

NBA I/10; BC A57

Easter Monday (BWV 66, 6)

*Acts 10:34-43. (Peter preaches to Cornelius's household.)

*Luke 24:13-35. (Jesus meets the disciples on the way to Emmaus.)

Librettist: Unknown; perhaps Christian Weiß the elder

FP: 2 April 1725 (St. Thomas in morning, St. Nicholas at Vespers)

This is the first cantata from Bach's second Leipzig cycle (the chorale cantata cycle) that is not a chorale cantata (in the sense that one chorale unifies the entire work). Thus, instead of beginning with a chorale fantasia, the work begins with a through-composed setting of a scriptural verse. As explained in the side note, the reason for the change may have been that Bach had lost his librettist. The central literary theme is that of light and darkness, derived from the Gospel reading.

J.S. Bach

Cantata No. 6

The opening chorus is in ABA form, with sarabande-like sections framing a central fugue in 4/4 meter. For Bach, the sarabande appears to have carried special meaning, able to portray the deepest expression of introspective melancholy (e.g., the famous chaconne for violin (in BWV 1004), or the sarabandes in the cello suites). See note for more.

Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden

Instrumentation:

First Cantata after the Chorale Cantatas in Cycle 2 with the Theme of Light & Darkness.

Ob I, II

Ob da caccia

Vln I, II

Vla

Violoncello piccolo (see side note)

SATB

Continuo with Harpsichord, Organ

(Along with BWV 109, this cantata

proves dual continuo accompani-

ment was sometimes used.)

The gloomy mood of the 2

disciples walking to Emmaus after

Jesus' crucifixion is depicted here

with the color of 3 oboes, minor

key, pulsing strings, and drooping

motives. The text's reference to the

onset of evening becomes a metaphor in the

libretto for spiritual darkness.

6/1.

(Andante $\text{♩} = 72$.)

Prayer: Remain with us for night approaches: Luke 24:29 (6/1). This is the request of the 2 disciples in the Gospel reading. Here "evening" also recalls the account of God walking in the Garden of Eden in the cool of the day, after Adam and Eve had sinned (Gen. 3:8).

Ritornello derived from vocal opening. Motive is repeated in vocal opening (It is reminiscent of "Ruht wohl" in the St. John Passion, heard 3 days earlier.)

C minor. Triple meter with accent on beat 2 suggests a sarabande. Throbbing unison notes suggest melancholic yearning, associated with the opening words of the text: "remain with us." Martin Petzoldt suggests that they represent the conscience knocking ("Bach-Kommentar 2:727).

For Alfred Dürr's comments on the libretto, see note.

A-flat major

E-flat major

E-flat major

E-flat major

The sarabande rhythm results in some accents on "weak" words or syllables—

presumably because the rhythm is more important than the text declamation. Largely homophonic sections in 3/4 frame a double fugue in common time. The opening motive is similar to the "ruht wohl" motive that begins the final chorus of the St. John Passion, resulting in an elegiac mood.

For biblical background, see note.

Text painting: A descending line in the soprano and Ob I accompanied by sweet parallel thirds depicts the day drawing to a close (the setting of the sun).

C minor

For observations on the first movement by Karin Wollschläger, see note.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

63.

bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,
 uns, bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,
 bei uns, bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,
 uns, bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns, dennes will

Obs

G minor G minor C minor

69.

denn es will A - - - bend werden und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - -
 denn es will Abend werden und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - -
 denn es will Abend werden und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - -
 A - - bend wer - - den und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - -

Oboes have pulsing D.

G minor

74.

get.
 get.
 get.
 get.

Strings

G minor G7 C minor G minor

hemiola

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

Central Fugal Section. The beginning is accompanied by continuo alone. Faster tempo suggests agitation and fear, which culminates in a unison statement of "remain with us." Drone figure (like a psalm tone) & both fugue subjects are introduced immediately; subject entries overlap somewhat.

