

SATB w/ piano  
Duration: c. 3:15

Choral Music of Douglas Byler

# Night Prayer

Text by Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

adapted by the composer

Music by Douglas Byler

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## About “Night Prayer”

Saint Augustine of Hippo (354 -430) was a Roman African, early Christian theologian and philosopher from Numidia whose writings influenced the development of Western Christianity and Western philosophy. He was the bishop of Hippo Regius in north Africa and is viewed as one of the most important Church Fathers in Western Christianity for his writings in the Patristic Period. Among his most important works are *The City of God*, *On Christian Doctrine*, and *Confessions*. (Wikipedia)

This translation and setting of Augustine’s prayer incorporates a simple melody for the first three lines, which is heard three times throughout the course of the piece. The rest of the text is only heard once in the middle of the piece, in little segments passed between parts and then building to a fortissimo on the text “And all for your love’s sake.” The main motive in the piano is a descending pattern of fourths, initially heard in the introduction in 3 sets of 3, and forms much of the motivic basis for the rest of the work. This setting was commissioned and premiered by the Wesley Singers of Blacksburg United Methodist Church in Blacksburg, VA, conducted by Cristen Mitchell.

### Text:

*Watch, O Lord*

*with those who wake, or watch or weep tonight;*

*And give your angels\* charge over those who sleep.*

*Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ.*

*Rest your weary ones.*

*Bless your dying ones.*

*Soothe your suffering ones.*

*Pity your afflicted ones.*

*Shield your joyful ones.*

*And all for your love’s sake.*

*Amen.*

\*original text includes “and saints”



**Douglas Byler** (b. 1988) is a composer and real estate entrepreneur from the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. He received a Bachelor of Music degree in Composition from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA and is currently studying composition at Westminster Choir College in Princeton, NJ. His music has won several awards and has been performed across the United States.

# Night Prayer

Augustine of Hippo (354-430),  
adapted by the composer

Douglas Byler (ASCAP)

The score is written for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Piano. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano part begins with a *p* dynamic and a *rubato, contemplative* tempo. The vocal parts enter at measure 4 with a unison line. The tempo changes to *andante* at measure 6, with a metronome marking of 88. The piano accompaniment includes markings for *tempo* and *pulling back*. The lyrics are: "Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep to - night; And give your an - gels charge o - ver".

Soprano  
Alto

Tenor  
Bass

Piano

*p* *rubato, contemplative*

*pulling back*

SA unison

*andante* ♩ = 88  
*mp*

SA

Watch, O Lord, with those who

*andante* ♩ = 88

*tempo*

*pulling back*

*p*

SA

wake, or watch, or weep to - night; And give your an - gels charge o - ver

13

SA

those who sleep.

17

TB

*mf*

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep to - night; And

21

SA

SA unison *pp*

...o - ver those who

TB

give your an - gels charge o - ver those who sleep.

26 *mf*

SA sleep. Rest your wear - y ones. —

tenors *mf*

altos

TB Tend your sick ones, O Lord Christ.

26 *mf*

31 *p* *cres. poco a poco*

SA Bless Your dy - ing ones. Soothe — Your suff'r - ing ones.

TB Soothe Your suff'r - ing ones.

31 *cres. poco a poco*

SA *ten.*  
Pi - ty Your af - flic - ted ones. Shield Your joy - ful ones. And

TB

35 *ten.*

SA *f* *ff* *dim.*  
all for your love's sake. A - men,

TB *f*  
all for your love's sake. A - men. A -

40 *f* *ff* *dim.*

45

SA *mp* *p*

A - men. And all for your love's sake.

TB *dim.* *mp* *p*

men, A - men. for your love's sake.

45

*mf* *mp* *p*

50

SA *mp*

Watch, O Lord, with those who wake, or watch, or weep to - night, And give your an-gels

TB *mp*

50

*pp*

*8va*

(play these notes in random sequence and duration, to create a sort of drone effect.)

Night Prayer

SA charge o - ver those who sleep. A - men, *dim. poco a poco*

TB charge o - ver those who sleep. o - ver those who sleep, *dim. poco a poco* A -

8va

55

(transition aleatoric notes into tempo with no break)

*dim. poco a poco*

\* *ped.* \*

SA *pp* A - men, A - men.

TB *pp* men, A - men, A - men.

61

8va

*pp*