Interpretation

of

"Amazing Grace"

This composition was originally conceived as a vocal motet with "ah" interludes (summer of 1967, revised/extended summer of 1992; organ score April 1993).

The manual(s) are coupled at 8'-pitch to the pedal (NO Pedal 16' sound whatsoever).

Interludes: measures 1 - 6.2 (= measure 6, 2nd beat) - always played slower
measures 20.3 - 39.2 - always played slower

The interludes should be a different registration-color from the actual hymn-tune verse. Perhaps 8' flutes or strings (with or without celestes); 8' strings vs. 8' soft principals or open/hybrid flutes. If the organ is small, then adding and withdrawing a 4' flute will accomplish the same effect.

Dynamics: depending on the registration, you may have to settle for mf to f or preferably pp to mp. But contrast should be readily apparent throughout. Since both feet are employed throughout this composition, "expression pedalling" may have to be kept at a minimum. If all else fails, simply retaining the same sound throughout with opening/closing the shades may have to suffice. I would discourage the use of tremulants (tremolo) because of the chordal complexity, but if no celeste or strings exist, you may have to apply.

I have tried to maintain harmonic interest for both performer and listener (audience) and if you follow strictly-as-possible the marked fingerings, you will have little need to substitute unnecessarily. There is copious hand-sharing of inner voices The interludes should be played slower, and at the re-entry of the hymn-tune, the tempo is quickened (to personal taste). The tempo need not be the same as that used for public (or solo) singing. Lots of rubato can be used liberally (within reasonably good taste). Vertical crescents indicate "breath marks". Please do not be intimidated by silence, as it will be welcomed since intense legato ensues throughout the composition, hence the fussy-fingering.

I have provided 2 endings: the choice is the performer's, but the coda at measure 53 to the end must be used.

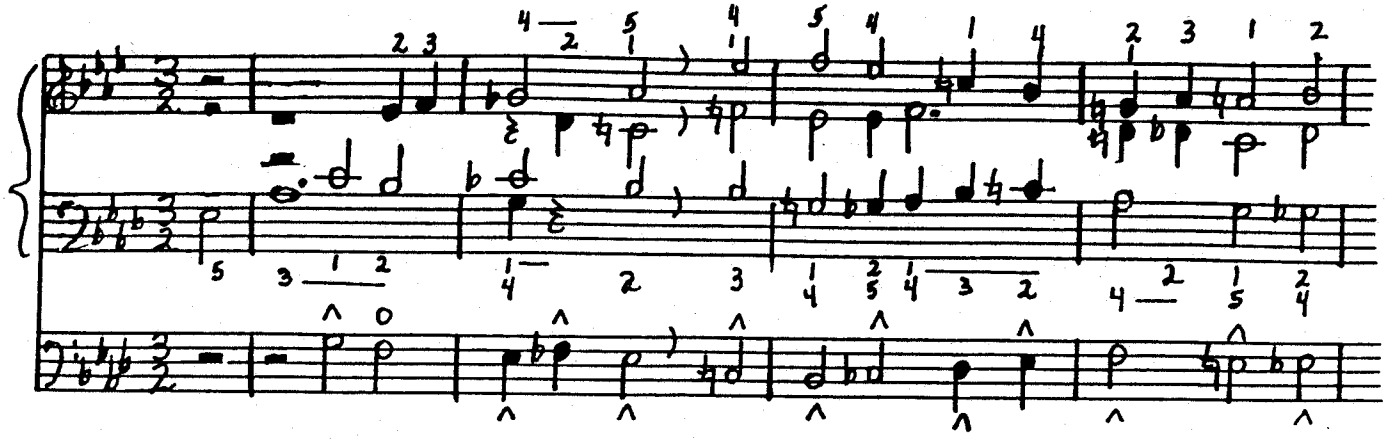
Norman L. Selby (April 1993)

"AMAZING GRACE"

in grateful memory of my mother, Helena P. Selby (1920-2002)