80. Andante. (♩ = 80.)

Fugue Subject 2

Double Fugue

Both fugue subjects sink downward to depict "geneiget" (the "declining" of the day).



The earlier throbbing is taken over in Subject 1.

Fugue Subject 1

Andante.

Text painting: Long notes (like a motto or drone/psalm tone figure) for "remain with us."

Continuo only.

Inflection for "Abend"

G major

C minor

E dim.7

83.

C minor

G minor

86.

F minor

Text painting: Descending lines for approaching evening.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

89.

- bend wer - - den und der
 und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - - get, hat sich ge - nei -
 den, denn es will A - - - bend wer - - den, denn es will A - -
 get. Bleib' bei uns, denn es will A - - - bend wer - -

Ob I, Vin I

Instruments double voices.

C7 F minor

92. C minor

Tag hat sich ge - nei - - get und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - get, es will A -
 get, denn es will A - - - - bend werden und der Tag hat sich ge - nei -
 - bend wer - den und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - - get.
 den, denn es will A - - - - bend wer -

F minor C minor G minor A7

95. F minor

- bend werden, denn es will A - - - - bend wer -
 get, denn es will A - - - - bend wer - - - den.
 Bleib' bei uns, denn es will A - -
 den und der Tag hat sich ge - nei -

+Ob da caccia, Via

E D major D7 G minor C minor C7

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

98.

den, denn es will A - - - - - bend werden und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - get.

Bleib' +Ob II, Vln II bei uns, denn es will A - - - - -

- - - - - bend wer - - - - - den, es will A - bend wer - - - - -

get, der Tag hat sich ge - nei - get, denn es will A - - - - - bend wer - - - - -

F major B-flat major B-flat 7 E-flat major

101.

+Ob I, Vln I

Bleib' bei uns, denn der Tag hat sich ge -

- - - - - bend wer - - - - - den und der Tag hat sich ge - nei -

denn es will A - - - - - bend wer - den. Bleib' bei -

- den, A - - - - - bend wer - den, denn es will A - - - - - bend werden..

E-flat 7 A-flat major

104.

nei - get, hat sich ge - nei - get, denn es will A - - - - - bend wer -

- - - - - get, und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - - - - - get, denn es will A - - - - -

uns, denn es will A - - - - - bend wer -

Bleib' bei uns,

A-flat major

107.

den, denn es will A - - - bend werden und der
 - - - bend wer - - - den, A - - - bend wer - - - den und der
 den und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - - get, hat sich ge - neiget, und der
 denn es will A - - - bend wer - - - den, denn es will A - - -

Ob I, Vln I intone "Bleib bei uns."

F minor F minor G7

110.

Tag hat sich ge - nei - - - get. Bleib' bei uns,
 Tag hat sich ge - nei - - - get. Bleib' Unison bei uns,
 Tag hat sich ge - nei - - - get. Bleib' bei uns,
 - bend wer - - - den. Bleib' bei uns,

Ob 1 Vln I Subject 2
 Subject 1 Vln II Ob da caccia via

C minor C minor

The fugal agitation culminates (and is joined by) a unison cry by voices for help—the agitated section ends with unison, syncopated cry to "remain with us" while instruments present 2 more entries of subject 1 and 1 entry of subject 2.

113.

(Tempo I.) Shortened sarabande section returns.
 bleib' bei uns! Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,
 bleib' bei uns! Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,
 bleib' bei uns! Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,
 bleib' bei uns! Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns, denn es will

(Tempo I.)

Throbbing unison notes in the strings return, depicting the melancholic yearning associated with "remain with us."

C minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

118. Text painting: Descending motives and descending order of entries to depict nightfall.

118. Musical score for voice and strings. The lyrics are: "denn es will A - - bend wer - den und der Tag hat sich ge - nei -". The score features a descending melodic line in the voice parts and a descending string accompaniment. The strings are highlighted in orange.

