

“Till I Start Praying”

A New Life Dramatic Art's production,
based on an original poem by Barb Smith.
Featuring music from We The Kingdom.
NewLifeFM.com | 2022

“The sudden loss of a loved one marks the start of an emotional and spiritual journey for a woman. Follow her journey as she steps out of darkness and into the light and hope that Christ provides.”

This production will take place during our 9:30 and 11am services on Sunday, August 7, 2022, and will happen after Message and lead into the response song.

This is a mostly silent skit, with live narration provided by Barb Smith. The actors onstage will illustrate the poem's stanzas following the narration. Live background music, lighting, and choreographed visual effects will be used. The stage will be broken up into 3 scenes. The final stanza will lead into and be part of the Sunday response song, which will be *If All I Had was Christ* by We the Kingdom. The skit concludes with the end of the song.

This production is technically one continuous scene, but for ease of preparation, we have broken it down into 3 scenes.

CHARACTERS:

Narrator - Speaking Role, Barb Smith

The Woman (unnamed) - Singing Role, adult

Jesus - Nonspeaking Role, adult

Condolence Mourners - Speaking Role, adult

Mourners/ Memorial Guests - Nonspeaking Roles, adult/ teen/ child

Pastor - Speaking Role, Singing Role, adult

SCENES:

Scene 1 - The Wake (Stage Right)

Inside a home, mourners are gathered for a wake, as gatherers mingle and express condolences to an unnamed woman.

Scene 2 - The Bench (Stage Left)

The woman leaves the wake, walking in the rain and sitting on a bench to contemplate her loss, where she eventually sees Christ offering His hand.

Scene 3 - The Grave (Center Stage)

Taking Christ's open hand, the woman and Christ walk together to a graveside memorial, where she is surrounded by the others affected by this loss. Together they heal by drawing near to Christ and laying down their burdens.

(MORE)

SCENE 1 - THE WAKE

Stage right. Interior of a home. The scene implies a living room, with a few chairs, a framed picture of Christ on the wall, and a framed picture with its back to the audience on an end table.

LIGHTS COME UP ON A GATHERING OF **MOURNERS** WEARING BLACK MILLING ABOUT AS A **WOMAN** SITS IN A CHAIR, LOOKING DISTANT. AUDIO OF A MINGLING CROWD IS PLAYING.

CONDOLENCE MOURNER

(Comes out of the crowd, lays a hand on the shoulder of the sitting woman, and slightly crouches.)

I'm so sorry for your loss.

WOMAN

(Looks up after hearing and shakes her head up and down, looking distant.)

CONDOLENCE MOURNER

(Pats woman's shoulder and walks into the crowd.)

BACKGROUND MUSIC BEGINS, AND LIGHTS DIM TO FOCUS ON THE WOMAN IN THE CHAIR.

NARRATOR

How fast the time passes

WOMAN

(Looks toward the picture on the end table solemnly.)

NARRATOR

Until one day

WOMAN

(Picks up the photo and stares down at it in her hands.)

NARRATOR

You lose that one person.
They vanish away.

(MORE)

(MORE)
(CONT'D)

WOMAN

(Stands up from the chair. Looks up from the photo, distantly out towards the congregation.)

NARRATOR

Then time slowly stops

MOURNERS

(Begin to move in slow motion)

AUDIO OF CROWD MINGLING BEGINS TO FADE DOWN.

NARRATOR

Creeps slowly by.
You feel every emotion.
Cry every cry.

WOMAN

(Closes her eyes and clutches the picture to her heart, face turned upwards.)

NARRATOR

Until you turn numb.

MOURNERS

(Freeze in place.)

AUDIO OF THE CROWD FADES OUT COMPLETELY.

WOMAN

(Slowly walks through the frozen crowd, distant and unseeing.)

LIGHTS BEGIN TO FADE DOWN ON STAGE RIGHT.

