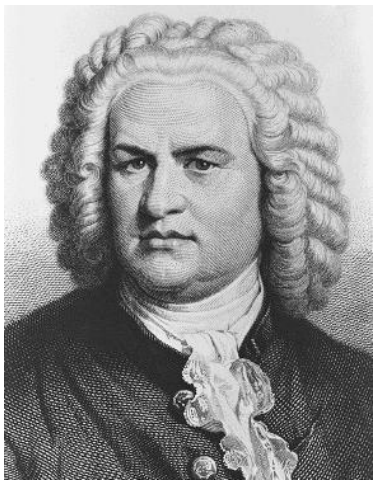


AS Music
Bach Chorale Cadence exercises

These ten chorale exercises (with solutions) are intended for use as EdExcel AS tests, but would also be useful as preparatory tests for other Bach chorale tests. They have been prepared for use alongside Hugh Benham's *A student's Guide to Harmony and Counterpoint* (Rhinegold, 2007), and fill the gap between the exercises in the book, and the completion of actual past papers.

The tests are progressive, as follows:

- In Chorales 1-4, only the final three chords are to be completed; from Chorale 5 onwards, the full four chords are required, as in the EdExcel test.

- Chorales 1 and 2 involve perfect cadences only, with simple endings e.g. 3-2-1, 8-7-8, and 2-2-1 (see Benham for how to work these), and keys are given. Chorale 3 still only uses perfect cadences, but more difficult ones, and with no keys given.

- From Chorale 4 onwards, imperfect cadences are introduced, and Chorales 6 and 9 are in minor keys.

Brief notes are provided after each solution, with any particular teaching points.

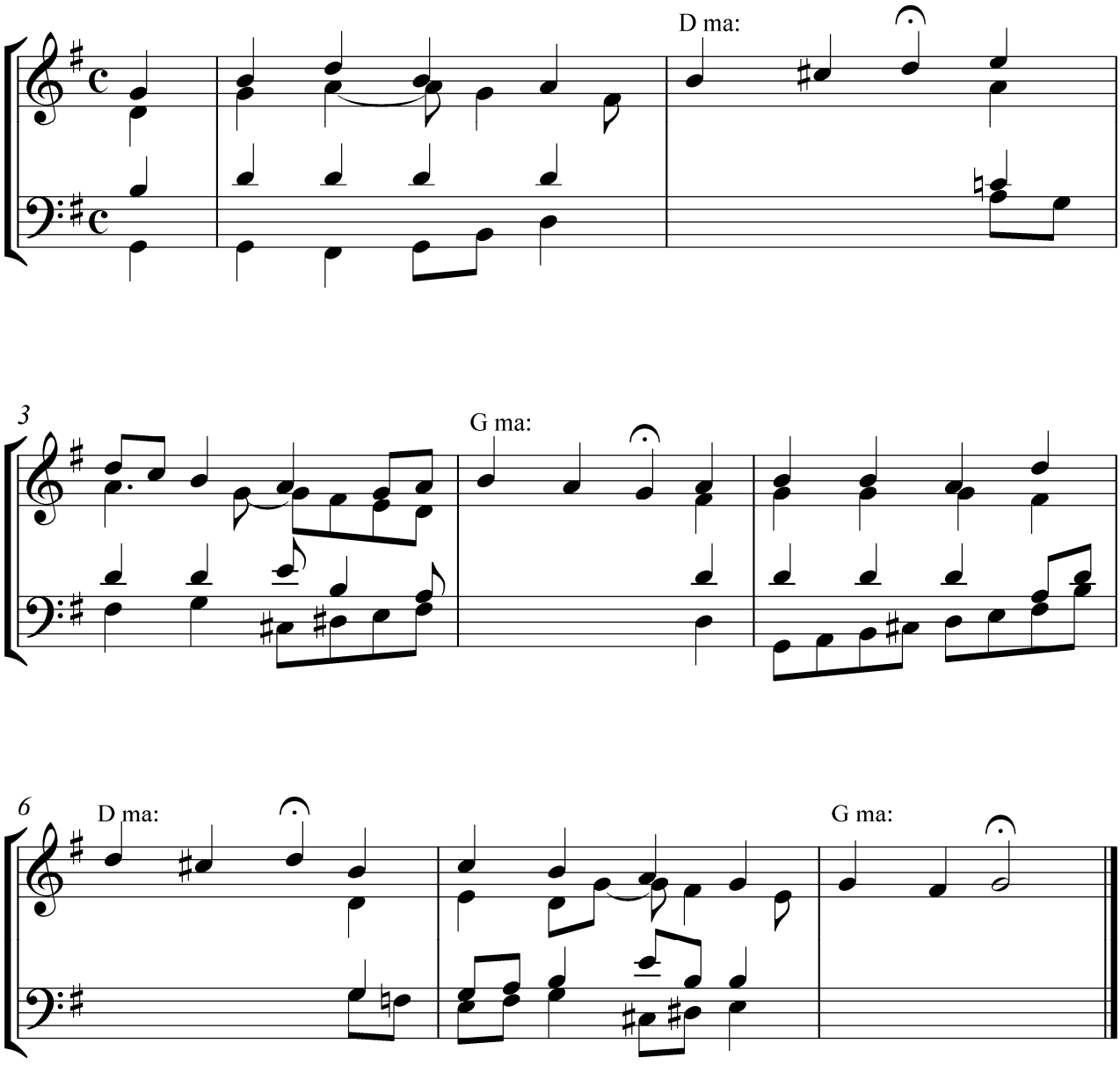
DST
June 2008

Index of chorales:

1	*Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend*	R136
2	*Singt dem Herrn ein neues Lied*	R246
3	*Christus, der ist mein Leben*	R6
4	*Mach's mit mir, Gott, nach deiner Güt*	R44
5	*Meinen Jesum laß ich nicht, Jesus*	R151
6	*Laß, o Herr, dein Ohr sich neigen*	R218
7	*Uns ist ein Kindlein heut gebor'n*	R148
8	*Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*	R4
9	*Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort*	R72
10	*Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein*	R247

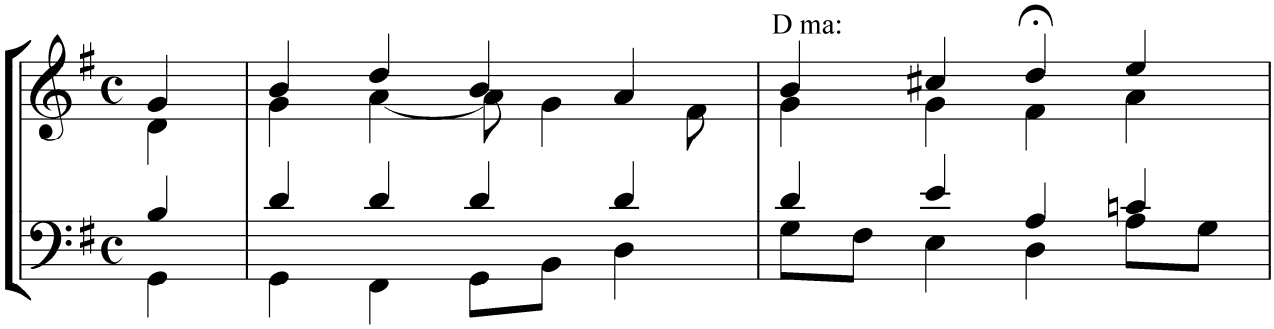
Chorale 1

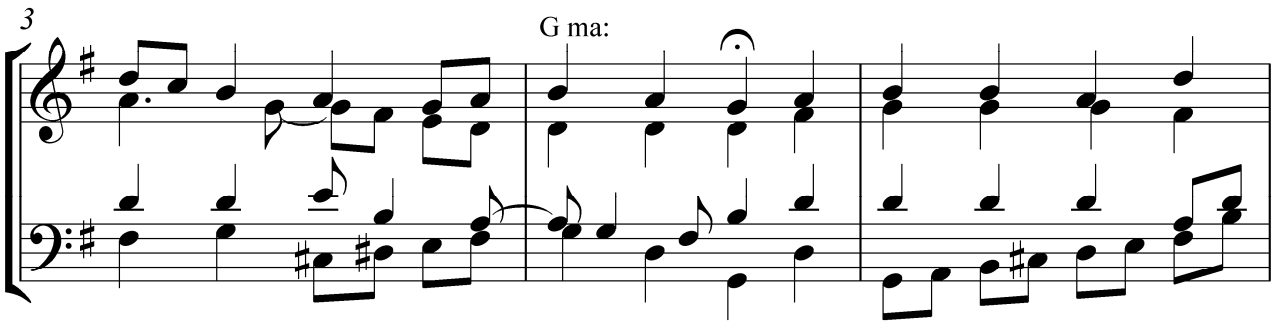
Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:

