

# Songs of Our Lives

By Jessica Harris Daum

We know God wants to have conversation with us and needs no fancy words. Still we struggle with what to say. Every Psalm is a prayer, expressing our human experience in a way that still rings true today. Make a Psalm your own prayer, and let it open you to feel God's presence and hear God's voice.

## For

Adult, Couple

## Season

Summer

## Needed

A Bible or device with a Bible app



## Activity Plan

1. Find a space free from distractions. If the weather is nice, an outdoor space is a good option.
2. In your Bible go to the Book of Psalms. Choose a Psalm to guide your prayer. Any Psalm will do. Here are some ideas:
  - Prayer for help: 42 ("As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God")
  - Prayer of thanksgiving for help: 121 ("I lift my eyes to the hills, from where will my help come?")
  - Prayer for forgiveness: 51 ("Create in me a clean heart, O God")
  - Prayer of thanksgiving: 40 ("I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined and heard my cry")
  - Prayer of praise: 139 ("I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made")
  - Prayer of trust: 23 ("The Lord is my shepherd")
  - Prayer of encouragement: 46 ("Be still, and know that I am God!")
3. Decide whether you will pray for a certain amount of time or through a specific amount of text. For example: our prayer will end after 15 minutes, or we will pray 10 verses of a psalm. Praying the Psalms is free-form, so knowing when it will end may help you to enter more fully into the prayer.
4. To begin, pray aloud:
 

*Holy God, meet us now. Help us to speak to You and to listen for Your response. Amen.*
5. Pray the Psalm. Begin by reading the first verse aloud. Then, pause for as long as you'd like, letting the words of the verse sink in. Allow the words to bring other images or thoughts to your mind. Don't hold on tightly to any one thought, but allow your mind to roam as the Psalmist's words echo in your thoughts. This silence may last as long as you'd like.
6. Then, if there are two of you praying, pass the Psalm to the other person. The other person may read that first verse again, or read the next verse.
7. Allow for space between each verse. Let the thoughts that arise become your prayer. In the words of the Psalm and the silence, listen for God speaking to you as well.
8. The reader may choose to move forward with the next verse in the Psalm or to return to any earlier verse that is still resonating. Let the process be flexible. Don't worry about rules, but instead do whatever helps you to spend this time in conversation with God.

9. The prayer may end in silence when you've reached either the amount of time or the point in the text that you agreed upon before you began. Simply say, "Amen" to close this time of prayer.
10. If you wish, you may debrief your prayer in conversation with your partner or in a journal. Here are some questions to guide your reflection if you choose:
  - Which phrase or word in the Psalm stood out to you most significantly?
  - What thoughts or images were connected to this phrase or word?
  - Where was your imagination caught?
  - What triggered a memory?
  - What did you hear God saying to you as you prayed the Psalm?