NARRATOR

Then you forget why.
You used to care,

THE WOMAN

(Exits the light to walk towards Stage Left.)

(MORE)

(MORE)
(CONT'D)

NARRATOR

Now just want to die

STAGE IS DARK. AUDIO OF THUNDER CRASH BOOMS IN, FOLLOWED BY STEADY RAIN.

SCENE 2 - THE BENCH

Stage left. Exterior park bench. The scene implies a rainy day.

LIGHTS COME UP ON AN EMPTY PARK BENCH NEXT TO A LAMPPOST. THE **WOMAN** IS ENTERING THE SCENE NOW WITH AN OPEN UMBRELLA, SLOWLY WALKING TOWARDS THE BENCH, STILL HOLDING THE PICTURE FRAME. AUDIO OF STEADY LIGHT RAIN IS PLAYING, ALONG WITH BACKGROUND MUSIC.

NARRATOR

Why did God take them?
What should I do?
Nowhere to turn.

WOMAN

(Sits on the far end of the bench, looking at the photo in her lap.)

NARRATOR

Not even a clue.

WOMAN

(Clutches her hands together, eyes closed in prayer. Face up toward the congregation.)

NARRATOR

Till I start praying.

MUSIC BREAKS IN, MORE INTENSE AND BUILDING. AUDIO OF RAIN BEGINS TO FADE. SPOTLIGHT RAPIDLY FADES UP ON CENTER STAGE, WHERE **JESUS** IS STANDING.

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

NARRATOR

Suddenly hear;
God whispers to me

WOMAN

(She opens her eyes and turns her head towards Center Stage. She sees Jesus.)

NARRATOR

"Come and draw near".

JESUS

(Extends His hand towards the woman on the bench, offering His peace.)

NARRATOR

I'm struggling inside

WOMAN

(She looks back down at the picture in her lap, afraid to let go.)

NARRATOR

But God's there too.

WOMAN

(She is resolute. She stands up, puts her umbrella down, and confidently walks towards Jesus.)

NARRATOR

I'm hurting and sad
But His promise is true.

LIGHTS FADE ON STAGE LEFT, SPOTLIGHT ON CENTER STAGE TRANSITIONS TO A LIT SCENE. THE AUDIO OF RAIN HAS FADED OUT COMPLETELY.

JESUS

(Woman takes his hand and he guides her just behind him, to reveal a grave.)

(MORE)

(CONT'D)

SCENE 3 - THE GRAVE

Center Stage. Exterior gravesite. The scene implies a memorial is taking place.

LIGHTS COME UP ON AN SINGULAR GRAVE, WITH **MEMORIAL GUESTS** AND THE **PASTOR** UPSTAGE, HOLDING CANDLES AND MEMENTOS. **JESUS** AND THE **WOMAN** ARE STANDING JUST TO THE SIDE OF THE GRAVE AS HE REVEALS IT TO HER. SHE CLUTCHES THE PHOTO TO HER HEART, HOLDING JESUS'S HAND WITH THE OTHER.

JESUS AND WOMAN

(Holding hands, Jesus brings the woman behind the grave, facing the congregation. He puts his arm around her shoulders, looking at her. She has been infatuated with the grave until now, and looks up into his gaze.)

NARRATOR

He'll always be there
Right by my side.

WOMAN

(She smiles at Christ, teary with joy.)

NARRATOR

I can give Him my burdens
Place my worries aside.

WOMAN

(She lays down the photo at the base of the grave.)

JESUS AND WOMAN

(He squeezes her shoulder close and she holds His open hand with both of hers, mimicking how she used to clutch the photograph.)

MEMORIAL GUESTS

(They begin to come forward, laying down their mementos.)

NARRATOR

No longer alone
Jesus is near,
He listens and cares;

(MORE)

Calms all your fear.

(CONT'D)

MUSIC TRANSITIONS INTO THE BEGINNING OF, IF ALL I HAD WAS CHRIST.