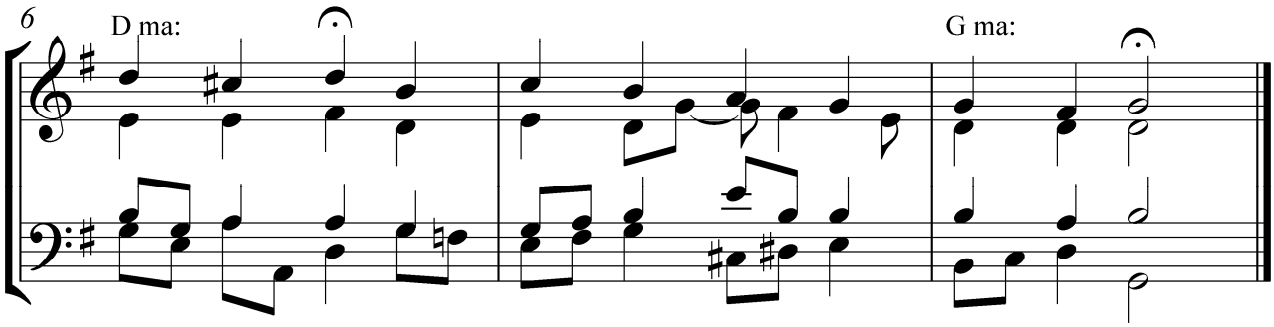


Chorale 1

Solution





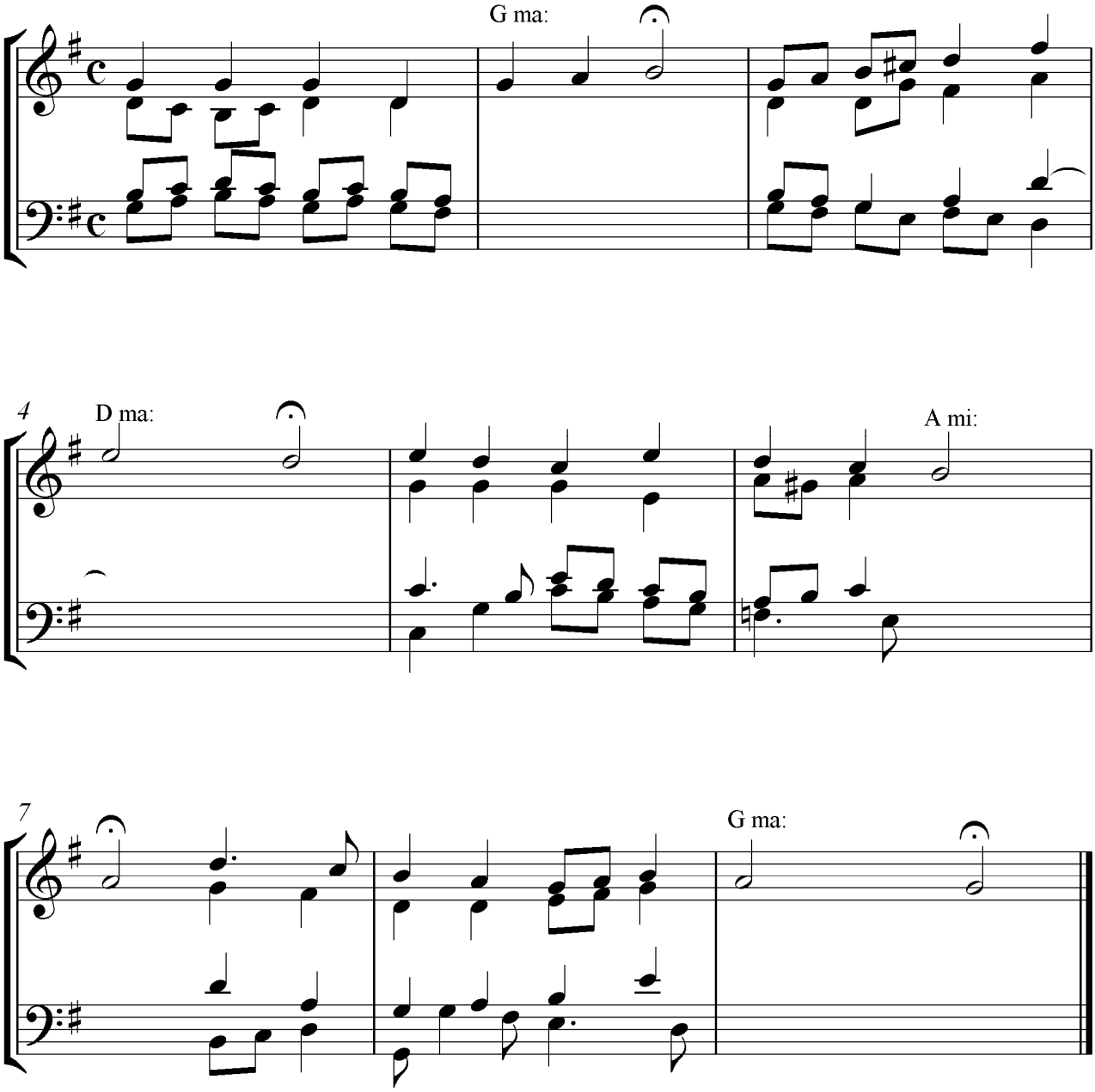


Chorale: *Herr Jesu Christ, dich zu uns wend'* (R136)

This is Bach's version, exactly as it appears in the original. Notice the 9-8 suspension in bar 4, and the typical leading note movement to the 3rd in the same bar.

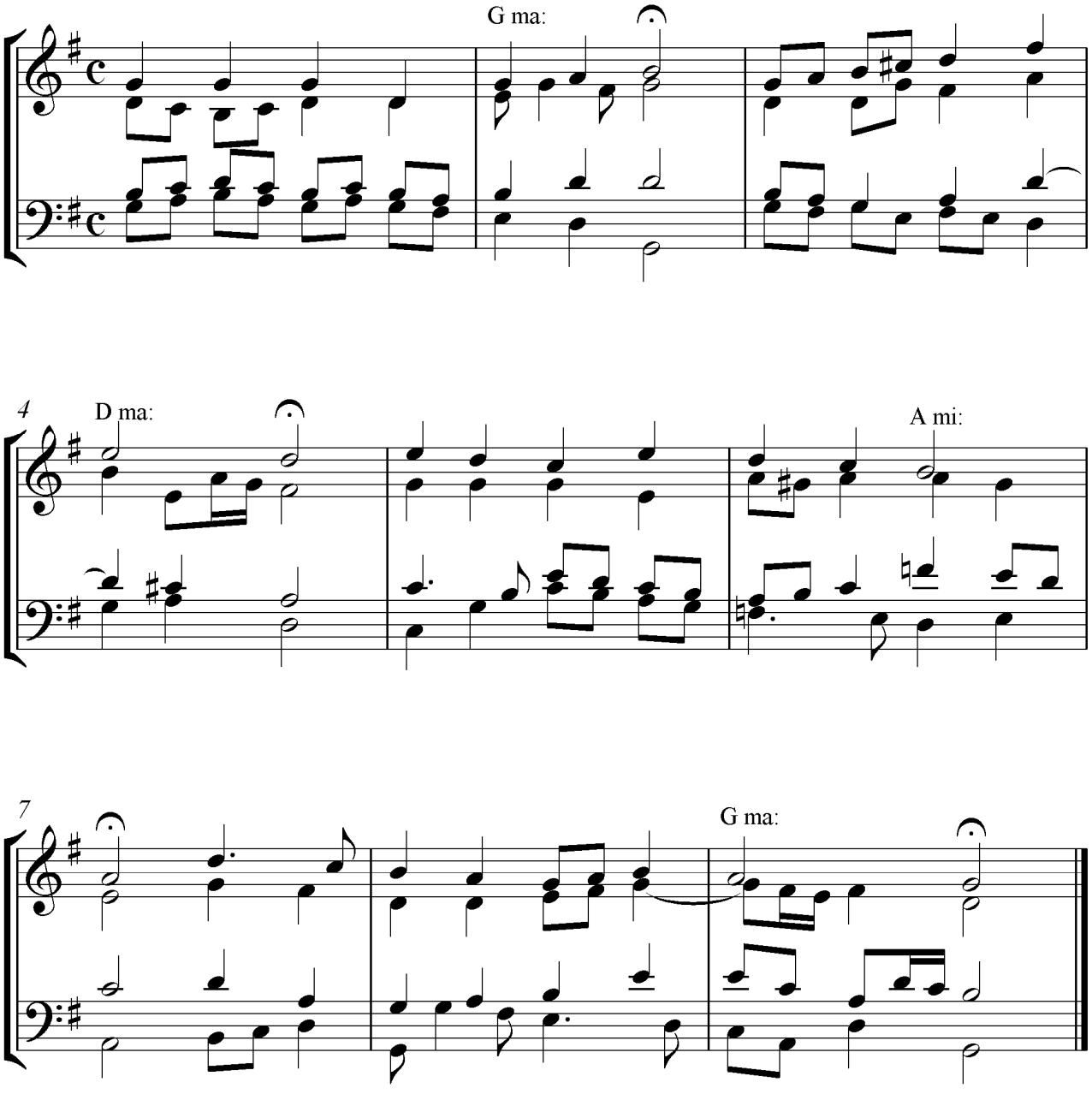
Chorale 2

Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Chorale 2

Solution

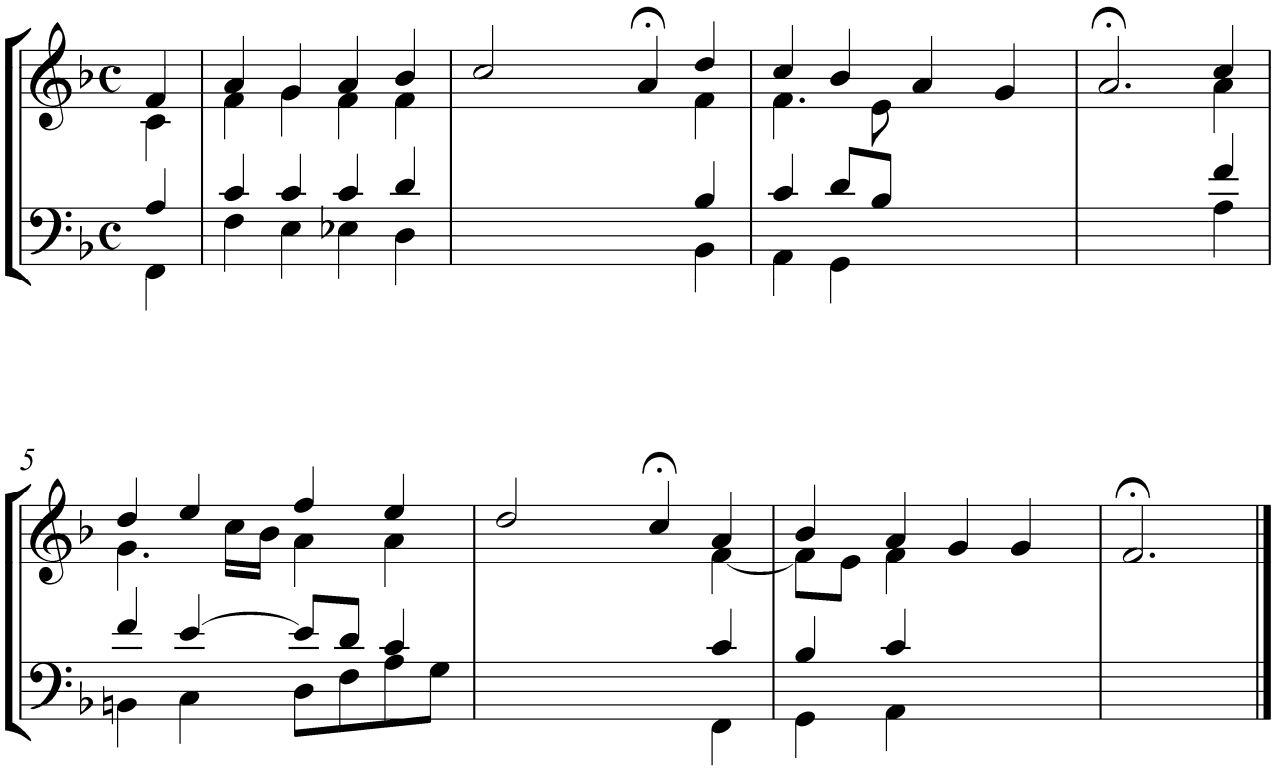


Chorale: *Singt dem Herrn ein neues Lied* (R246)
Adapted. Two phrases have been removed, and cadences simplified.

