

SIMPLE LITURGY | WEEK OF APRIL 5

Hello! And thanks for using this week's Simple Liturgy as a part of your daily or gathered worship. Before you begin, we encourage you to do two things:

1. Refresh yourself on how to use this liturgy for today's worship. You'll find an explanation on the last page.
2. Pray and ask God to bless this time and help you know and love Him more than you did before.

CALL TO WORSHIP

(LEADER) Last week, we began a trip through the Songs of Ascent. These Psalms are a kind of ancient playlist that helped God's people remember who God is, what He's done, and why a long and dangerous journey to His presence in Jerusalem was worth it. In this increasingly long and dangerous pandemic, these songs are for us, too.

What kind of songs have you found yourself listening to or singing? Have they expressed the uncertainty or fear you're feeling? Have they helped cheer you up and onward throughout the day? Have they helped you rest your mind?

Different Songs of Ascent help us out in each of those ways. This week, we're going to look at Psalm 122. It's one that fits in the "a song to cheer you on your way" category. Let's hear it together! Would someone like to read this out loud for us?

READ

Psalm 122

"I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"

And now here we are, standing inside your gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is a well-built city; its seamless walls cannot be breached.

All the tribes of Israel - the Lord's people - make their pilgrimage here.

They come to give thanks to the name of the Lord, as the law requires Israel.

Here stand the thrones from where judgment is given, the thrones of the house of David.

Pray for peace in Jerusalem. May all who love this city prosper.

O Jerusalem, may there be peace within your walls and prosperity in your palaces.

For the sake of my family and friends, I will say, "May you have peace."

For the sake of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek what is best for you, O Jerusalem."

(LEADER) This song cheered God's people on their way by helping them remember their destination. Soon they'll be together in God's city and danger will be replaced with peace! This song cheers us on, too, even in the best and the worst case scenarios: God has secured a place, a peace, and gladness for us that will last forever. And what can cheer us on even more today is the fact that we are not isolated from God and He is not isolated from us. He is with us even now in our homes. Let's thank God and cheer each other on as we sing!

SING

["10,000 Reasons" from YouTube playlist](#)

PRAY

(LEADER) We need God's help to hope. We need His help to not only remember the truth that can cheer us on our way, but to experience it as well. Let's take a few minutes to silently pray. Take your deepest fears to God. Ask Him to help you understand the hope the gospel gives you specifically, right here and now. Ask Him to give that hope a home in you, along with a peace that outweighs even the worst of your fears. (give a few minutes for silent prayer)

Let's pray together:

"Father God,
Hope and cheer seem far off in this season.
Sometimes they even seem wrong to want or feel.
You tell us that there is a time for everything -
a time to weep and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn and a time to dance.
But you also show us in Your Word that hope is meant for all times, especially when it seems far off.
You cheer us on to finish the race in front of us, especially when it gets hard.
Help us to set our sights on Jesus today.
Help us marvel that His work of joining and building us together into His dwelling place doesn't stop
even when the world seems to be screeching to a halt.
Help us have a sense of wonder that You are with us,
that Your Spirit lives in us and unites us to Yourself and to each other
even when we are separated and stuck in our homes.
And help us face uncertainty and danger with the certainty of peace.
We thank you, God, for making peace with us through Jesus and for giving us a home with You forever.
Amen."

Based on Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, Psalm 42:5 & 8, Philippians 3:14-16, and Hebrews 12:1-2

SING

["We Will Feast In The House of Zion" from YouTube playlist](#)

CELEBRATE THE GOSPEL

(LEADER) In Jesus Christ, we have every reason to hope! Let's hear the good news of the gospel together. Would someone like to read this out loud for us?

Ephesians 2:12-16, 19-21

"Remember that you were at one time separated from Christ, alienated from citizenship with the people of Israel and strangers to the covenant promises God had made with them. You lived in this world without God

and without hope. But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ. For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united us into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. Together as one body, Christ reconciled us all to God by means of his death on the cross.

So then you are no longer strangers or aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and members of the family of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple for the Lord. “

(LEADER) We lived without God and without hope. But now we live in Christ. We live with God. We live with hope! No matter what comes - sickness, sorrow, or death - we know we will stay united to Jesus! And we know that in the meantime, He is good and able to help us experience and express that unity. Let's thank God for Jesus' work!

SING

[“All I Have Is Christ” from YouTube playlist](#)

DEVOTIONAL

[Pastor Jeremy's Video - Psalm 122 from YouTube playlist](#)

CLOSING PRAYER

(LEADER) Let me read this benediction from the book of Romans as a prayer and blessing for the road ahead:

Romans 15:13

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”

HOW TO USE THIS LITURGY

This liturgy is meant to be a similar layout to our Sunday worship services. Our services are arranged the way they are for some good reasons. However, we're not trying to recreate our Sunday service here. We simply want to help you enjoy and express the parts of our Sunday services that matter the most in a way that is easy to do at-home. It may look like a lot, but it's simple to use. Just follow along! Here's how it will work:

We'll start with a Scripture reading because our worship always begins with God - with who He is, what He's said, and what He's done. Our worship is always a response to Him. It's not something we do to get Him to respond to us. No, God steps towards us first. This means that you can think of our songs as the way we respond to God together: He speaks to us through His Word, and we sing to Him and each other in light of what He says to us. So after this reading, you'll sing a song of worship.

Next, we'll move into a time of prayer. God putting Himself on display is like a light being turned on in the dark. We can see ourselves and our world more clearly, and it's usually not a pretty sight. We see a whole lot of brokenness - some of it is sin that needs to be confessed, and some of it is suffering that needs to be lamented. This time of prayer will be a way of responding to God in light of what He reveals about us and our world, and the song that follows will continue that expression, giving voice to repentance and hope.

But God is not just a light that reveals everything broken inside and outside of us. He is a Savior who heals it all. He has good news to speak about what He's done to bring surefire forgiveness and redemption! That good news is the gospel. We'll read a passage that points us straight to Jesus, and we'll sing a song of praise in response to the good news that He's finished the work that forgives and heals all wrongs.

After that, you'll be led to watch Pastor Jeremy's devotional so that God can teach and speak candidly and specifically to you. You'll end your time with a brief prayer of blessing for the days ahead..

A few more helpful notes:

- 1) Don't be weirded out by the word "liturgy". It may make you think of solemn religious rituals. Or you may associate it with a theology/expression of Christianity you feel isn't right or true. We're using the word "liturgy" because it means "the work of the people". It's another way of saying, "This is the framework of how we'll celebrate the gospel and respond to God with renewed faith and thanks together."
- 2) This liturgy is written to work for someone who is leading the time of worship in a home - most likely with their family or roommates as we shelter-in-place. But it's also written so that those pieces are fruitful for you even if you're alone. We encourage you to let all of it lead you to hear God clearly and respond to Him genuinely.
- 3) You may feel weirded out by doing certain things out loud like reading Scripture or singing with family or friends. We encourage you to be brave! Hearing Scripture being read to you and over you is a sweet gift to your soul. It's a physical experience of the spiritual reality that God is present. The same is true for singing. Your singing, even if you can't carry a tune, will be an experiential reminder to those in the room that they are not alone - that God is with them and that you are with them, too. And if you're alone, sing solely to God. He is singing, too, and rejoicing over you with love (Zeph. 3:17).
- 4) Each video is linked individually. [Here is the full youtube playlist.](#)

Enjoy worshipping today!