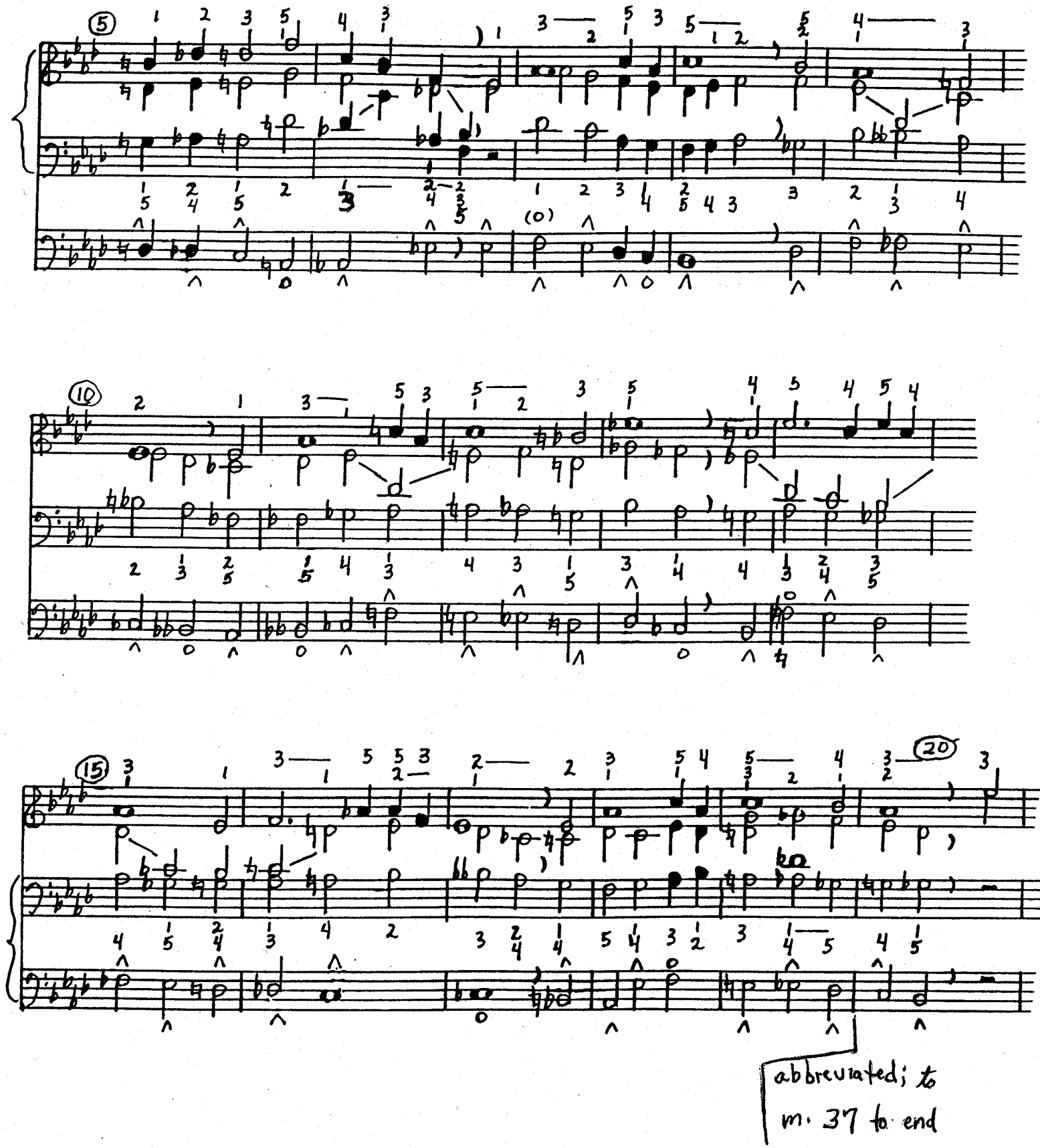
"New Britain"

Norman L. Selby, M.M.
(April 1993 for organ)



