

MANGISONDELE NKOSI YAM



(Nearer My God to Thee)
Traditional Zulu

arranged by
Michael Barrett



Cameron LaBarr
CHORAL SERIES

Santa Barbara Music Publishing, Inc.

sbmp.com

About the arranger

Dr. Michael Joseph Barrett is an internationally acclaimed conductor, composer, educator, and choral clinician. He led the University of Pretoria (TUKS) Camerata from 2013–2025 and has served as a faculty member and now Research Associate in the university's Department of Music. He earned his DMus in Choral Performance in 2017. His choirs have won numerous awards, including the Grand Prix of Nations (2014, 2017), and have performed at top events such as the ACDA National Conference (2025) and the World Symposium of Choral Music (2017). He is in demand as a guest conductor, clinician and composer with over 40 works published between SBMP and Walton Music. He is also Executive Director and Co-Producer of Capital Singers, South Africa's largest community choir.



Mangisondele Nkosi Yam

Nearer My God to Thee

A traditional praise and worship song from the Zulu culture

Translation

Mangisondele kuwena Nkosi Noma
ngiqhutshwa inhlupego Nkosi
Ngingathokoza
Ngiphinde ngithi nge
Ungisondeze Nkosi kuwe manje.

Be nearer (to me) my Lord
Even when I suffer Lord
And when in pain
I am (still) happy
Let me be near to you, my Lord

Noma ngehlelwa Ngokubi Nkosi Ngilel'
etsheni ngihlupheka Nkosi
Emaphushweni
Njalo ngingathi nje
Ungisondeze Nkosi kuwe manje. Amen!

Even if bad things happen Lord If suffering
occurs Lord
In my dreams
I will always believe, so
Let me be near to you, my Lord Amen!

Performance notes

Mangisondele Nkosi Yam is a traditional isiZulu prayer (very closely linked to the hymn “Nearer My God to Thee”). It resembles the style of Isicathamiya (a cappella singing with close harmonies) that originated among the Zulu mine workers during the Apartheid years. This arrangement, however, is for mixed voices and traditionally *isicathamiya* was only performed by men. It is meant to be performed in Church and is a sacred work. No instruments should accompany this work. The soloists can be both male – the alto part can be substituted with a tenor voice. These singers represent the people and should lead the “congregation” in this spirit-like prayer. Soloists have the freedom to *ad lib* as they lead the singers, especially in bars 56-72.

Pronunciation Guide

All vowels are pure as in Latin.

“qh” – as in the word “ngiqhutshwa” is pronounced by making a click sound with the tongue. Place the tongue at the roof of the mouth just behind the teeth and then release the tongue sharply into a “q” sound. When doing this, breathe into the sound so that you produced the “qh” sound.

“h” – silent as in the word “ngiphinde” – which will be pronounced “ngipinde”

“sh” – as in the word “Emaphushweni” would be pronounced like the English word “shout”. Thus this word would be pronounced “Ema – pu – shwe – ni”.

“hl” – is pronounced by placing the tongue on the sides of the mouth. It is similar to the Welsh word Llangollen.

recording and rehearsal tracks available at sbmp.com

Mangisondele Nkosi Yam

Traditional Zulu
Arr. Michael Barrett

Moderato
mp

Soprano Solo
Man - gi - son - de - le____ ku - we - na Nko - si____

Alto Solo
mp
No-ma ngi-qhu - tshwa

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto 1

Alto 2

5

mp
No - ma ngi - qhu - tshwa____ in - hlu-pe - go N -

mp
No - ma ngi - qhu - tshwa____ in - hlu-pe - go N -

mp
No - ma ngi - qhu - tshwa____ in - hlu-pe - go N -

mp
No - ma ngi - qhu - tshwa____ in - hlu-pe - go N -

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8 *mf*

Ngi-nga-tho-ko - za Ngi - nga - tho - ko, tho-ko - za Ngi - phin - de

mf

Ngi-nga-tho-ko - za Ngi - nga - tho - ko, tho-ko - za Ngi - phin - de

ko - si Ngi - nga - tho - ko - za Ngi - phin - de

ko - si Ngi - nga - tho - ko - za Ngi - phin - de

ko - si Ngi - nga - tho - ko - za Ngi - phin - de

ko - si Ngi - nga - tho - ko - za Ngi - phin - de

12

ngi - thi-nje

ngi - thi-nje

ngi - thi-nje Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je.

ngi - thi-nje Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je.

ngi - thi-nje Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je.

ngi - thi-nje Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je.

