

**'T WAS THE TIME BEFORE EASTER:  
THE MUSICAL**

*Music and Lyrics by Christy Long*  
*Script by Kimberlee Mendoza*



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# 'Twas the Time Before Easter: The Musical

Music and lyrics by Christy Long  
Script by Kimberlee Mendoza

**CAST OF CHARACTERS****Narrator**

(Male or female)

**Peter**

(Male)

**John**

(Male)

**James**

(Male)

**Mary**

(Female)

**Mary Magdalene**

(Female)

**Thomas**

(Male)

**Jesus**

(Male)

**Soldier**

(Male, but could be a female, could have extras)

**Angel**

(Male or female)

**Other Disciples**

(Both male and female extras)

**Crowd**

(Both male and female extras)

## ***PRODUCTION NOTES***

This musical may be simple or elaborate, depending on the costumes, props, and set. Consider showing different scenes from the Bible between the Narrator's words. Freeze frame scenes during the Crucifixion could also be powerful. This is done by having the actors getting into the position of a scene, such as when Jesus is crucified. Everyone freezes, the lights fade up, and they hold the pose. When the lights go down, they move into another position. Or you may simply opt to enact the different scenes as written.

**TIME/LOCATION:** 33 A.D. — Passover, the night of the Crucifixion, and Easter.

**SET:** Stage Right is a house with a table and several chairs. Stage Left is a tomb setting that can also double as the Garden of Gethsemane. Consider decorating blocks with stone painted tarps and plants. Place a “rock” there. (This may be a small stool draped in a tarp painted to look like a rock.) Center Stage is where Jesus will walk through the crowd of palm branches and where a cross will need to be placed in the Crucifixion scene. It would be easiest to have it resting on the floor so Jesus may be “placed” on it simply by standing against it and placing his arms in a “T” position. Other items that might dress up your set: baskets, fake fruit, fake fish, additional palm branches, and more rocks.

**COSTUMES:** Narrator wears a nice dress or suit. Jesus wears a white biblical robe with a blue sash. Angel wears a white robe, wings optional. All others wear biblical robes, headpieces, and sandals. The women's headpieces should drape loosely from their heads while the men should tie theirs around their heads with a length of cord.

**PROPS:** Palm branches (real or artificial), hammer, miscellaneous plates for setting the table, loaf of bread, juice in goblets. A fun touch (but optional) is an oversized book for the Narrator with “’Twas the Time Before Easter” on the cover. This may be made of Fome-Cor or you may cover a large book, such as a wallpaper sample book, with a paper cover. The Narrator's script may be hidden inside.

**OPTIONAL EFFECTS:** Strobe lights and earthquake sound effects for when Jesus dies and a smoke machine or a blackout for Jesus' ascension.

**MUSIC:** This musical features five original songs with piano accompaniment. Solo parts are suggested throughout. Smaller groups may prefer that all the characters sing every song without solos. Do what works for your group's size, age, and experience.

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***SONG LIST***

1. Happy Hosanna
2. Remember Me
3. By His Stripes
4. Risen!
5. Things Are Looking Up

1           (*CROWD enters with palm branches.*)

2   **NARRATOR:** ‘Twas the week before Easter, and all through  
3           the street,

4           Crowds gathered, hoping the Lord they would meet.

5           Palm branches waving, they started to sing,

6           “Hosanna! Hosanna to the King of Kings!”

7   **CROWD:** (*Together*) Hosanna! Hosanna to the King of Kings!

8           Hosanna! Hosanna to the King of Kings!

9

10   **SONG:** “Happy Hosanna” (*During the song, CROWD waves palm*  
11           *branches as JESUS walks through them at Center Stage.*)

12

13   **Chorus:**

14   **ALL:** (*Singing*) Happy hosannas, triumphant hallelujahs.

15           The King has come.

16           Tell all the good news.

17           Greet him with branches.

18           Greet him with shouts of praise.

19           Jesus our Savior, the Ancient of Days.

20

21   (*Repeat chorus*)

22

23           Hosanna, hallelujah.

24           Hosanna to the King.

25           Hosanna, in the highest,

26           Hear the people sing.

27           Hosanna, hallelujah,

28           Hosanna, See him come,

29           Riding on a donkey.

30           Jesus, God’s own Son.

31

32   (*Repeat chorus*)

33

34           Hosanna, hallelujah.

35           Hosanna to the King.

36           Hosanna, in the highest,

37           Hear the people sing.

38           Hosanna, hallelujah,

1           **Hosanna. See him come.**  
 2           **Riding on a donkey,**  
 3           **Jesus, God’s own Son.**

4

5           *(Repeat chorus)*

6

7           **The Ancient of Days.**  
 8           **The Ancient of Days.**  
 9           **Happy Hosanna.**

10

11           *(CROWD follows JESUS out. Lights out. Lights up on house.*  
 12           *DISCIPLES set the table.)*

13

14       **NARRATOR: ’Twas a few nights before Easter, and all**  
 15           **through the home,**  
 16           **It was business as usual, from Israel to Rome.**  
 17           **In the daily routine, not one follower or friend**  
 18           **Could predict that the life of Jesus would end.**

19

20           **The disciples prepared for the Passover meal.**  
 21           **In the upper room, Jesus would soon reveal** *(JESUS enters*  
 22           *as DISCIPLES sit around the table)*  
 23           **That his time here on earth was almost done.**  
 24           **His life’s purpose was to die for everyone.** *(JESUS breaks*  
 25           *bread and hands it out.)*