123. Musical score for voice and strings. The lyrics are: "get. Bleib' bei uns, bleib' bei uns,". The score features a descending melodic line in the voice parts and a descending string accompaniment. The strings are highlighted in orange. Chord changes are marked: G, A-flat major, and E-flat major.

128. Musical score for voice, oboes, and strings. The lyrics are: "denn es will A - - bend werden und der Tag hat sich ge - nei - get.". The score features a descending melodic line in the voice parts and a descending string accompaniment. The strings are highlighted in orange. Chord changes are marked: E-flat major, E-flat major, hemiola, F minor, C minor, and C major. Instrument parts for Ob I, Ob II, and Ob da caccia are also shown.

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6/2. **Aria.** •Prayer: O Christ, remain our light (6/2). Physical light becomes metaphor for spiritual light. Alto is often the voice of the believing soul. See Petzoldt, "Bach-Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 541.

(Andante, ♩ = 104.)

Obbligato oboe da caccia (used in a later performance). The ritornello is based on opening vocal material. The upbeat mood (with major key, minuet rhythm, and pizzicato bass) is established by the singer's motto or "devise," which identifies Jesus' royal station. Nevertheless, the low timbre of the voice and obbligato shows Bach's sensitivity to varying degrees of light and shade.

13. **Alto.**

Alto is often the voice of intimate, heartfelt faith. The text of the motto apparently alludes to Mark 14:61, where Pilate asks Jesus, "Are you Christ, the son of the highly exalted one?" Since the disciples in the Gospel reading did not at first recognize Jesus, it is appropriate that this aria focuses on the identity of Jesus before moving on to supplication.

Text painting: upward leap to depict "highly praised."

For biblical background, see note.

19.

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.

25.

31. *tr*
 sein ent - ge - - gen, lass es dir nicht sein ent - ge - - gen, *tr*

G7 C minor B-flat 7 E-flat major

37. *tr*
 dass wir itzt vor dei - - nem Thron ei - ne Bit - - te *tr*

E-flat major E-flat 7

43. Text painting: rising figure for prayerful petition followed by descending line for more literal rendering of the repeated words, "laying down."
tr
 nie - der - le - - gen, ei - - ne Bit - te nie - der - le - - gen: *tr*

A-flat major F7 B-flat major F major F7 B-flat major B-flat major

49. *tr*

55. The low timbre of alto and oboe da caccia underscore the reference to the encroaching darkness.
 Bleib, ach blei - - be un - ser *tr*

B-flat major G7 C minor

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61. *tr*
Licht, bleib', ach blei - - - - - be un - ser Licht, weil die -

C minor C7 F minor

66. Fin - - - - - ster - niss ein - bricht, bleib', ach blei - - -

E-flat 7 A-flat major

72. - - - - - be un - ser Licht, weil die Fin - - -

Text painting: Descending whole-tone line for "darkness" with tonal descent to extreme number of flats.

E-flat 7 A-flat major C7 F minor B-flat 7 E-flat minor A-flat 7

78. - - - - - sterniss ein - bricht,

D-flat minor E-flat 7 A-flat major A-flat major

84. *tr*

E-flat 7 A-flat major

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

89.

bleib', ach blei - - - - - be un - ser Licht, bleib', ach blei - - - - -

p

F7 B-flat minor B-flat minor B-flat 7 E-flat minor

95.

- - - - - be un - ser Licht, weil die Fin - - - - - sterniss einbricht,

B-flat 7 E-flat minor F7 B-flat major

101.

bleib', ach blei - - - - - be un - ser Licht, weil die

NBA has A-flat

B-flat 7 E-flat 7 E-flat major A-flat major B-flat major E-flat major G7

108. Text painting: Descending whole-tone line for "darkness" with tonal descent to extreme number of flats.

114.

Fin - - - - - ster_nissein_bricht.