PASTOR

(Comes forward from amongst the crowd, holding a Bible in one hand. He greets the woman with a pat on the shoulder. He then walks downstage in front of the grave and faces the congregation.)

Would you all please rise and worship with me?

STAGE LIGHTS FADE, SOFT SPOTLIGHT ON PASTOR DOWNSTAGE.

PASTOR (SINGS)

IF ALL I HAD WAS CHRIST
I'D HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN
ALL I HAVE IS CHRIST
AND I HAVE EVERYTHING

WOMAN (SINGS)

(Comes forward into the light, singing to the Pastor. Jesus discretely exits during her singing.)

HIS PRESENCE IS ENOUGH
HE HIDES ME IN HIS WINGS
HE WRAPS ME IN HIS LOVE
AND STIRS MY HEART TO SING

STAGE LIGHTS FADE UP TO THE WORSHIP SCENE.

WORSHIP TEAM, PASTOR, WOMAN, MEMORIAL GUESTS (ALL SING)

MY LIFE IS IN HIS HANDS
HE IS MY CONFIDENCE
HE KEEPS HIS PROMISES
FOREVER AND AMEN

WORSHIP TEAM & CAST - PARTS TBD.

He's gentle with my heart
He knows each tear I cry
There's healing in His scars
For every one of mine
My life is in His hands
He is my confidence

(MORE)

He keeps His promises
Forever and amen
I have never known a love like this before
Jesus, You are the one I'm living for
I have never known a love like this before
Jesus, You are the one I'm living for
My life is in His hands
He is my confidence
He keeps His promises
Forever and amen
Forever and amen
Forever and amen
Forever and amen
My life is in Your hands
You are my confidence
You keep Your promises
Forever and amen
My life is in Your hands
You are my confidence
You keep Your promises
Forever and amen
You keep Your promises
Forever and amen

(MORE)

Join the Cast & Crew of “Till I Start Praying”

Join the Dramatic Arts Ministry team for the upcoming production, “Till I Start Praying,” a skit formed around the original poem of Barb Smith, featuring music from We The Kingdom.

JOIN THE CAST

Submit your audition digitally for your chance to join the cast of “Till I Start Praying”. Submissions are due by Wednesday, July 6th!


Audition Materials & Submission

Nonspeaking Role

- While playing the provided audio file (below), record and submit a video audition of yourself acting out motions as the poem is read. Get creative and have fun!

Singing Role

- Same as above; while playing the **audio file**, record an audition of yourself acting out motions as the poem is read. Get creative and have fun!
- Singing roles must also perform the first verse and chorus of We the Kingdom’s, “If All I Had was Christ”. You can choose to sing along to the music or choose to sing it acapella in a different key.

Link to song:  We The Kingdom - If All I Had Was Christ [Audio]

Link to audio: <https://vimeo.com/724641407/24019f1d9a>

Upload auditions here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KQ5-V8A_d7c3LxVRRwQRitCQGSq31_zw?usp=sharing

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE

BLUE - CAST, PRODUCTION DIR., ASST. DIRECTORS, PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS, PROP MASTER

GREEN - CAST, PRODUCTION DIR., MUSIC DIR., SOUND DIR., ASST. DIRECTORS, PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS, PROP MASTER, COSTUME COORDINATOR

YELLOW - FULL CAST AND CREW, WORSHIP & TECH TEAM

Sunday	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Saturday
June 26	27	28	29	30	July 1	2
3	4	5	6 AUDITIONS DUE	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18 ZOOM Table Read - Time TBD.	19 REHEARSAL 5:30-8PM	20	21	22	23
24	25 REHEARSAL 5:30-8PM	26 REHEARSAL 5:30-8PM	27	28	29	30
31 DRESS REHEARSAL 12:30PM	Aug 1	2	3 DRESS REHEARSAL 5:30PM	4	5	6
7 SHOWDATE 7:30AM - 12:30PM						

(MORE)