

SINGING THE PSALMS

The psalms are pointed for singing. They may be sung to the simple tones on the following page or to other systems of chant.

Each psalm verse has two parts; the division is marked by an asterisk (*). Tones 1 through 5 are divided into two parts at the single bar line. The asterisk (*) above this bar line indicates how the verse division fits the tone division. The first note (□) in each part of the tone is a reciting note, to which one or more syllables or words are sung. The point (˘) above a syllable (or word) indicates the syllable (or word) where the singers move from the reciting note to the black notes.

Example. The first two verses of Psalm 8 are sung to tone 1 as shown below:

O LORD our Lord,* how exalted is your name in all the world!
 Out of the mouths of in-fants and children* your majesty is praised a - bove the heavens.

Tones 6 through 10 are double tones, providing music for two Psalm verses. The double bar indicates the division between the verses. Each verse is divided into two parts and sung in the same manner as to tones 1–5.

Example. The first two verses of Psalm 8 are sung to tone 6 as shown below:

O LORD our Lord,* how exalted is your name in all the world!
 Out of the mouths of in-fants and children* your majesty is praised a-bove the heavens.

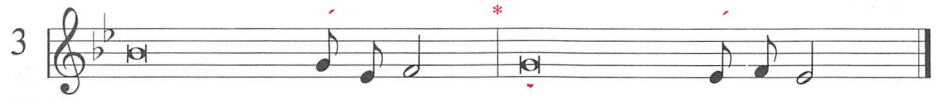
Note. From the point (˘) to the asterisk (*) or from the point (˘) to the end of the verse, there are usually three syllables—one for each of the three remaining notes. When there are more than three syllables, the additional syllables are sung to the half (last) note. Occasionally a three-syllable word is sung to the two black notes by eliding the middle syllable, for example: *Ev-er-y* becomes *ev-ry*, *of-fer-ing* becomes *of-f'ring*, *mar-vel-ous* becomes *mar-v'lous*. *Blessed* is sung *blest*.

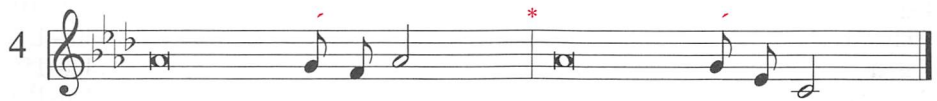
Any psalm can be sung to any tone. The result is better, however, when the tone is matched to the text. The mood of the tone (bright, somber) should fit the mood of the text. The double tones (6–10) usually are best for longer texts, especially those with an even number of verses.

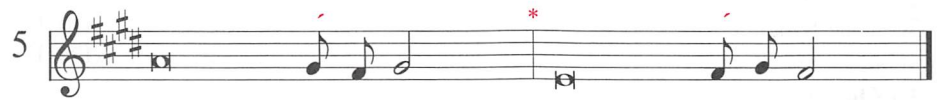
Canticles 15, 18, 19, 20, and 21 are pointed for singing to these or similar tones. They may also be sung to the tones of canticles 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

1 

2 

3 

4 

5 

6 

7 

8 

9 

10 