

# FROM SORROW TO JOY

## Worship on the Anniversary of a Difficult Year

*“You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” John 16:20-24*

**MAIN THEME:** *It has been a year since COVID-19 began to drastically impact our lives. Here are some materials to get you started creating either a group or private time of worship reflecting upon events of the past year.*

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### CHOOSING SCRIPTURE // FOR THE FOUNDATION

The main passage from John 16:20-24 lays a foundation from the words of Jesus for this special time of worship. Other passages which support this theme and might be utilized throughout your worship time include:

- ◆ Psalm 13:1-6
- ◆ Psalm 30:1-5, 11-12
- ◆ Habakkuk 3:17-1
- ◆ Isaiah 55:12
- ◆ Philippians 1:3-6
- ◆ Jude 1:24-25
- ◆ Revelation 21:5

### CHOOSING MUSIC // FOR SINGING

- ◆ **Be Still My Soul**  
Text and Translation: Kathrina von Schlegel and Jane Borthwick  
Music: Jean Sibelius

◆ **Christ Our Hope in Life and Death**

Text and Music: Keith Getty, Matt Boswell, Jordan Kauflin, Matt Merker and Matt Papa  
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◆ **Come Ye Sinners Poor and Needy**

Verse Lyrics: Joseph Hart (1759). Refrain: Anonymous. Music: Walker's Southern Harmony. Public Domain (adm worldwide at [www.CapitolCMGPublishing.com](http://www.CapitolCMGPublishing.com), excluding the UK & Europe which is adm by Integrity Music). From Together for the Gospel Live IV. Sovereign Grace Music, a division of Sovereign Grace Churches. [www.SovereignGraceMusic.org](http://www.SovereignGraceMusic.org)

◆ **Goodness of God**

Text and Music: Jenn Johnson, Ed Cash, Jason Ingram, Ben Fielding and Brian Johnson  
©2018 Alletrop Music | SHOUT! Music Publishing Australia | Fellow Ships Music | So Essential Tunes | Bethel Music Publishing

◆ **Holy, Holy, Holy**

Text: Reginald Heber  
Music: John Bacchus Dykes

◆ **I Need Thee Every Hour**

Author: Annie S. Hawks (1872); Author (refrain): Robert Lowry (1872)  
Tune: [I need Thee every hour] (Lowry)

◆ **It Is Well With My Soul**

Author: Horatio Gates Spafford (1873)  
Tune: VILLE DU HAVRE

◆ **Light After Darkness**

Text: Frances Ridley Havergal, 1879 (verses); Zac Hicks, 2008 (chorus & bridge, based on Psalm 30:5 & Job 1:12)  
Music: Zac Hicks, 2008  
©2009 Unbudding Fig Music (ASCAP)

◆ **Lord, I Need You**

Text and Music: Jesse Reeves, Kristian Stanfill, Matt Maher, Christy Nockels and Daniel Carson  
©2011 sixsteps Music | Sweater Weather Music | Thankyou Music | Valley Of Songs Music | [worshiptogether.com](http://worshiptogether.com) songs

◆ **O Heart Bereaved and Lonely**

Text: Frances Jane Crosby

Music: Christopher Miner

©2004 Christopher Miner Music

◆ **Plead for Me**

Sovereign Grace Music All That Thrills My Soul © 2012 Sovereign Grace Music

◆ **This Dry Land**

This Dry Land (feat. Advent Birmingham) | Cardiphonia Music Daughter Zion's Woe ©

Cardiphonia Music

◆ **Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**

Text and Music: Helen Howarth Lemmel

◆ **Wait on the Lord**

Text and Music: Wen Reagan

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## MAKING SPACE // FOR PRAYER

◆ **Collect for Days of Trouble**

*2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Matthew 16:24-25; Psalm 80*

Renewing, restoring, and reviving God, we know that you give the gentle rains and warm sun, and all that we need to grow healthy and strong. And while our heads tell us that your grace is made perfect in our weakness, our hearts feel only the frailty of a failing world. So Lord, come! Come down, come in, come with us, and make us whole. Our troubles and weaknesses leave our souls barren; sickness and grief leave our hearts in pain; war and violence leave our world in conflict; homelessness and inequality leave many feeling abandoned; and the poor and starving remind us that oppression reigns rampant. So come down, come in, come with us, and make us whole! Help us receive the faith you offer, Jesus—the faith that is different, the faith that is dangerously compelling, the faith that carries a cross and says, “When I’m weak, then I’m strong.” And though your children wander far from home, root us once again in the warmth of love. Restore us, O Lord, and make your face shine upon us so that our world can be saved, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns forever and ever. Amen.