C minor F7 B-flat minor E-flat 7 A-flat minor D-flat 7 B-flat 7 E-flat major dal segno

Chorale Aria
14 (156) 6/3

●Prayer: Thy Word is our light, help us keep it to end (6/3). This chorale is different from the one that ends the cantata, a phenomenon found in Bach's first cantata cycle (before the chorale cantata cycle). Music is repeated for the second of two chorale stanzas. Bach later transcribed this movement for organ as one of the Schübler chorales (BWV 649).

Instrumentation: Obligato by violoncello piccolo (see side note) plus continuo. The virtuosic obbligato, with its biplanar, leaping, wide-ranging melody, is an effective foil to the chorale tune with its slower, conjunct movement. It appears to symbolize the flickering "Light of God's Word" in the church's lamp stand, referenced at the end of the first stanza and in the following movement.

Choral.

1. (Allegro ♩ = 104.)

Violoncello piccolo (see note) *mf*

Motive derived from chorale.

B-flat major C7 F major

4/48.

B-flat 7 E-flat major F7 B-flat major F7

8/52.

C7 F major B-flat 7 E-flat major A minor 7

11/55.

D minor G minor C minor F7 B-flat major

13/57.

F7

The chorale represents the church's response. It contrasts the metaphorical darkness of evening with the light of Christ/the divine Word. The first stanza's prayer that the light not be extinguished foreshadows the threat implied in the following recitative—that Christ could overthrow the church's lampstand (a reference to Revelation 2:5). The second stanza's reference to keeping Word and Sacrament pure applies the image of "remaining" to the church ("remaining faithful"), while the association of Word and Eucharistic Sacrament reflects the Gospel reading for the day, where the 2 disciples do not recognize Jesus until he breaks bread with them.

The individualized prayer of the preceding movement gives way to a corporate prayer by the Church. Bach chooses one of the tunes associated with this chorale.

For biblical background, see note.

15/59. Soprano.

Ach bleib' bei uns, Herr Je - - - su
In die - ser letzt - - be - - trüb - - - ten

B-flat major B-flat 7 E-flat major

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19/63.

Christ, weil
Zeit ver -

E-flat major F7 B-flat major

Evening understood metaphorically as spiritual darkness.

23/67.

es nun A - bend wor - den
leih' uns, Herr, Be - stän - dig -

D7 G minor B-flat 7 E-flat major F7 B-flat major

26/70.

ist,
keit,

B-flat major B-flat 7 E-flat major F7 B-flat major

29/73.

dein gött - lich
dass wir dein

B-flat major B-flat major D7

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

Christ's divine Word enlightens, just as the confused disciples in the Gospel reading are led to understanding by Jesus' exposition of Old Testament scriptures and the subsequent "breaking of bread."

33/77

Wort, das hel - - le Licht,
Wort und Sa - - kra - - ment

G minor F7 G minor C7 F major

36/80. In the Gospel reading, Christ explains his death and resurrection to the 2 confused disciples in light of the Old Testament scriptures (Word).

lass rein

F major D major

The prayer to keep the Word and Sacrament pure applies the image of "remaining" to the church ("remaining faithful"), while the linking of Word and Sacrament reflects the Gospel reading for the day, where the 2 disciples do not recognize Jesus (are not enlightened) until he breaks bread with them. "Breaking bread" becomes a common New Testament term for the Eucharist.

39/83. The prayer that the church's light not be extinguished points to the implied threat in the next recitative, which alludes to Christ's words in Revelation 2:5: "Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent."

39/83.

ja bei uns aus - - lö - - schen nicht!
be - halt'n bis an un - - ser End!

D7 G minor B-flat major B-flat 7 B-flat major E-flat major B-flat 7

43/87.

E-flat major F7

46.

1. 2. 90.

B-flat major B-flat major F7 Dal Segno.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

Secco

6/4. **Recitativo.** •Darkness has triumphed in many places (6/4). Pervasive spiritual darkness is depicted with chromatic saturation and unexpected chord progressions.

