Continuo bass repeats (quasi-ostinato). C pedal...

Text painting: Parallel motion reflects the first person plural "we" ("wir")...

52.

dankbar'm Ge-mü-the, wir  
 dankbar'm Ge-mü-

G7 C major

55.

hof-fen's von sei-ner be-harr-li-chen Gü-te und prei-sen's im Vor-aus mit  
 -the, und prei-sen's im Vor-aus mit

C major Continuo bass repeats (quasi-ostinato). G pedal...



58.

dankbar'm Ge - mü - the.

dankbar'm Ge - mü - the.

*espr.*

C major

61.

Final ritornello is back in C major.

Continuo bass repeats (quasi-ostinato).

G pedal...

64.

hemiola

C major

See also 16/6: The same chorale ends the cantata of 2 days later: "Herr Gott, dich loben wir," BWV 16, for New Year's Day, 1726. The text is the last stanza of "Helft mir Gotts Güte preisen.")

**Nº 6. Choral.** • New Years prayer; thanks for blessings in Christ and prayer for new year (28/6).

Soprano. 1/5

All' solch' dein' Güt' wir prei - sen, Va - ter im Himmels - thron,} die du uns thust be - wei - sen durch Chri - stum, dei - nen Sohn,}

All' solch' dein' Güt' wir prei - sen, Va - ter im Himmels - thron,} die du uns thust be - wei - sen durch Chri - stum, dei - nen Sohn,}

All' solch' dein' Güt' wir prei - sen, Va - ter im Him - mels - thron,} die du uns thust be - wei - sen durch Christum, dei - nen Sohn,}

All' solch' dein' Güt' wir prei - sen, Va - ter im Himmels - thron,} die du uns thust be - wei - sen durch Chri - stum, dei - nen Sohn,}

Streichorch., Ob., Tromp., Pos.

A minor

A minor

A minor

(Original key returns.)

This simple chorale is a kind of summary, hearkening back to sentiments in previous movements to remember God's blessings and to praise God for them. (Compare the psalm paraphrase in movement 2, encapsulated in Psalm 103:2 "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.") Petzoldt notes that the chorale brings together 3 aspects of Simeon and Anna's utterances in the Gospel lesson, as explained by the theologian of Bach's day, Johann Olearius: Harmonia (harmony), Homologia (confession) Symphonia (accord). See Petzoldt 2:274.

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Neumeister libretto has "friedsam"; the original parts have diverging forms of the word. See Neumann, "Sämtliche Kantaten Texte," 1967, p. 40.

Abgesang of bar form.

9.

und bit - ten fer - ner dich: Gieb uns ein fried - lich Jah - - re, für

und bit - ten fer - ner dich: Gieb uns ein fried - lich Jah - - re, für

und bit - ten fer - ner dich: Gieb uns ein fried - lich Jah - - re, für

und bit - ten fer - ner dich: Gieb uns ein fried - lich Jah - - re, für

A minor G major G7

Neumeister: "vor"

13.

al - lem Leid be - wah - - re und nähr' uns mil - dig - lich!

al - lem Leid be - wah - - re und nähr' uns mil - dig - lich!

al - lem Leid be - wah - - re und nähr' uns mil - dig - lich!

al - lem Leid be - wah - - re und nähr' uns mil - dig - lich!

C major A minor A major