◆ **Pray a Psalm of lamentation**

Psalm 44

Psalm 60

Psalm 74

Psalm 79  
Psalm 80  
Psalm 85  
Psalm 86  
Psalm 90

## TAKING TIME // TO LAMENT

1. **CRY OUT TO GOD.**

Biblical lament is more than internal grieving. It is crying out to an almighty, merciful, loving God.

2. **NAME YOUR PAIN.**

Reflect over the losses and grief you've experienced during the past year, and name them in prayer.

3. **MAKE YOUR REQUESTS KNOWN TO GOD.**

Express your heart's desires to God. In the Psalms, many times these requests sound demanding. "Please, God, help me!"

4. **EXPRESS YOUR TRUST IN GOD.**

A cry to Almighty God with faith results in hope for the future. While things are not now as they should be, those who trust in God know better days lie ahead.

## CREATING SPOKEN WORD // FOR HEARING

A Tableaux Representing the 126<sup>th</sup> Psalm

**Image 1: Worshipful joy.**

*Actor 2 bows down to the ground in a state of worship. Actor 3 stands beside her/him one arm outstretched in worship, gazing to the sky joyfully with other hand on top of head in a state of wonderment (this position is open to change/interpretation).*

**Actor 1:**

When the Lord changed Zion's circumstances for the better, it was like we had been dreaming. Our mouths were suddenly filled with laughter; our tongues were filled with joyful shouts. It was even said, at that time, among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them!"

**Image 2: A gardener sows his seeds.**

*Actor 3, The Farmer, kneels down to the ground and digs his/her fingers into the ground for sowing while Actor 1, The Lord, places a gentle hand on his/her shoulder, guiding the farmer and overlooking the bounty that will surely come to harvest.*

**Actor 2**

Yes, the Lord has done great things for us, and we are overjoyed. Lord, change our circumstances for the better, like dry streams in the desert waste! Let those who plant with tears reap the harvest with joyful shouts.

**Image 3: Rejoicing!**

*Actor 1 and Actor 2, back-to-back. Actor 1 assumes a position of anxiety while Actor 2 assumes a position of praise showing the dichotomy of waiting to be delivered and being delivered.*

**Actor 3**

Let those who go out, crying and carrying their seed, come home with joyful shouts, carrying bales of grain!

*Beat.*

This is the word of the Lord.

*Actor 1 and Actor 2 turn out to join Actor 3.*

**All**

Thanks be to God.

**Other options for spoken word elements include:**

[Here Breathing](#)

[Character of God: Compassion](#)

## FINDING ART // FOR SEEING



***Rest from Anxiety*** by artist Joe Cory is an invitation to rest in Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, especially when the troubles of life are crashing all around us. Knowing we can cast our cares upon Jesus helps us find rest, especially during anxious times.

# SAMPLE WORSHIP SERVICE

*From Sorrow to Joy: Worship on a Difficult Anniversary*

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## GATHERING

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;  
**There is no end to his greatness.**  
One generation shall praise your works to another  
**And shall declare your power.**  
All your works praise you, Lord,  
**And your faithful servants bless you.**  
They make known the glory of your kingdom  
**And speak of your power.**  
My mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord:  
**Let all flesh bless his holy name forever and ever.**

*from The Worship Sourcebook, Second Edition, copyright 2013.*

## SONGS OF WORSHIP:

- ◆ [Come Ye Sinners Poor and Needy](#)
- ◆ [This Dry Land](#)

## A Responsive Reading Based on Psalm 22:

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from my cries of anguish? My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer, by night, but I find no rest.