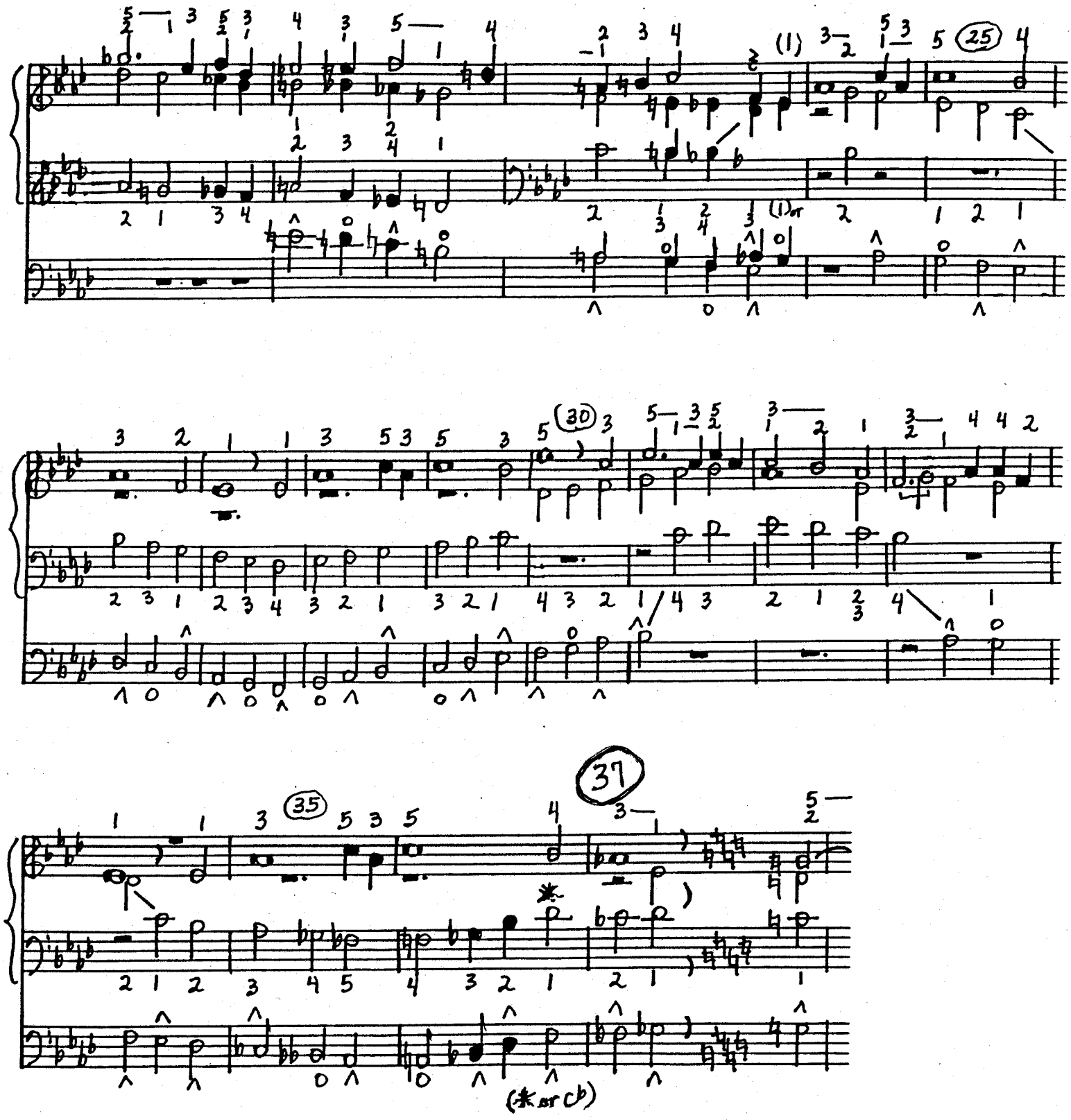
"Amazing Grace" for organ

Norman L. Selby



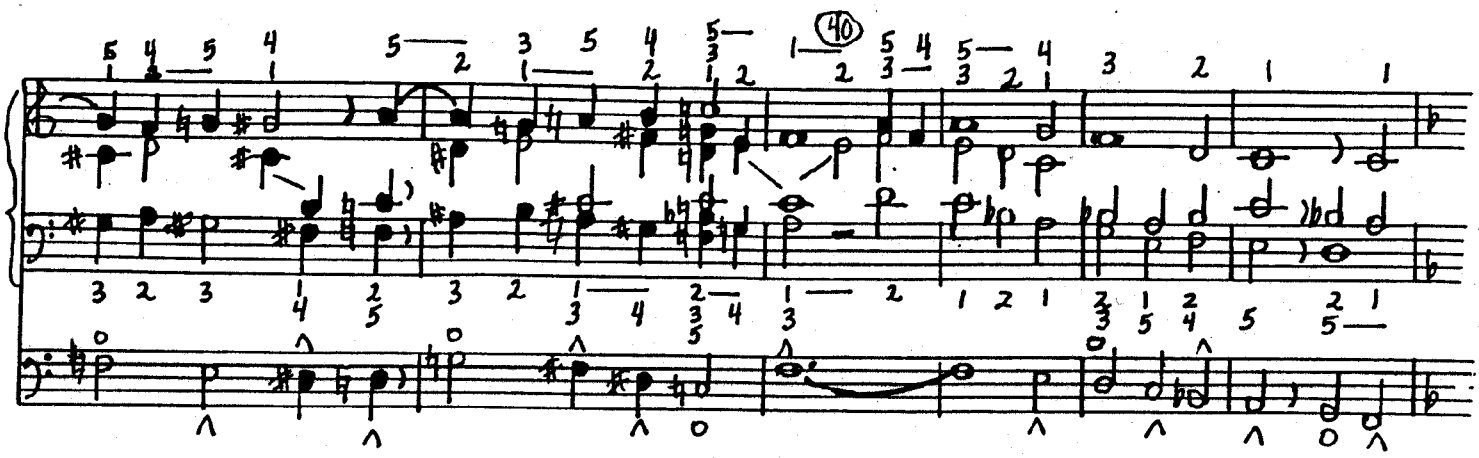
"Amazing Grace" for organ