Note the decoration of the II7b – V – I cadences, which is very typical of Bach's style.

Chorale 3

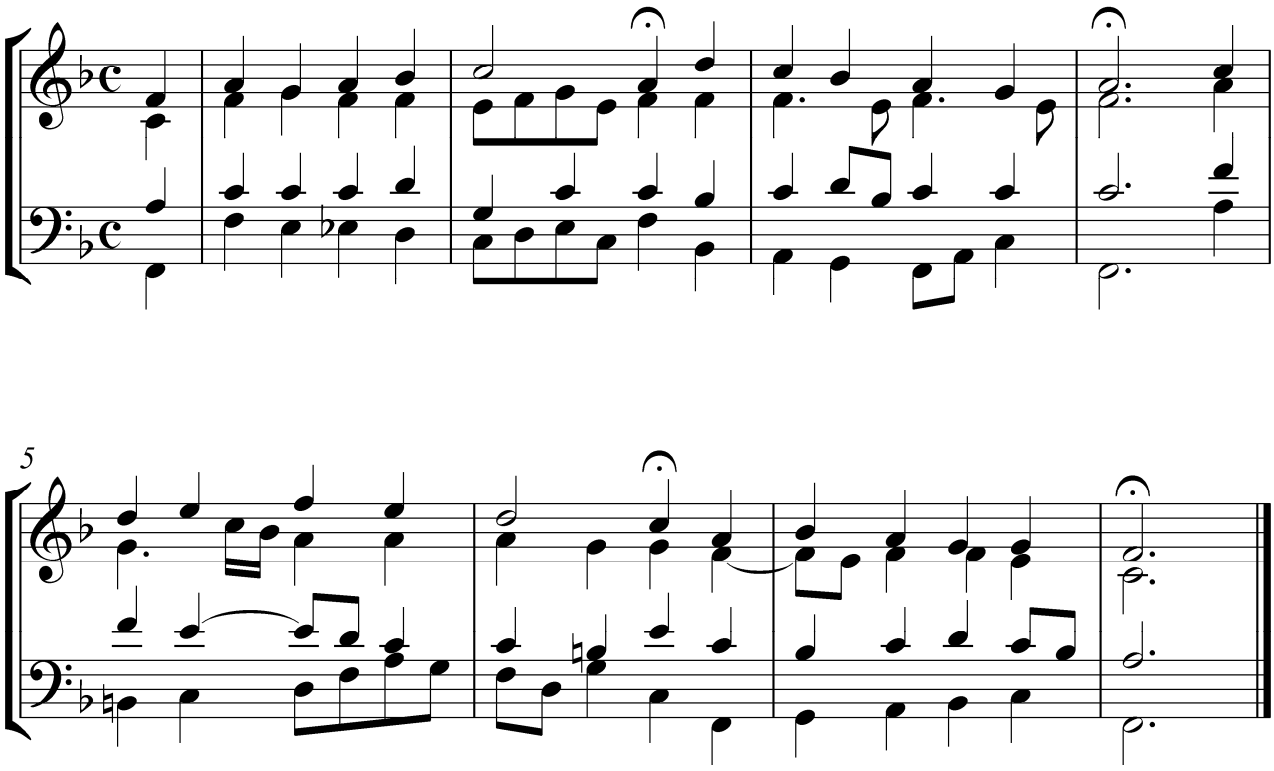
Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Hint: the first cadence uses only one chord under the minim C, but needs something to make it more interesting.

Chorale 3

Solution



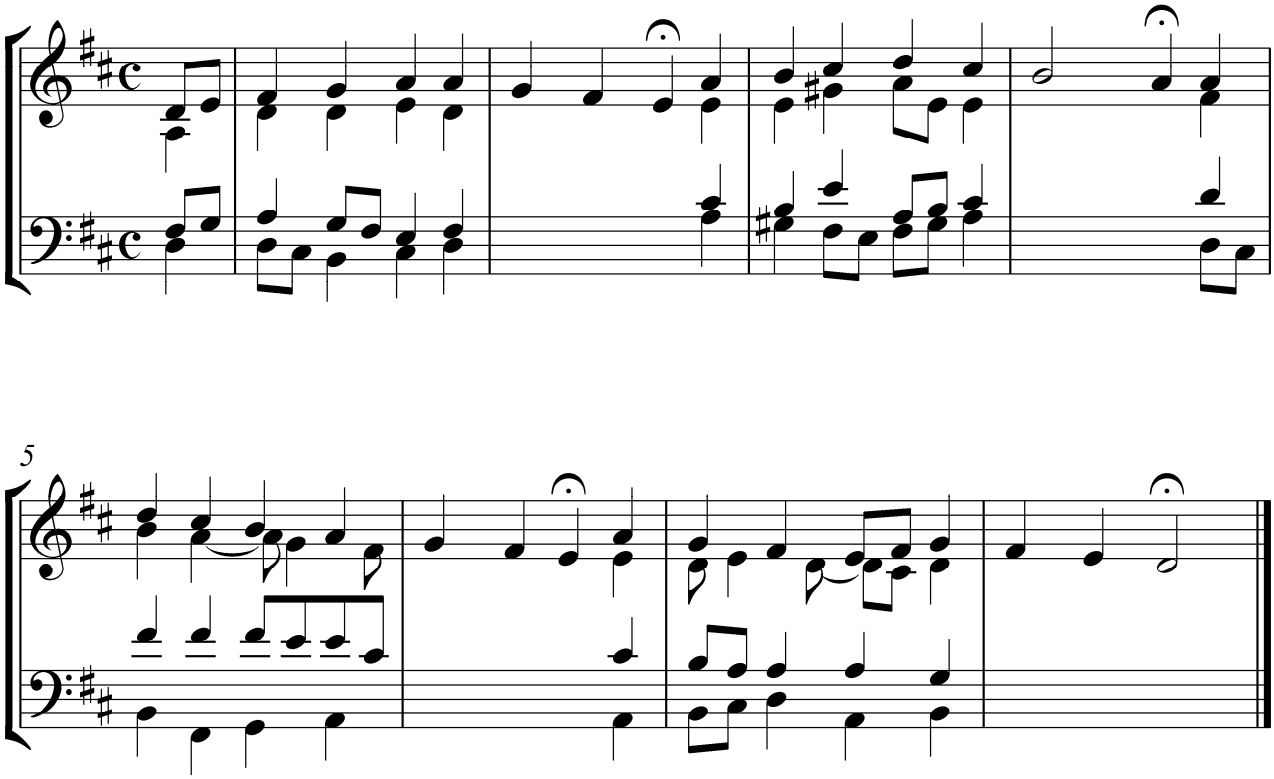
Chorale: *Christus, der ist mein Leben* (R6)

Complete, but slightly simplified (especially the final cadence).

The first cadence is quite unusual, and Bach's treatment is worth noting. In the third cadence, notice the leading note leaping to the 3rd rather than the tonic.

Chorale 4

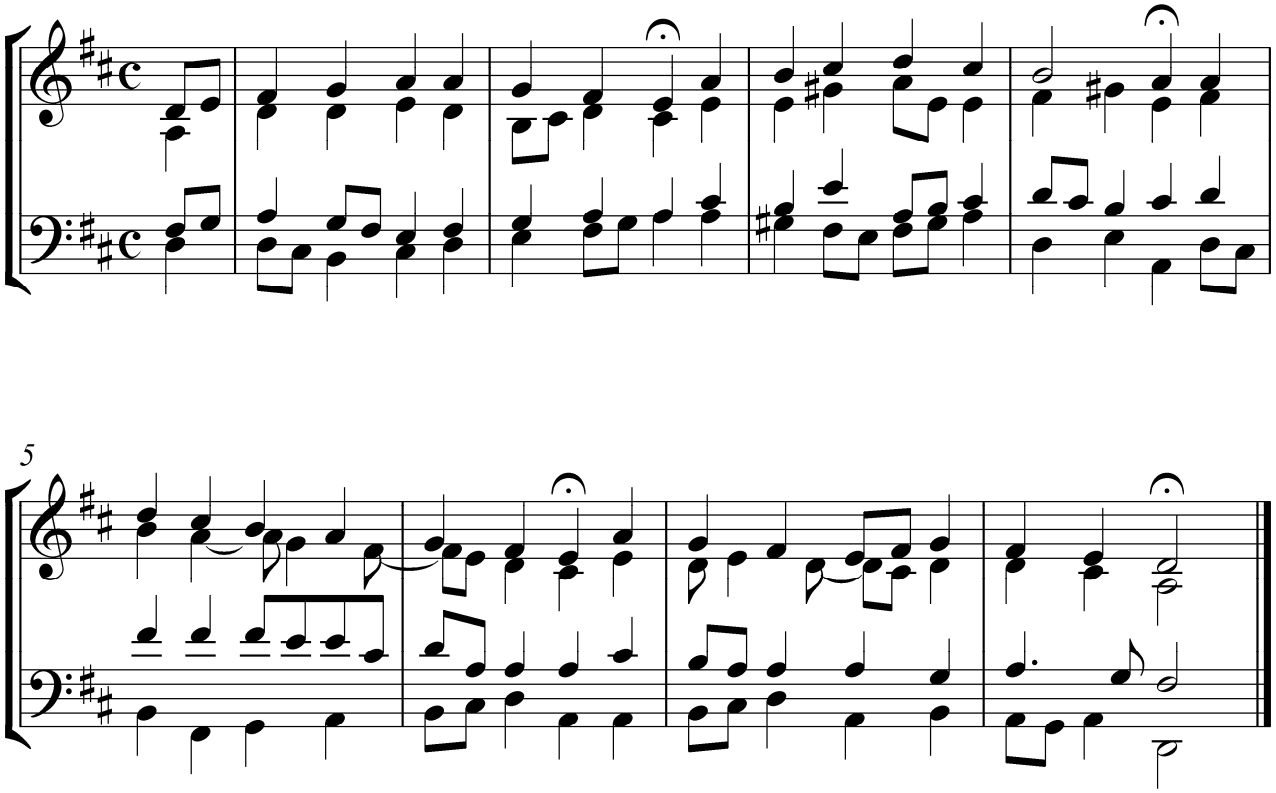
Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Hint: two of the cadences are imperfect.