*[Allow time to name individual losses, pain, sorrows and lamentations before the Lord and one another. Consider such griefs from the past year as sickness*

*and death of friends and loved ones, social injustice and unrest, job and financial stress, loss of what once was normal, etc.]*

You are enthroned as the Holy One; you are the one Israel praises. In you our ancestors put their trust; they trusted and you delivered them. To you they cried out and were saved; in you they trusted and were not put to shame.

**Lord, be not far from me. You are my strength; come quickly to help me. I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly I will praise you.**

You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel.

**For he has not despised or scorned the suffering of the afflicted one; he has not hidden his face from him, but has listened to his cry for help.**

**SONG OF WORSHIP: Holy, Holy, Holy (*sing unaccompanied, voices only*)**

Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide thee, though the eye of sinfulness thy glory may not see, only thou art holy; there is none beside thee, perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore thee,

casting down their golden crowns around the  
glassy sea;  
cherubim and seraphim falling down before thee,  
which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God almighty!  
All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth, and  
sky, and sea.  
Holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty!  
God in three persons, blessed trinity!

## WORD

Read John 16:20-24

Hear these words from Jesus as recorded in John  
16, verses 20-24:

“You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow  
will turn into joy. When a woman is giving  
birth, she has sorrow because her hour has  
come, but when she has delivered the  
baby, she no longer remembers the  
anguish, for joy that a human being has  
been born into the world. So also you have  
sorrow now, but I will see you again, and  
your hearts will rejoice, and no one will  
take your joy from you. In that day you  
will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to  
you, whatever you ask of the Father in my  
name, he will give it to you. Until now you  
have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and  
you will receive, that your joy may be full.”

**SONG OF WORSHIP:** [Plead for Me](#)

**Collect for Days of Trouble**

*2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Matthew 16:24-25; Psalm 80*

Renewing, restoring, and reviving God, we  
know that you give the gentle rains and  
warm sun, and all that we need to grow  
healthy and strong. And while our heads  
tell us that your grace is made perfect in  
our weakness, our hearts feel only the  
frailty of a failing world. So Lord, come!  
Come down, come in, come with us, and  
make us whole. Our troubles and  
weaknesses leave our souls barren;  
sickness and grief leave our hearts in pain;  
war and violence leave our world in  
conflict; homelessness and inequality  
leave many feeling abandoned; and the  
poor and starving remind us that  
oppression reigns rampant. So come down,  
come in, come with us, and make us whole!  
Help us receive the faith you offer, Jesus—  
the faith that is different, the faith that is  
dangerously compelling, the faith that  
carries a cross and says, “When I’m weak,  
then I’m strong.” And though your  
children wander far from home, root us  
once again in the warmth of love. Restore  
us, O Lord, and make your face shine upon  
us so that our world can be saved, through  
Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns forever  
and ever. Amen.

## RESPONSE

Spoken Word Poem: [Here Breathing by Amena  
Brown](#)

**A Responsive Reading Based on Habakkuk 3:17-18:**

Though the fig tree does not bud And  
there are no grapes on the vines,

**Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.**

Though the olive crop fails  
and the fields produce no food

**Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior**

Though there are no sheep in the  
pen and no cattle in the stalls,

**Yet I will rejoice in the Lord,  
I will be joyful in God my Savior.**

**SONG OF WORSHIP:** [Goodness of God](#)

**Optional Activity:**

Document your personal response to God's goodness over the past year as a memorial to which you can return during future times of suffering. Your response may be in the form of writing in a journal; singing, playing, or writing music; creating visual art, or something completely different altogether.

## SENDING



*Rest from Anxiety* by artist Joe Cory is an invitation to rest in Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, especially when the troubles of life are crashing all around us. Knowing we can cast our cares upon Jesus helps us find rest, especially during anxious times.

**SONG OF WORSHIP:** [It Is Well With My Soul](#)

### **Benediction**

From Jude 1:24-25:

Now to him who is able to keep you from  
stumbling and to present you blameless before  
the presence  
of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our  
Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be  
glory,  
majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time  
and now and forever. Amen.