Chromatic Saturation in the vocal part in 9 mm.

For biblical background, see note.



1. **Basso.** E G A F C# B-flat D

Es hat die Dunkelheit an vielen Orten überhandgenommen. Woher ist

Text painting: Large leap downward for "darkness."

Secco

A7 C# dim.7 D minor

3. aber dieses kommen? Bloss da-her, weil sowohl die Kleinen, als die Grossen nicht in Ge-

Text painting: Chromatic descending bass line and tonal descent "flatward" in the circle of fifths for descent into spiritual darkness, leading to judgment. Martin Petzoldt suggests the reference to "small and "great" alludes to Paul's statements about Jews and Greeks (all are sinners). See "Bach-Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 729.

F major F7 D major G7 C7 F7

6. rech-tig-keit vor dir, o Gott, ge-wandelt und wi-der ih-re Christenpflicht ge-

E-flat 6. A-flat

B-flat major B-flat 7 G major C7 B dim.7

8. handelt. Drum hast du auch den Leuch-ter un-ge-stossen.

With a vocal line that descends almost 2 octaves, Bach sets this allusion to Christ's warning in Revelation 2:5 to the church in Ephesus: "Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent."

G7 C minor A dim. F# dim.7 E-flat major G minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

•Prayer: Jesus, keep us with the light of thy Word (6/5). Martin Petzoldt suggests that this aria is to be understood as a prayer by the individual, which moves in the next movement to a prayer by the Church. See "Bach-Kommentar," vol. 1, p. 729. In this regard, he argues that the last three movements parallel the first three.

6/5. Aria.

(Moderato ♩ = 72.)

1. Vln I

Strings

Ritornello *mf* Ritornello derived from vocal line.

G minor

A7

4.

D minor

Alfred Dürr argues that the main motive is to be understood as a reference to the cross; similarly, Martin Petzoldt notes that the name of Jesus is synonymous with the cross and the power to save from sin. See Dürr/Jones, "Die Kantaten," 280, Petzoldt, "Bach-Kommentar," vol. 2, p. 729. However, the monotonous, trudging rhythm of the motive may also depict walking (as represented by the 2 disciples in the Gospel account walking with Jesus, and by the text's reference to avoiding the path of sin).

Tenore.

7.

The triplet passages may be intended to represent the shimmering light (see the tenor's melisma in m. 34).

Rising triplets are editorial.

Je - su, lass uns auf dich se - - hen,

Cross figure

Vln I

Vln II & Vla tacet

D major

G minor

G minor

For biblical background, see note.



9.

+Vln II & Vla

mf

p

G7

C minor

F# dim.7

G minor

Je - su, lass uns

This type of aria is called a "Devisenarie" or "motto aria" (see above at movement no. 2). Here the motto may allude to Hebrews 12:1-2 ("... looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross...").

12.

auf dich se - hen, dass wir nicht auf den Sündenwegen gehen, auf den

C# dim.7

D minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

15.

Sün - den - - we - - - gen ge - - hen!

The end of each vocal section is accompanied by the end of the ritornello (triplets).

Ritornello

B-flat major
D minor

D minor

D7

18.

Je - - su, lass uns auf dich se - hen,

G minor

G7 C minor

21.

Je - su, lass uns auf dich se - hen, dass wir

D7

G minor

F7

Text painting: The earlier passage is transposed down a major third so that it modulates far "flatward" (to B-flat minor) for "paths of sin" (compare mm. 13-16).

24.

nicht auf den Sün - den - wegen gehen, auf den Sün - den - we - -

F7

B-flat minor

B-flat minor

B-flat minor

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

26. *tr.*
- gen ge - hen!

Ritornello

G7 C minor A7 D major

29. Lass das

Vln I up 8va

G7 C minor

C minor Bass derived from primary motive.