Chorale 4

Solution



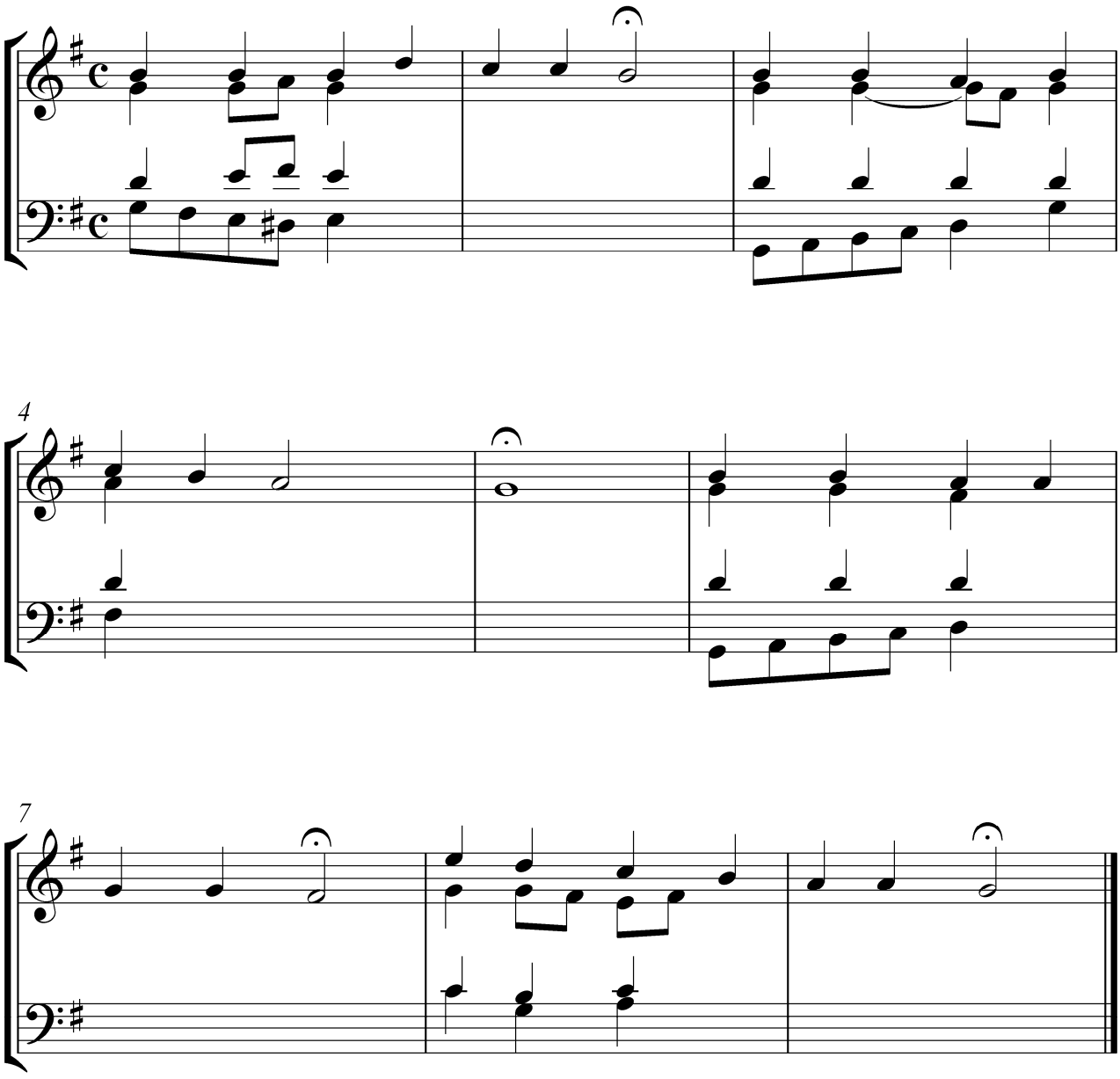
Chorale: *Mach's mit mir, Gott, nach deiner Güt* (R44 & R310)

The suggested version above is a combination of these two Bach harmonisations. Of the two, R310 (from the St. Matthew Passion) is the more interesting, but too difficult for AS.

Note the IIb – V – I at the second cadence, rather than the more common II7b.