26

27           **He broke bread and prayed for all to see,**

28

29       **JESUS: This is my body given for you; remember me.**  
 30           *(DISCIPLES each take a piece of bread and eat it.)*

31       **NARRATOR: Then he took the cup and prayed over it too,**

32       **JESUS: This is my blood, the covenant poured out for you.**  
 33           *(DISCIPLES drink from their cups.)*

34

35       **SONG: “Remember Me”**

36

37       **Chorus:**

38       **JESUS: *(Singing)* Remember me. Remember me.**

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1           **Take the wine and bread.**  
 2           **Remember all I've said.**  
 3           **This is my body. This is my blood.**  
 4           **I give them both to you.**  
 5           **It's my unending love.**

6  
 7           **There have been miracles you won't soon forget.**  
 8           **The blind now see. The lame now walk.**  
 9           **The deaf can hear. The mute can talk,**  
 10          **But more than even these ...**

11  
 12        *(Repeat chorus)*

13  
 14          **People will accuse me of things that are not true.**  
 15          **Be at peace and do not fear.**  
 16          **Believe my words, not what you hear.**  
 17          **This I say to you ...**

18  
 19        *(Repeat chorus)*

20  
 21          **Remember me.**  
 22          **Remember me.**  
 23          **Remember me.**  
 24          **Remember me.**

25  
 26        *(Lights out on house. DISCIPLES exit. JESUS walks to a rock at*  
 27        *Center Stage and prays.)*

28        **NARRATOR: Jesus left soon after to pray for the night,**  
 29        **To gain strength for the coming spiritual fight.**  
 30        **Gruff soldiers descended on Gethsemane, (SOLDIERS**  
 31        *enter and confront JESUS. CROWD also enters here)*  
 32        **Tried him and beat him, then nailed him to a tree. (JESUS**  
 33        *is taken forcibly to the cross. SOLDIERS may hammer the wood,*  
 34        *as if nailing him to the cross. MARY and MARY MAGDALENE*  
 35        *enter, crying.)*

36        **JESUS: Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me.**

37        **CROWD: (Together) Crucify him! Let the thief go free!**

38        **JESUS: Father, forgive them. They know not what they do.**

1 **SOLDIER:** If you are the Christ, then let angels rescue you!

2 **NARRATOR:** It was now the sixth hour, and darkness came.

3 The world would never be the same.

4 Jesus spoke, and the crowd could hear it:

5 **JESUS:** Father, into your hands I commit my spirit. (*Blackout*  
6 *as ALL exit. Consider using a strobe light and playing sound*  
7 *effects of earthquake noises. Then lights slowly rise on the house*  
8 *and its occupants — the DISCIPLES, MARY, and MARY*  
9 *MAGDALENE, who are visibly upset.*)

10

11 **SONG:** “By His Stripes” (*May be sung by a SOLDIER at the cross*  
12 *or a BYSTANDER if preferred*)

13

14 **MARY MAGDALENE:** (*Singing*) I stand in need before you,  
15 crying out to you,

16 Desp’rate in my human weakness. There is nothing I can  
17 do.

18 From dust we came and is our end, but in Christ I’m made  
19 brand new.

20 As I walk this earthly plain, there is healing for my pain.

21 **Chorus:**

22 By his stripes I’m healed. By his wounds I’m made whole,  
23 By his suffering I am set free.

24 Smitten by God was he, wounded and bruised for me.

25 By his stripes I am healed, by his stripes I am healed.

26

27 Jesus was rejected, acquainted with our grief,

28 Carrying all our sorrows to offer us relief.

29 God was pleased to bruise him, to lay stripes upon his  
30 back,

31 So that we may be made whole, perfect in his peace.

32

33 By his stripes I’m healed. By his wounds I’m made whole.

34 By his suffering I am set free.

35 Smitten by God was he, wounded and bruised for me.

36 By his stripes ...

37

38

1 **Bridge:**

2 **Jesus did it for me.**

3 **The work is done, it's complete.**

4 **I believe and I receive.**

5

6 *(Repeat chorus)*

7

8 **NARRATOR: 'Twas the hour of Easter, when all through the**  
9 **land,**

10 **His grieving followers could not understand.**

11 **The disciples were hiding away in fear,**

12 **In hopes that Roman soldiers would not come near.**

13 *(JAMES enters house. DISCIPLES are scared.)*

14 **PETER: Brother James, did you bolt the door nice and right?**

15 **JAMES: Yes. I believe nobody followed me tonight.**

16 **MARY MAGDALENE: What will happen to all of us now?**

17 **MARY: Don't worry. God will provide for us somehow.** *(MARY*  
18 *and MARY MAGDALENE exit. Lights out on house and up on*  
19 *tomb as MARY and MARY MAGDALENE approach.)*

20 **NARRATOR: At dawn on the first day, they went to the tomb,**  
21 **But the Marys found only an empty stone room.** *(ANGEL*  
22 *enters.)*

23 **A glowing white angel approached them and said,**

24 **ANGEL: Do not be afraid. He's risen from the dead!**

25

26 **SONG: "Risen!"** *(May be sung by MARY and MARY MAGDALENE*  
27 *if preferred.)*

28

29 **Chorus:**

30 **ANGEL: *(Singing)* Jesus is risen from the grave.**

31 **The tomb could not contain him.**

32 **Power of life, all men to save,**

33 **Hell could not restrain him.**

34 **It is finished, it is done.**

35 **He has paid the ransom.**

36 **Jesus, Savior, God's own son.**

37 **Let us raise a glad song!**

38



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