17 *mf*

No - ma nge - hle - lwa ___ Ngo - ku - bi Nko - si ___

mf

Ngi - le - le - etsh ___

21

mf

Ngi - le - le - etshe - ni

mf

Ngi - lel' et - she - ni ___ ngi - hlu-phe - ka N -

mf

Ngi - lel' et - she - ni ___ ngi - hlu-phe - ka N -

mf

Ngi - lel' et - she - ni ___ ngi - hlu-phe - ka N -

mf

Ngi - lel' et - she - ni ___ ngi - hlu-phe - ka N -

24 *f*

U - le - le _____ U - le - le nja - lo ngi -

f

Em - a phu - shwe - ni Em - a - phu - shwe, phu - shwe - ni nja - lo ngi -

ko - si Em - a - phu - shwe - ni _____ nja - lo ngi -

ko - si Em - a - phu - shwe - ni _____ nja - lo ngi -

ko - si Em - a - phu - shwe - ni _____ nja - lo ngi -

ko - si Em - a - phu - shwe - ni _____ nja - lo ngi -

ko - si Em - a - phu - shwe - ni _____ nja - lo ngi -

28

nga - thi nje _____

nga - thi nje _____

nga - thi nje _____ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we _____ man -

nga - thi nje _____ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we _____ man -

nga - thi nje _____ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we _____ man -

nga - thi nje _____ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we _____ man -

32

U-le - le U-le - le ngi - phin - de

Nja-lo ngo-vu - ma Nja - lo ngo - vu, ngo-vu - ma ngi - phin - de

je. *f* Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma ngi - phin - de

je. *f* Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma ngi - phin - de

je. *f* Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma ngi - phin - de

je. *f* Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma ngi - phin - de

36

ngi - thi nje_

ngi - thi nje_

mf ngi - thi nje_ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we_ man -

mf ngi - thi nje_ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we_ man -

mf ngi - thi nje_ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we_ man -

mf ngi - thi nje_ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we_ man -

40

f Nja-lo ngo-vu - ma ngo-vu - ma ngi - phin - de

f Nja-lo ngo-vu - ma Nja - lo ngo - vu, ngo-vu - ma ngi - phin - de

f je. Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma ngi - phin - de

f je. Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma ngi - phin - de

f je. Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma ngi - phin - de

f je. Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma ngi - phin - de

44

ngi - thi nje__ un-gi-s

ngi - thi nje__

, mf ngi - thi nje__ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we__ man -

, mf ngi - thi nje__ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we__ man -

, mf ngi - thi nje__ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we__ man -

, mf ngi - thi nje__ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we__ man -

48

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52 *mp*
 Nce-la ku-son-de-la Ba-ba
mp
 Ba-ba
p
 je. Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we__ man -
p
 je. Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we__ man -
p
 je. Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we__ man -
p
 je. Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we__ man -

Soloists ad lib (gospel style)

56

f A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A -

f A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A -

mf je. A-men A-men A-men A-men

mf je. A-men A-men O A-men A-men

mf je. A-men A-men A-men A-men

mf je. A-men A-men A-men A-men

59 ad lib continue until bar 72

men A-men A-men

men A-men A - men A-men A - men

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

A-men A-men O A-men A-men A-men A-men O

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

62

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

A-men A-men A-men A-men O A-men A-men A-men A-men O

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

66

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

A-men A-men A-men A-men O A-men A-men A-men A-men O

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men

70

f

Ha - le - lu - jah _____

f

Ha - le - lu - jah _____

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A

A-men A-men A-men A-men O A-men A-men A

A-men A-men A-men A-men men en A

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A

74

f

Ha - le - lu - jah _____

f

Ha - le - lu - jah _____

sub. mf

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A

sub. mf

A-men A-men A-men A-men O A-men A-men A

sub. mf

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A

sub. mf

A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A

78

ff Nja-lo ngo-vu - ma _____ ngi-si

ff Nja-lo ngo-vu - ma Nja - lo ngo -

sub. mf A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men Nja - lo ngo -

sub. mf A-men A-men A-men A-men O A-men A-men Nja - lo ngo -

sub. mf A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men Nja - lo ngo -

sub. mf A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men A-men Nja - lo ngo -

82

Nja - lo ngo-vu - ma _____ Un - gi - so -

vu, ngo-vu - ma _____ Un - gi - so -

vu - ma _____ ngi - phin - de ngi - thi nje _____

vu - ma _____ ngi - phin - de ngi - thi nje _____

vu - ma _____ ngi - phin - de ngi - thi nje _____

vu - ma _____ ngi - phin - de ngi - thi nje _____

85

Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we___ man -

Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we___ man -

Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si - we___ man -

Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we___ man -

88

Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma___

Nja - lo ngo - vu, ngo - vu - ma___

je. Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma___

je. Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma___

je. Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma___

je. Nja - lo ngo - vu - ma___

91

ngi - phin - de ngi - thi nje___ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si

ngi - phin - de ngi - thi nje___ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si

ngi - phin - de ngi - thi nje___ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si

ngi - phin - de ngi - thi nje___ Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si

95

ze-la ku-son-de-la Ba-ba___

Ba - ba___ *mf*

ku - we___ man - je. Un - gi - son - *mf*

ku - we___ man - je. Un - gi - son - *mf*

ku - we___ man - je. Un - gi - son - *mf*

ku - we___ man - je. Un - gi - son - *mf*

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98

Ba - ba _

Nce-la ku-son-de - la Ba-ba _

de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je.

de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je.

de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je.

de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je.

101

Alto rit.

mp Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je. *p*

mp Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je. *p*

mp Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je. *p*

mp Un - gi - son - de - ze Nko - si ku - we man - je. *p*