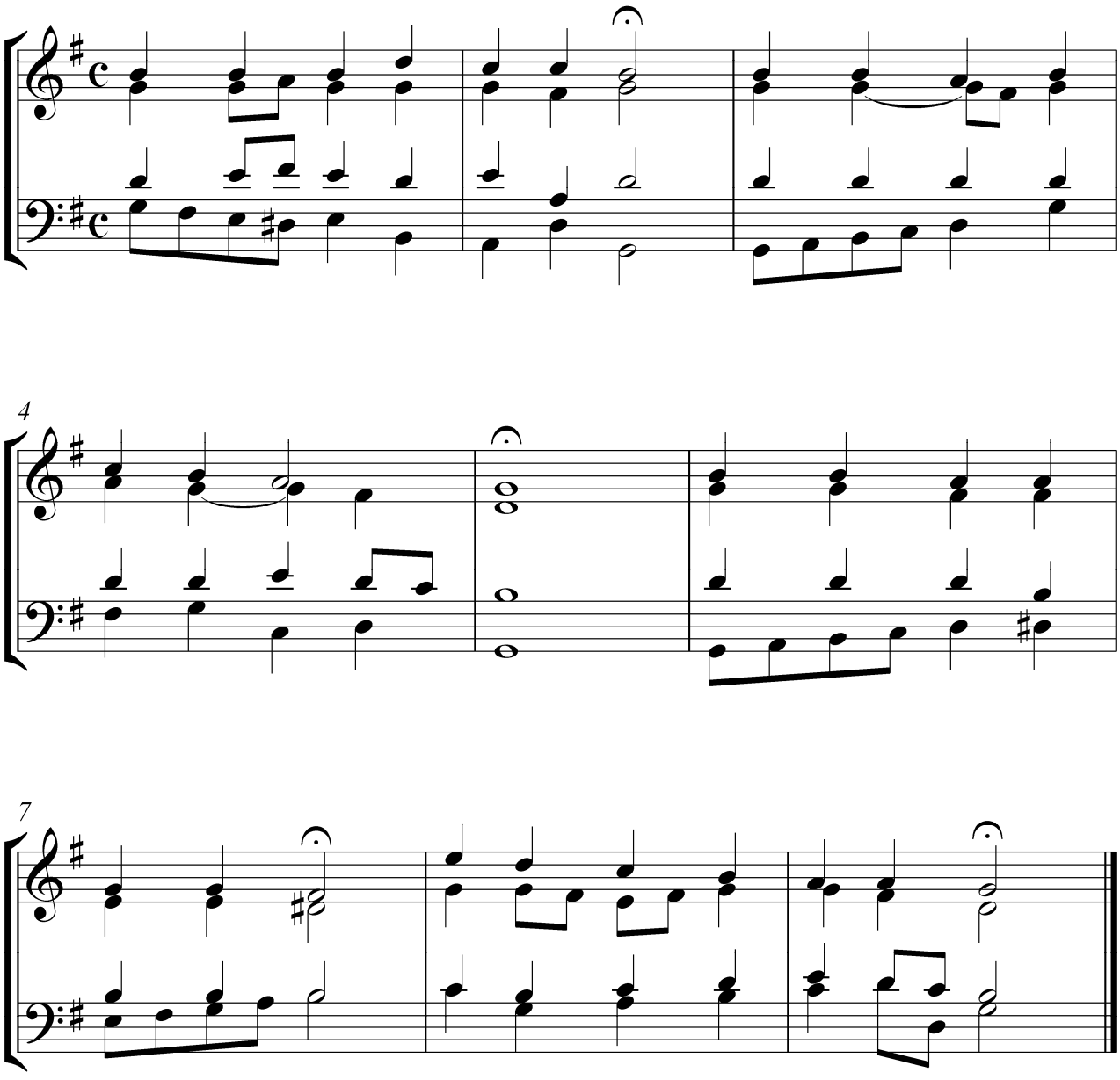
Chorale 5

Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Chorale 5

Solution



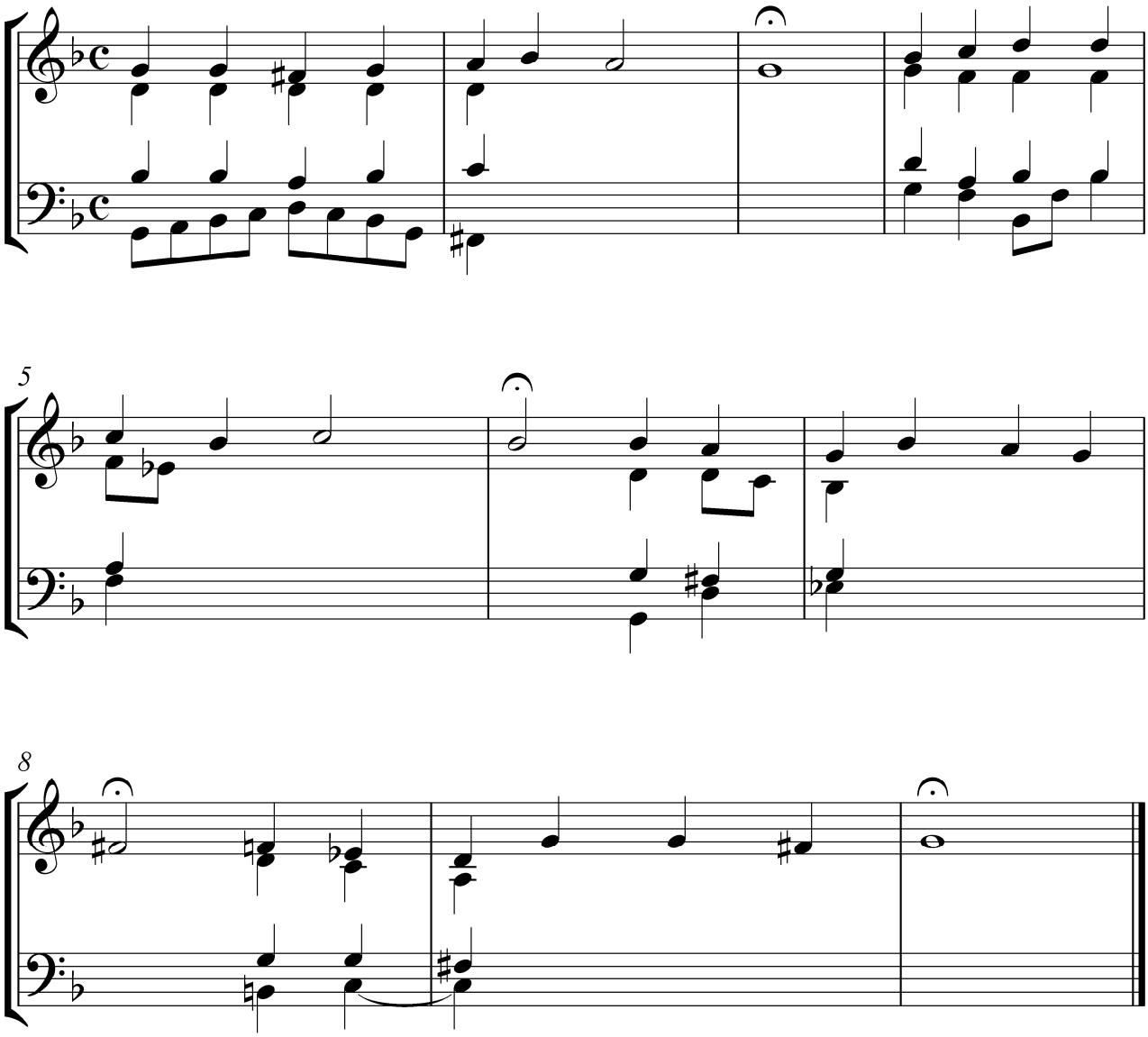
Chorale: *Meinen Jesum laß ich nicht, Jesus* (R151)

Complete, but simplified throughout. Bach's version has many more passing notes, especially at the cadences. He also uses a diminished seventh at bar 6 beat 4 instead of V7b.

This exercise has the same number of chords to be completed (16) as in the AS exam.

Chorale 6

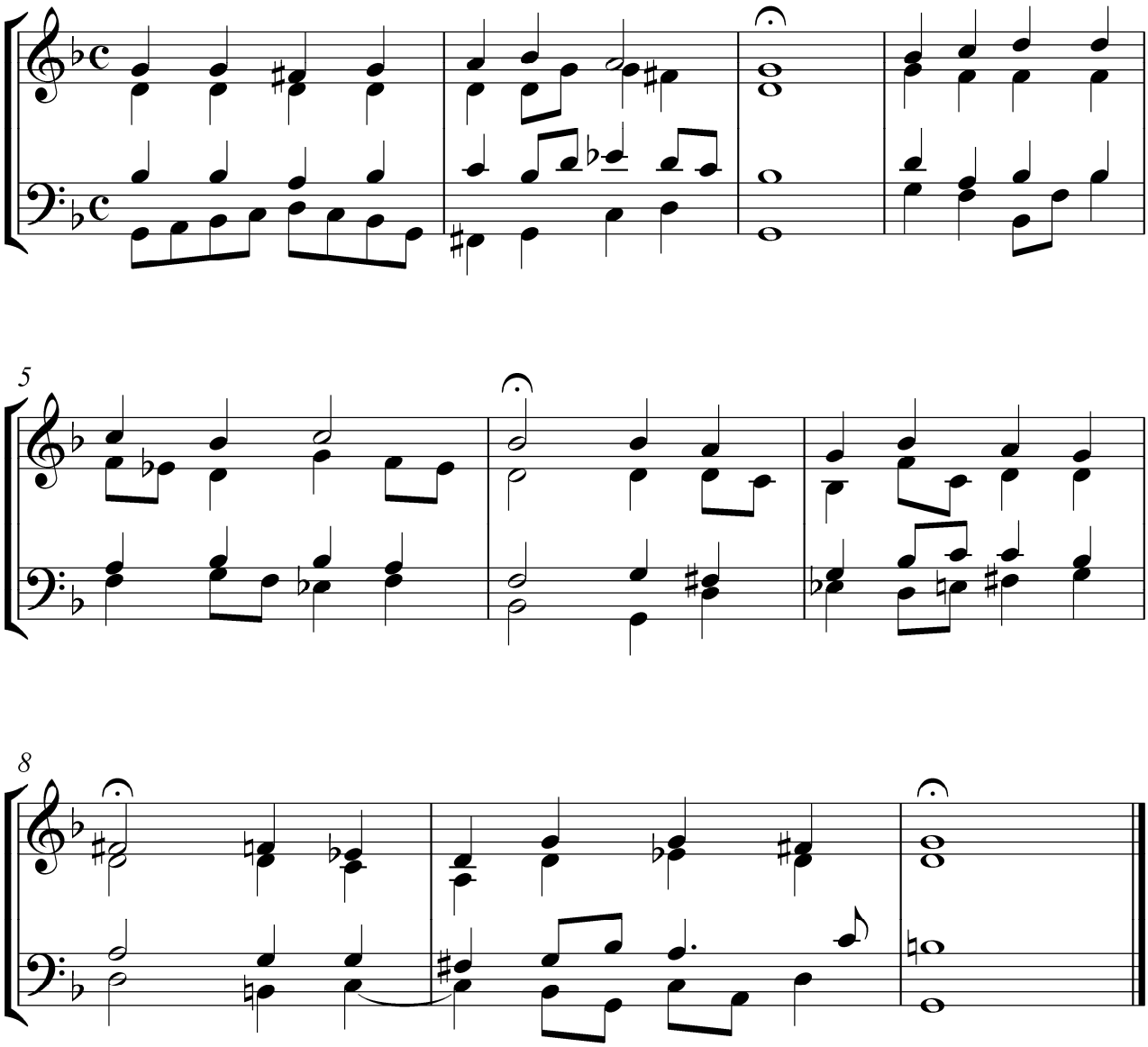
Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Hint: Remember in minor keys to make sure you have included the right accidentals. What happens to the last chord ?

