

Praying in the Garden: A Holy Week Worship Evening

Following are ideas for a holy week worship evening around the theme of Jesus praying in the garden. It focuses on themes such as suffering, sorrow, pleading with God, and deliverance. It follows the story as it is told in Mark, chapter 14, verses 32 to 41. For each section of the story, a Psalm is also given as a prayer. The excerpts from the Psalms are given from the Christian Standard Bible to give a more personal tone, like a prayer – rather than a Bible reading. You could have 2 speakers, one that reads the verses from Mark, and one that reads the prayers from the Psalms. Feel free to switch the songs to others that you are familiar with.

In the night...

Our worship evening today takes place in the darkness, on the night that Jesus was betrayed, in the garden. In ancient times, night was a much more sinister time than it is for us. With electricity – darkness is something that we seldom consider. But in Jesus' time, the darkness was unknown, dangerous, lurking, and sometimes overwhelming. As we follow Jesus and His disciples through Gethsemane, keep this atmosphere in mind.

*Sing verses 1 and 2 of **The Servant King** (156H)*

Mark 14:32-34

Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch."

Lord from sorrows deep I call

Matt Papa and Matt Boswell - <https://store.gettymusic.com/us/song/lord-from-sorrows/>

Have a solo sing verse 1

Read excerpt from Psalm 86 while the piano continues the song:

Psalm 86: 1-2, 6-7, 14-16 (CSB)

Listen, Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. Protect my life, for I am faithful. You are my God; save your servant who trusts in you... Lord, hear my prayer; listen to my plea for mercy. I call on you in the day of my distress, for you will answer me... a gang of ruthless men intends to kill me. They do not let you guide them. But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger and abounding in faithful love and truth. Turn to me and be gracious to me. Give your strength to your servant...

Sing verse 2, chorus, and verse 3, chorus twice – with the congregation joining on the chorus

Mark 14: 35-36

He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

156H The Servant King

Sing verse 2 (again) – congregation

Read excerpt from Psalm 143 while piano continues the song:

Psalm 143: 1, 3, 4, 9-10 (CSB)

Lord hear my prayer... for the enemy has pursued me, crushing me to the ground...my spirit is weak within me; my heart is overcome with dismay... Rescue me from my enemies, Lord; I come to you for protection. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God. May your gracious Spirit lead me on level ground.

Sing verses 3 & 4 – congregation

Mark 14: 37-39

Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words.

618C In His presence

You could use the piano part of this arrangement and have the congregation sing from the hymnal:

<https://www.lorenz.com/choral/church/in-his-presence>

Read excerpt from Psalm 6:6-8 (CSB)

I am weary from my groaning; with my tears I dampen my bed and drench my couch every night. My eyes are swollen with grief; they grow old because of all my enemies. Depart from me evildoers, for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping.

Transition to one of these songs (or another of your choosing):

305C Jesus paid it all / 314C What wondrous love is this / 302C Lamb of God

Mark 14:40-41

And when He returned, He found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. Then He came the third time and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough! The hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Behold the Lamb

Keith and Kristyn Getty - <https://store.gettymusic.com/us/song/behold-the-lamb-communion-hymn/>

Have a solo sing verse 1.

Read an excerpt of Psalm 23 while the piano continues playing the song:

Psalm 23: 1-5 (CSB)

The Lord is my shepherd; I have what I need. He lets me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He renews my life; He leads me along the right paths for His name's sake. Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff – they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Sing all 4 verses of *Behold the Lamb* with congregation