32. Licht, das Licht, lass - das Licht, das Licht dei - nes Worts uns hel - ler

NBA: "helle"

C minor C7 F minor B-flat 7 E-flat major

Text painting: Melisma of triplets to represent the shimmering light.

34. schei - - - - - nen und dich je - - - - - der-zeit-treu

E-flat major

The poet asks Jesus to let his word shine brightly (reflecting the Gospel story of Jesus enlightening the disciples on the way to Emmaus after his resurrection) and "dich jederzeit treu meinen"—to always incline him faithfully to Jesus.

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Martin Petzoldt suggests that the melisma on "meinen" (i.e., to mean, or to be inclined toward), especially in mm. 42–43, is to stimulate the believer's agency. See "Bach-Kommentar," vol. 2, p. 730. Furthermore, giving "meinen" a melisma serves to match the rhyming couplet (the word "scheinen").

36.

mei - - - - - nen, je - der-zeit treu mei - nen! Lass das Licht

G minor D major E-flat major G7 C minor

Detailed description: This system shows measures 36-38. The vocal line features a melisma on "meinen" with a triplet and a trill. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Chord changes are indicated below the piano part.

39.

dei_nes_Worts uns hel_ler schei - - - - - nen

NBA: "helle"

F7 B-flat major F# dim.7 D7

Detailed description: This system shows measures 39-40. The vocal line has a melisma on "heller" with a trill. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern. Chord changes are indicated below the piano part.

41.

Text painting: Melisma for "meinen" (here: to be inclined toward). See above note.

und dich jederzeit treu mei - - - - -

G minor

Detailed description: This system shows measures 41-43. The vocal line features a melisma on "meinen" with a triplet. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern. A chord change to G minor is indicated below the piano part.

44.

- - - - - nen, dich je - derzeit treu mei - nen!

The end of each vocal section is accompanied by the end of the ritornello (triplets).

Ritornello

G minor

Detailed description: This system shows measures 44-46. The vocal line has a melisma on "meinen" with a trill. The piano accompaniment features a ritornello of triplets. A chord change to G minor is indicated below the piano part.

J.S. Bach - Church Cantatas BWV 6

47.

A major D minor G7 C minor F7 B-flat major F# dim.7 D7

50.

G minor G minor G minor

Choral. •Prayer for King of Kings to protect Christendom (6/6). This is stanza 2 of 3 in the 1542 chorale 6/6. "Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort" by Martin Luther (1483-1546).

+Ob I Vln I
+Ob II Vln II
+Ob da caccia Vla

Soprano. 1.
Alto. Be-weis' dein' Macht, Herr Je - su Christ, der du Herr al - ler Her - ren bist, be-
Tenore. Be - weis' dein' Macht, Herr Je - su Christ, der du Herr al - ler Her - ren bist, be-
Basso. Be-weis' dein' Macht, Herr Je - su Christ, der du Herr al - ler Her - ren bist, be-
Be-weis' dein' Macht, Herr Je - su Christ, der du Herr al - ler Herren bist, be-

G minor G minor B-flat major G minor

A short, simple 4-part chorale setting ends the cantata, representing the voice of the church. Thus, as noted above, the more individualized prayer of the previous movement gives way to this prayer by all of "poor Christendom." Perhaps the short stanza (set simply) was chosen to end the libretto because of its emphasis on Christ's identity and his ability to protect the Church—a fitting perspective in view of the Gospel reading for Easter Monday, with its account of 2 disciples confused, afraid, and unable to recognize at first who Jesus is.

For biblical background, see note.



5.

schirm' dein' ar - me Christen - heit, dass sie dich lob' in E - wig - keit!
schirm' dein' ar - me Chri - stenheit, dass sie dich lob' in E - wig - keit!
schirm' dein' ar - me Chri - stenheit, dass sie dich lob' in E - wig - keit!
schirm' dein' ar - me Chri - stenheit, dass sie dich lob' in E - wig - keit!

B-flat major G minor G major