Chorale 6

Solution

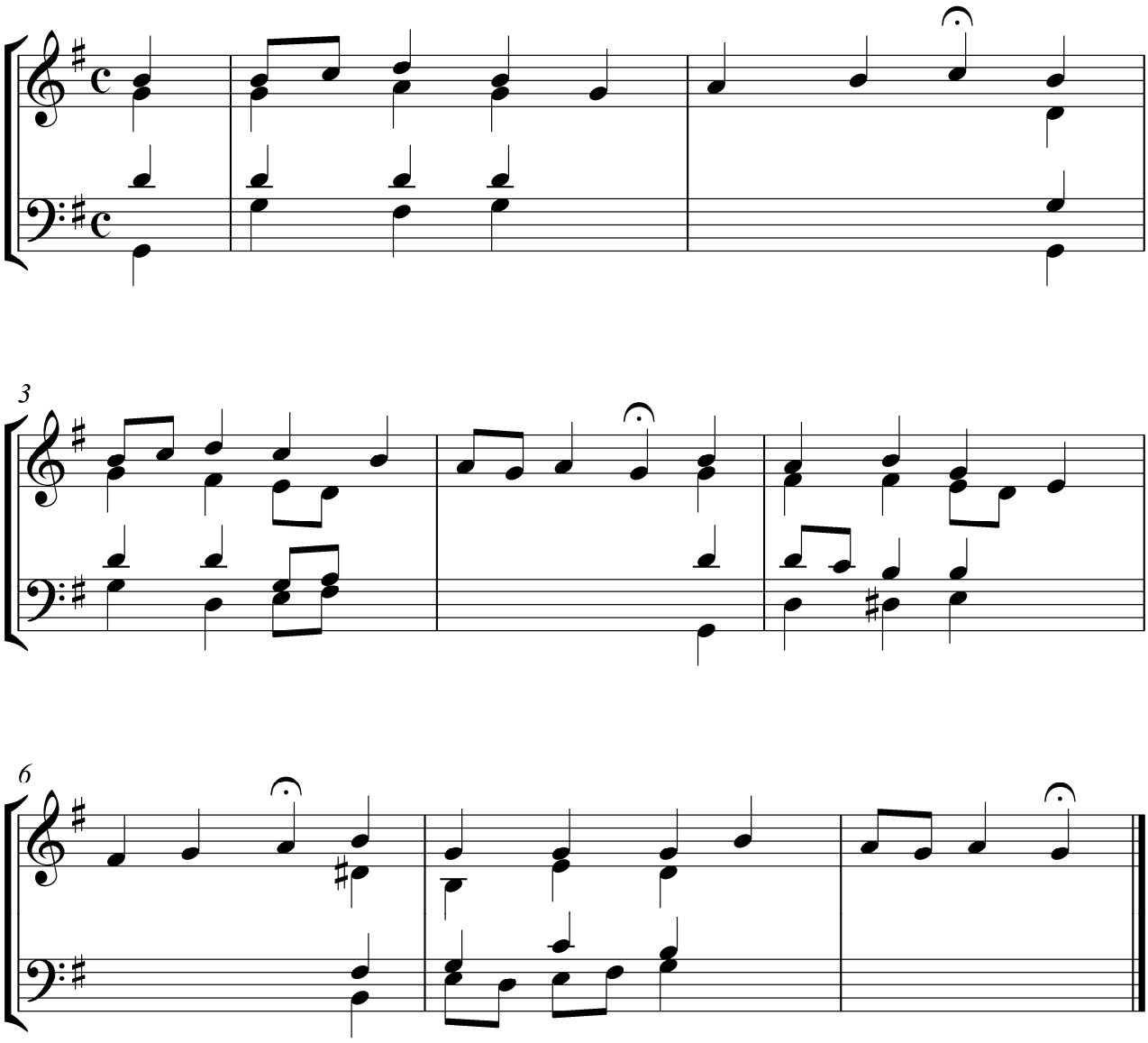


Chorale: *Laß, o Herr, dein Ohr sich neigen* (R218)

Shortened and simplified throughout. Bach's version repeats most phrases, offering different harmonisations each time.

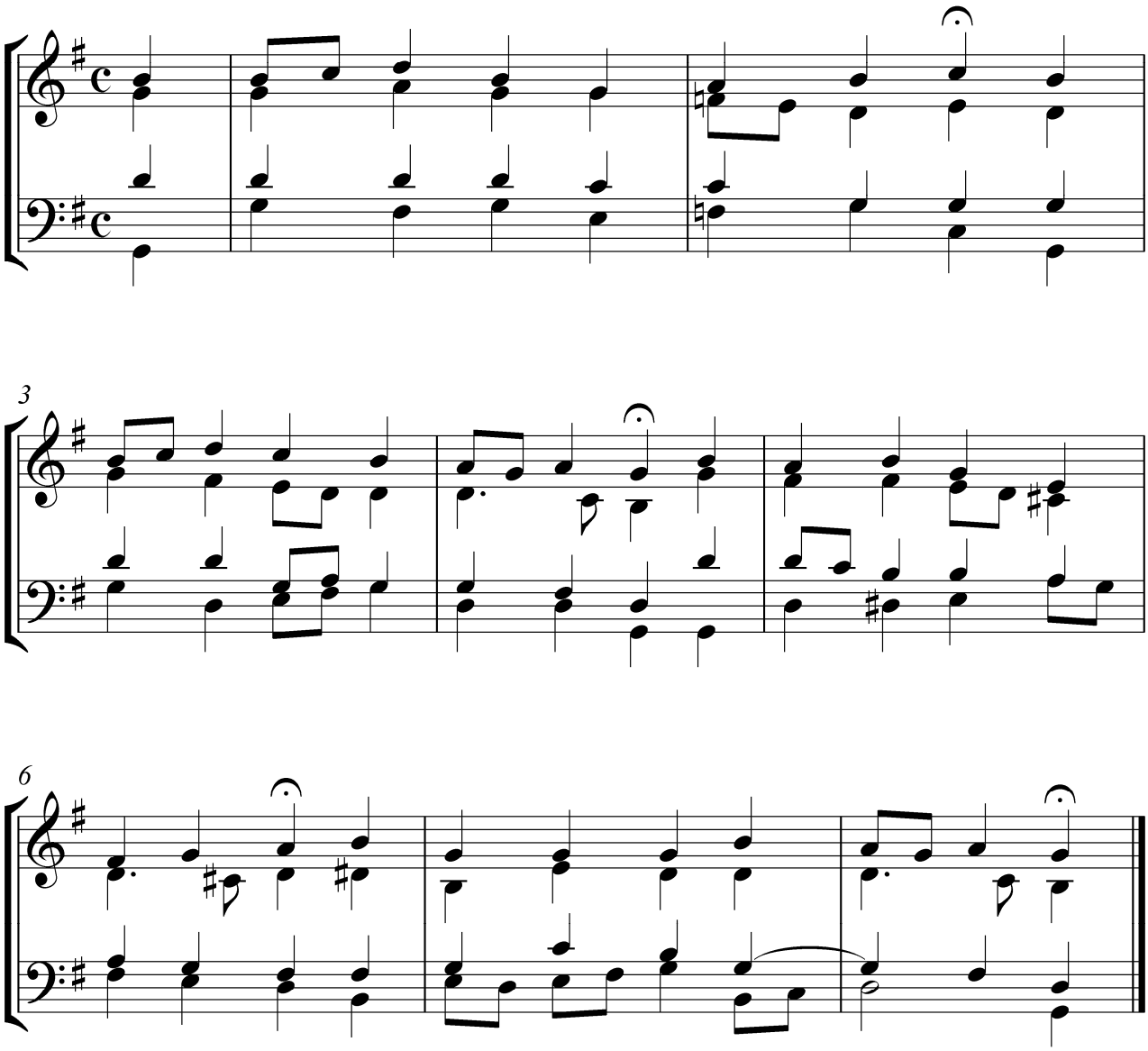
Chorale 7

Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Chorale 7

Solution

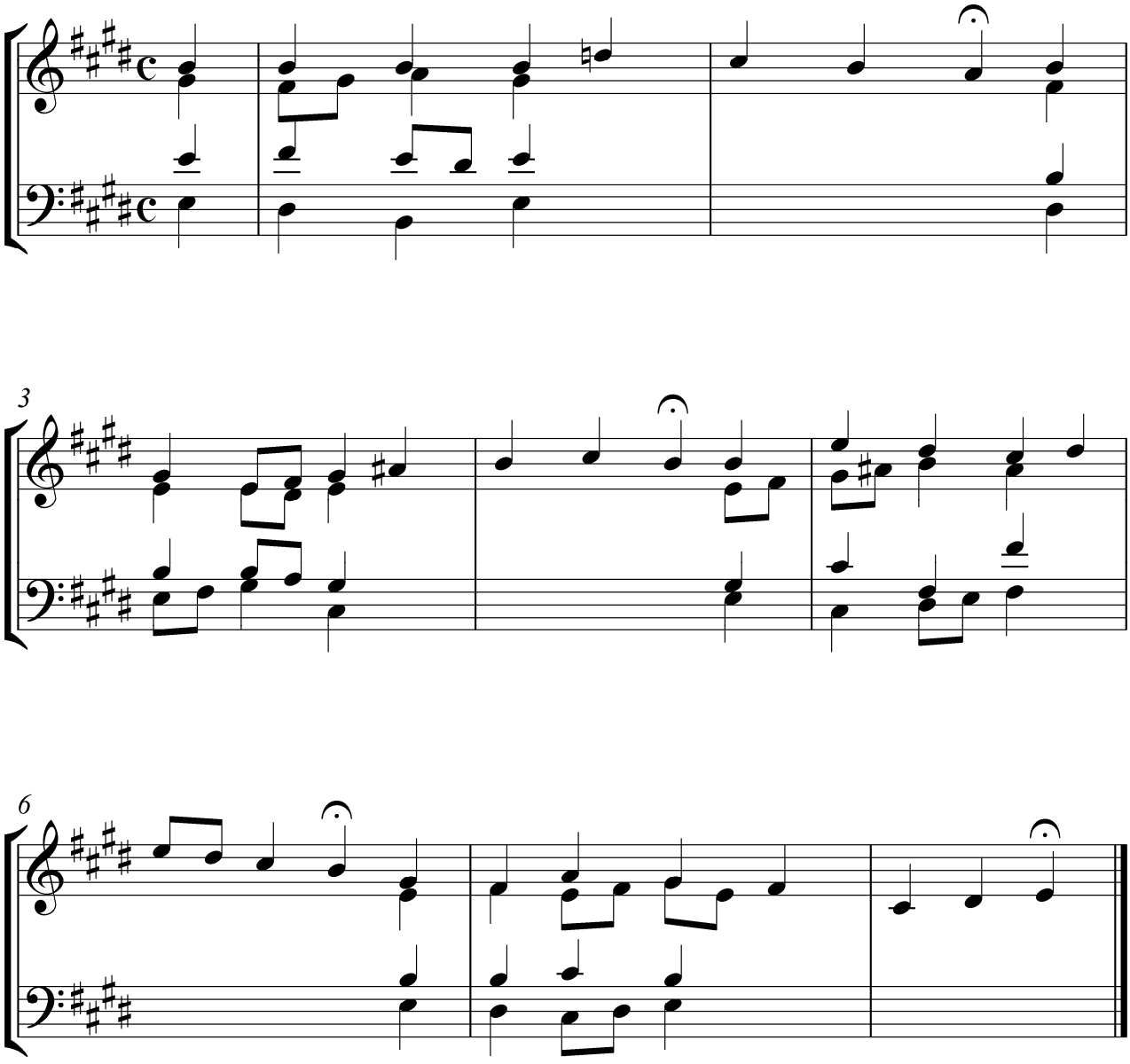


Chorale: *Uns ist ein Kindlein heut gebor'n* (R148)

Shortened and simplified throughout, with the second phrase completely re-written (the original is almost identical to the final phrase).