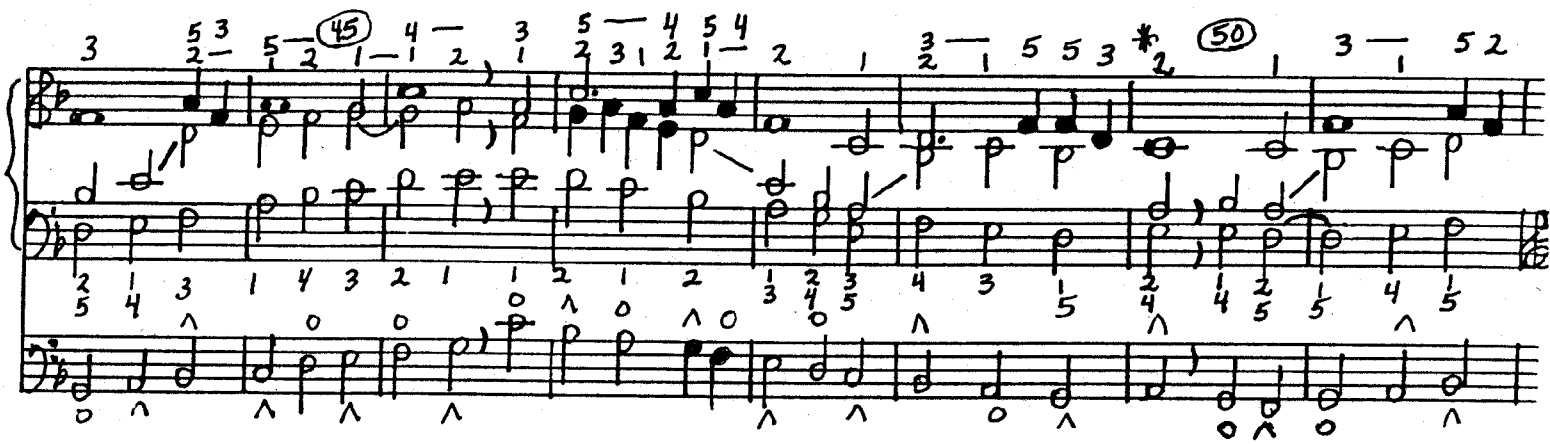
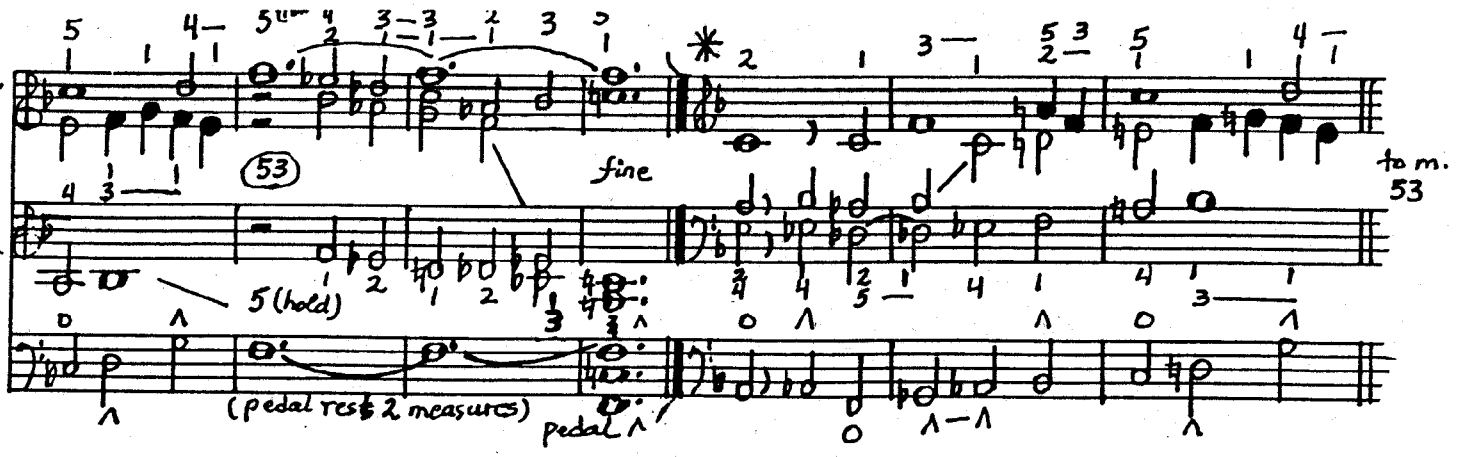
Norman L. Selby



"Amazing Grace" for organ

Norman L. Selby





alternate ending