

THE FINAL HOURS

Luke 22:14-16; Luke 22:19-20; John 13:21-30; Mark 14:27-31, Mark 14:32-46; Luke 22:52-53; Luke 22:66; Luke 23:5; Matthew 27:15-26; Mark 15:21-39; John 19:38-42 // Good Friday

This worship service comes from a Christian worship tradition begun in the Middle Ages. In the reading of the Passion story and the extinguishing of the candles, we participate symbolically in Christ's descent into death. Here are some resources to help you get started with your own service.

MAIN THEME: *Remembering the Cross*

CHOOSING MUSIC // FOR SINGING

- ✠ **How Deep the Father's Love for Us** [Key of D]
Text and Music: Stuart Townsend
© 1995, Thankyou Music

- ✠ **Lamb of God** [Key of C]
Words and Music: Twila Paris
© 1985, Straightway Music and Mountain String Music, Admin. by EMI Christian Music Publishing

- ✠ **O Sacred Head, Now Wounded** [Key of C]
Text: Bernard of Clairvaux; translator: Paul Gerhardt; translator: James W. Alexander
Music: PASSION CHORALE (Hassler)
Public Domain

- ✠ **The Power of the Cross** [Key of C]
Text: Taizé Community, paraphrase of Matthew 26:26-41
Music: Jacques Berthier
© 1984 Les Presses de Taizé (admin. GIA Publications)

CREATING DRAMA // FOR HEARING

Purchase and use "Where the Light Ends" by The Work of the People [www.theworkofthepeople.com]
It's based on a poem inspired by Good Friday.

Perhaps the most dramatic sound of the crucifixion was not hammers or earthquakes, but the unsettling silence that followed Jesus' death. Observe extended times of silence during your Good Friday service, allowing worshipers time to fully absorb the things they encounter.

FINDING ART // FOR SEEING

Make a large cross out of wood, or invite someone from your worshiping community to do so. Invite worshipers to hammer nails into this cross at the end of this service, then drape it in black.



LIVING WORSHIP // FOR DOING

At the close of worship, have the worshipers depart in silent reflection. You might leave them with a final question or quote on paper. A question could be: “Where are you most dead right now, and how might Christ begin pointing you to life?”

A quote could be:

“We have never preached violence, except the violence of love, which left Christ nailed to a cross, the violence that we must each do to ourselves to overcome our selfishness and such cruel inequalities among us. The violence we preach is not the violence of the sword, the violence of hatred. It is the violence of love, of relationship, the violence that wills to beat weapons into sickles for work.”

Oscar Romero, The Violence of Love

MAKING SPACE // FOR WORSHIPPING

For this service, the worship space should begin in light and move to darkness. The worship space should be dimly lit and somber. If this will be new to worshipers, give them advance notice through church announcements and a sign at entrances to the worship space. Place candles at the front or around the room that can be extinguished. As you move to darkness, be sure to provide enough light for worshipers to participate in safety.

You’ll notice that we included Communion at the beginning of our worship service as a way to reflect on the body and the blood. If you do this, you’ll need communion stations around the room with appropriate people to serve.

WRITING POETRY// FOR PRAYING

Use “Psalm 22” from The Work of the People [www.theworkofthepeople.com] as a call to worship.

Good Friday is a time to introduce Lent in your congregation, especially if you aren’t familiar with it. Consider using this Prayer of Lament from The Worship Sourcebook:

*Where are you, O God?
We are lost in the night; have you cast us from your presence?
Temptations surround us; their masks grin through the darkness.
We run from them, but which way should we go?
Where can we hide when all lies in shadow?
Have mercy on us, O God.
Our eyes are swollen from tears; our bones are cold with fear;
our souls have been broken—do you not hear, Lord?
Save us! According to your steadfast love, answer us!
Do not hide your face, but draw near and redeem us!*

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Follow the prayer with this statement from scripture:

“Seeker in the dark, do not be disheartened, for God hears your prayer. ‘Come near to God, and he will come near to you.’ (James 4:8)”



SAMPLE WORSHIP SERVICE

Good Friday // Luke 22:14-16; Luke 22:19-20; John 13:21-30; Mark 14:27-31, Mark 14: 32-46; Luke 22:52-53; Luke 22:66; Luke 23:5; Matthew 27:15-26; Mark 15:21-39; John 19:38-42 // The Final Hours

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WELCOME

Here, welcome worshipers and tell them a little about what to expect in this service.

INSTRUMENTAL MEDITATION

THOUGHTS ON GOOD FRIDAY

Not a sermon, but a few devotional thoughts.

SONG OF DEVOTION

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

THE BODY AND BLOOD

Scripture Reading

Luke 22:14-16

Luke 22:19-20

The Lord's Supper

Have tables around the worship space. Invite worshipers to one of the stations to receive the bread and cup.

THE BETRAYAL

Scripture Reading

John 13:21-30

Silence

Instrumental Meditation

THE DENIAL

Scripture Reading

Mark 14:27-31

Silence

Song of Gratitude

Lamb of God

THE AGONY

Scripture Reading

Mark 14:32-46

Silence

Song of Suffering

What Wondrous Love is This

THE TRIAL

Scripture Reading

Luke 22:52-53

Luke 22:66

Luke 23:5

Silence

Song of Love

How Deep the Fathers Love for Us

THE VERDICT

Scripture Reading

Matthew 27:15-26

Silence

Song of Journey

The Power of the Cross

THE CROSS

Scripture Reading

Mark 15:21-39

Silence

Video Reflection

Where the Light Ends

THE TOMB

Scripture Reading

John 19:38-42

Silence

Final Meditation

[A final word about Good Friday, pointing towards Easter Sunday. Instruct worshipers to exit the worship space in silence, in keeping with this solemn hour. Invite them to remain as long as they like.]