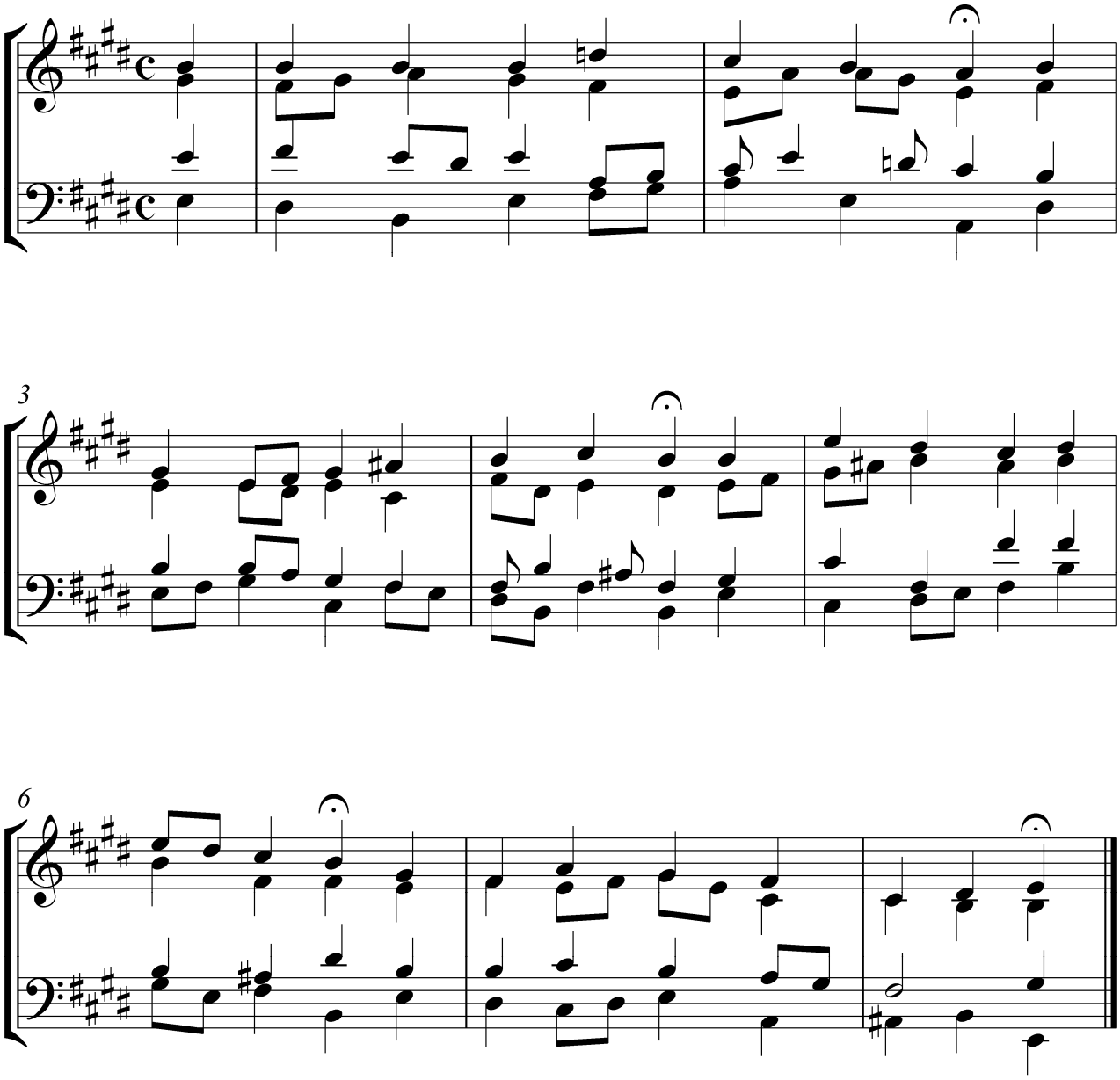
Chorale 8

Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Chorale 8

Solution

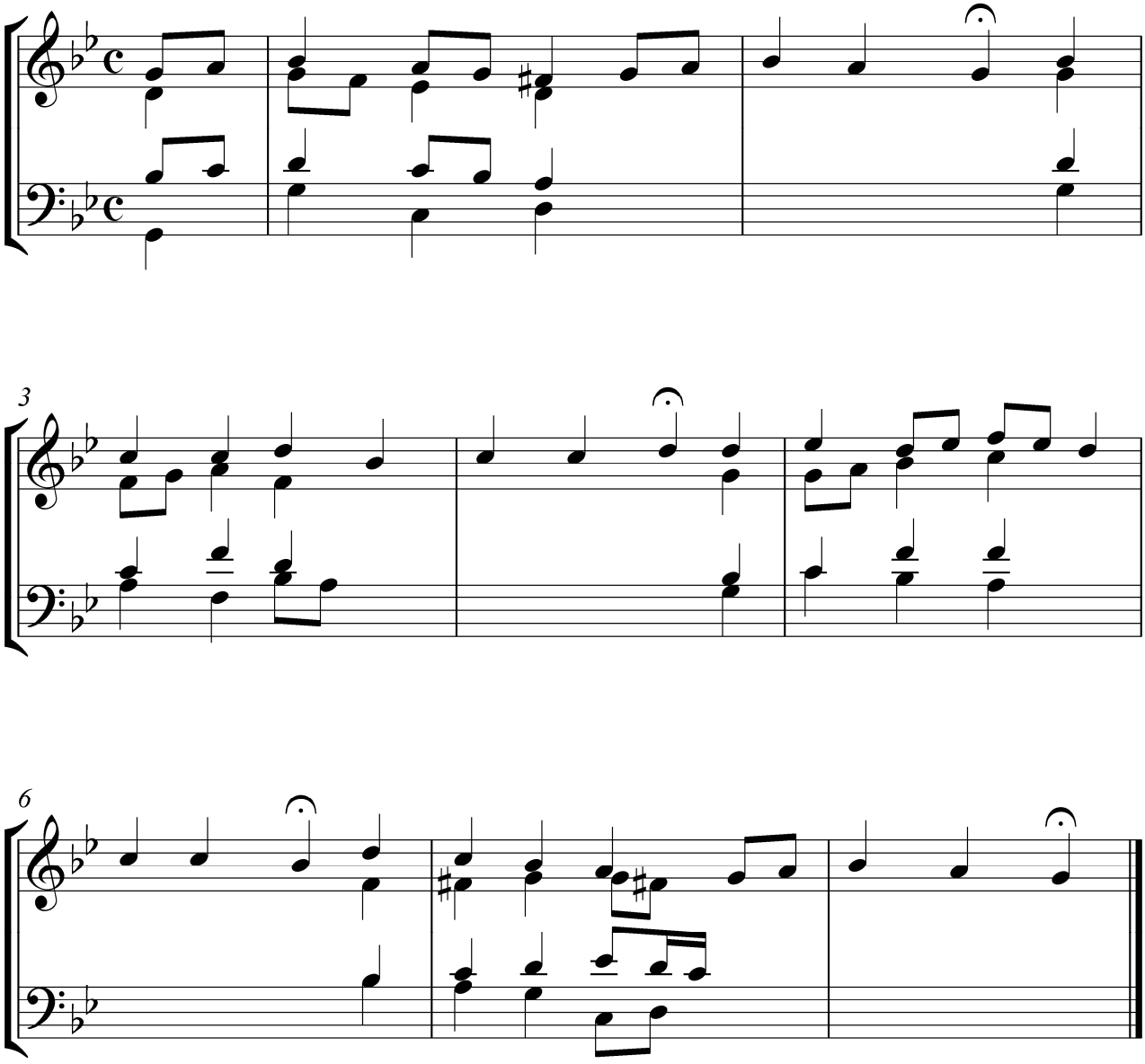


Chorale: *Es ist das Heil* (R4)

Shortened by the removal of one phrase, but otherwise pure Bach. The harmonisation of the final phrase is taken from R248 (the same chorale under another name).

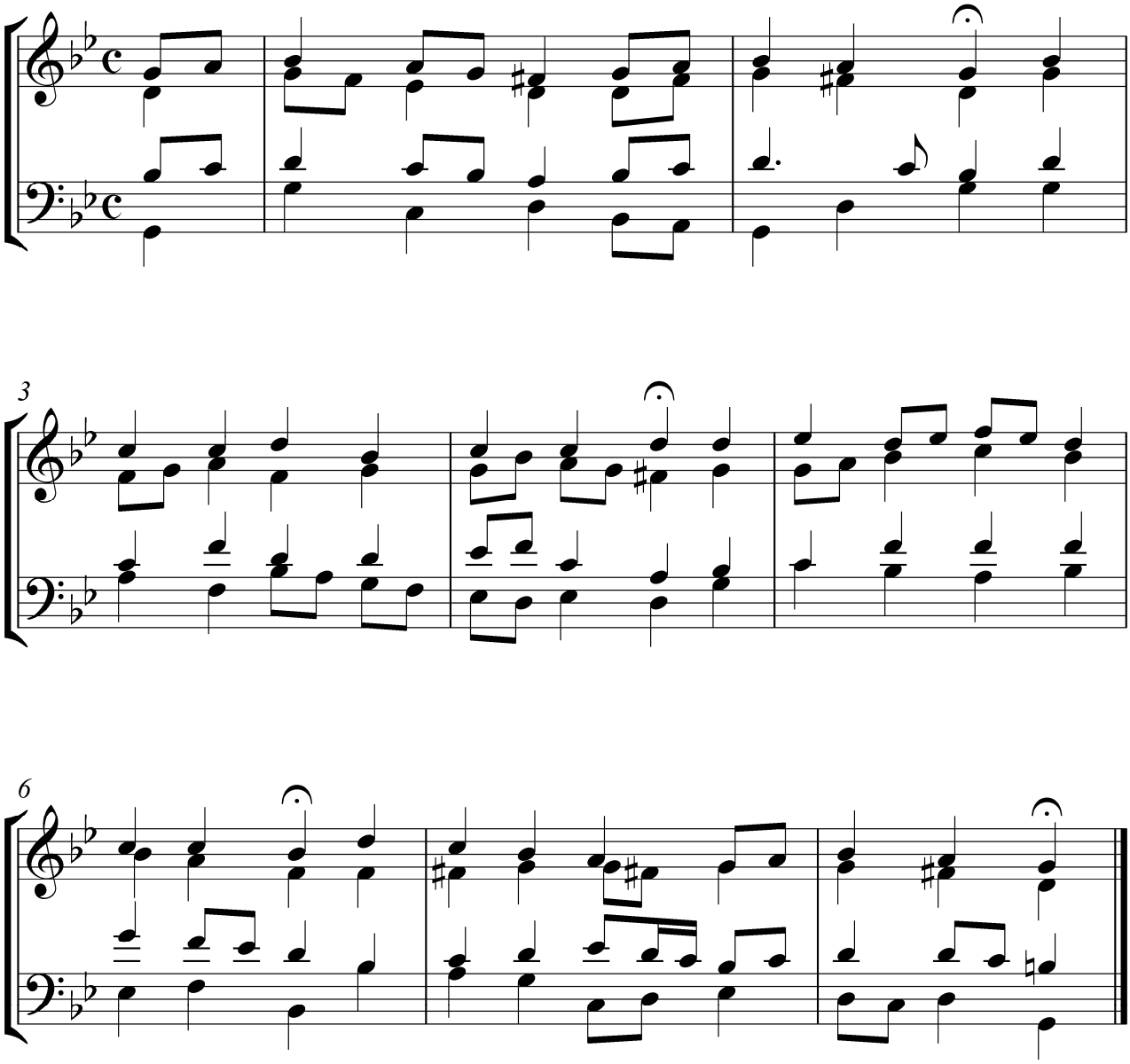
Chorale 9

Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Chorale 9

Solution

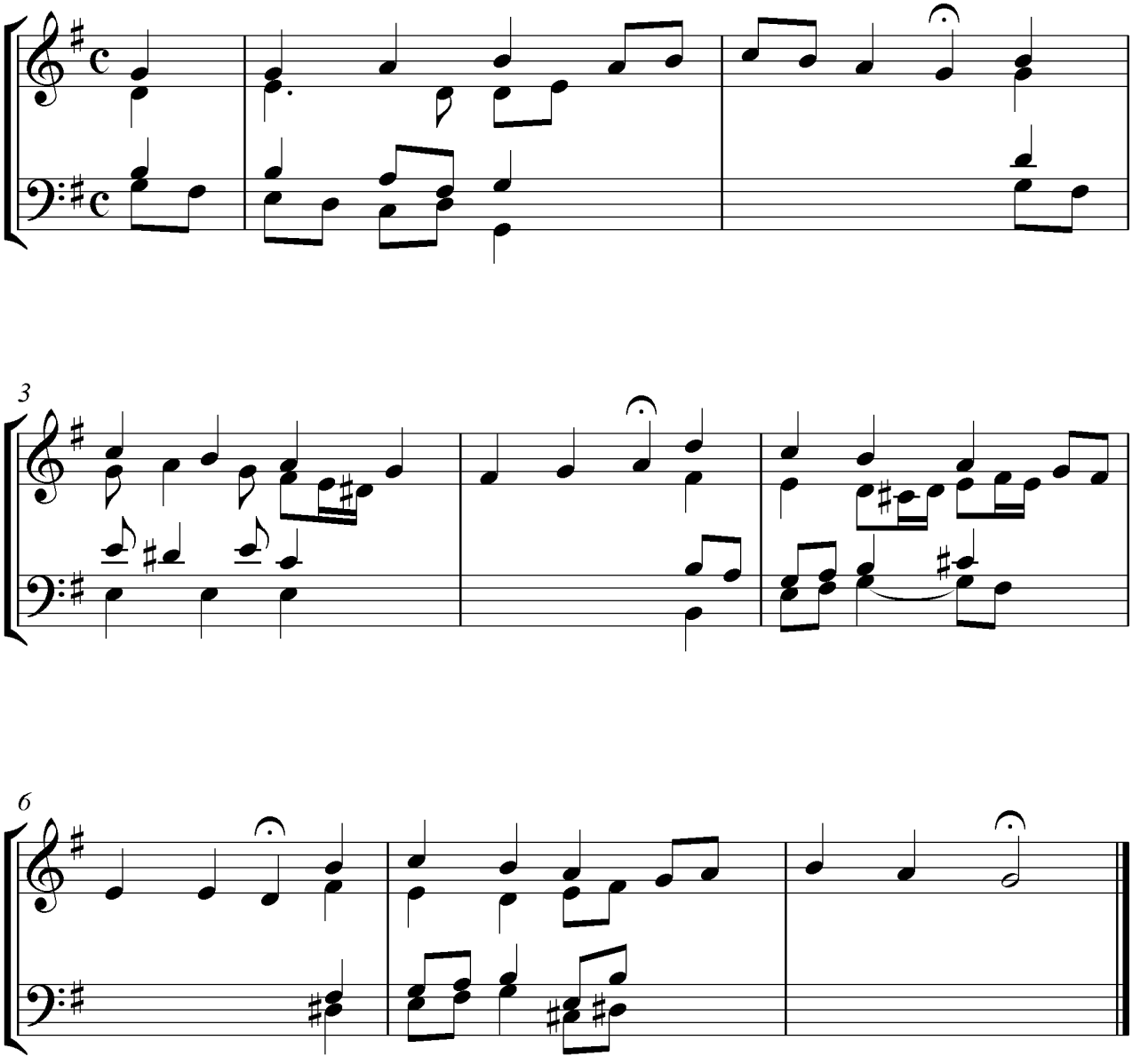


Chorale: *Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort* (R72)

Simplified, and the last phrase replaced with the last phrase of R204. Note the treatment of the 4-4-5 imperfect cadence at the end of the second phrase.

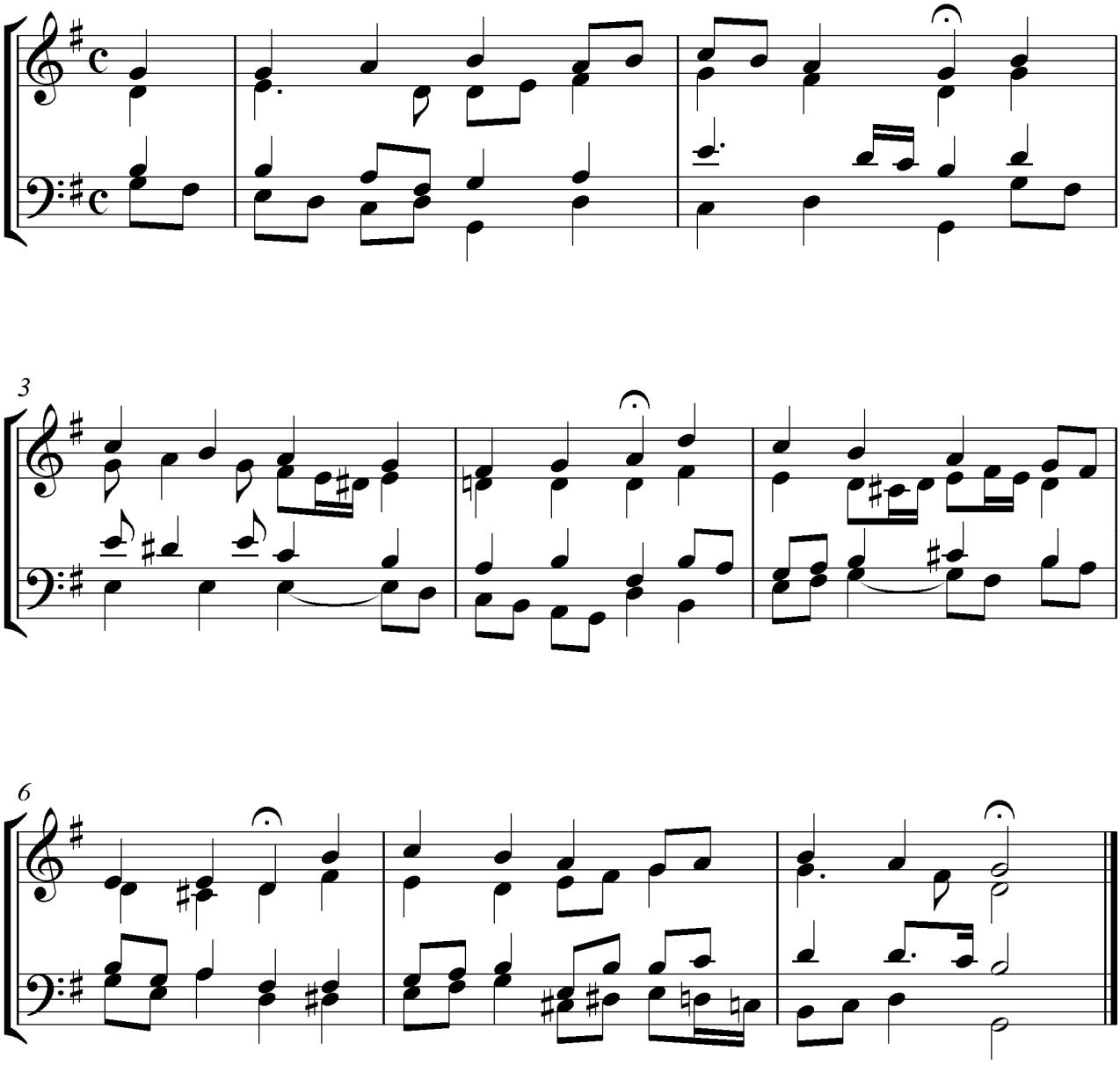
Chorale 10

Add alto, tenor and bass parts to complete the cadences of the following in an appropriate style:



Chorale 10

Solution



Chorale: *Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein* (R247). First cadence simplified (borrowed from R20)

Note the solution to the problem of the first cadence. 4-3-2-1 (with two quavers at the beginning) is quite a common pattern. Bach generally uses either IV or II (with or without 7ths) to approach the V - I. The 9-8 suspension is needed to avoid consecutive fifths.