

Standin' On the Mountain

A Christian Musical

Book, Music and Lyrics by Sharon Kay Chatwell

Arranged and Orchestrated by Nathan James Larsen

SONGS – SCREENING

Come to Jerusalem – The opening song of the play, which reminds us of our Beginning with God, of His provision for our salvation through Jesus Christ, and of His certain return. *Even so, come, Lord Jesus* (Rev. 21:20)

Be Our God – A choral piece, reminiscent of an old hymn, which tells of God's involvement in our world from Creation to the coming of Christ, and offers us the opportunity to trust Him as Savior. "He opens eyes that they might see, and speaks the truth that sets us free."

At His Feet with the Perfume – A moving piece sung by Ruth Ann, a faithful woman who serves in her church. Despite the quietness of her life she realizes that what means everything to her is knowing that He loves her and that He reaches out to her even now.

Jesus of Gethsemane – A fascinating solo piece, sung by The Pastor as he awaits execution, in which he struggles back and forth between fear and hope in the Lord. He alternates between two songs: one is his own personal prayer that expresses his fears and the other is a hymn about Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is this song which ultimately gives him the hope he needs to face his own personal Gethsemane.

Solomon, He was a King – This fun song is both sung and acted out by the participants at the Church Picnic. It tells the story of the Wisdom of Solomon, who was once called upon to decide the fate of a baby that was claimed by two different women. The story is related by the Pastor, two female soloists representing the two prostitutes, and the Choir.

I Am Just a Servant – A duet sung by Ruth Ann and Perdu. The tick-tock rhythm of the music helps Ruth Ann express her mild frustration about the sameness of her everyday life at work; something to which many of us can relate. Though she's "just a servant" in her Father's House, she rejoices that "One day soon, I know He'll come for me!"

Toddle On Off to Jesus – This duet, sung by the young married couple, Sylva and Danehart, captures the essence of the play. Sylva has begun to wonder if God might actually be real; Danehart does not share her interest. She pours out her heart to him, but he mocks her, saying she should "Toddle on off to Jesus" if she thinks He will have her. In the end, Sylva goes, leaving Danehart by himself to wonder "But, if it's true..."

Standin' on the Mountain – This is the signature piece of the play, sung by the entire Cast as the Finale. It explains that we can trust in God to be faithful, as He was to Abraham. It reminds us that as followers of Christ, we have the promises of God to stand upon, just as one might stand upon a mountain. The final verse invites all who hear to accept Jesus as Savior, so that we may all stand on the Mountain together.

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CHARACTERS:

PASTOR – A man of faith in an age of faithlessness

RUTH ANN – A jolly old soul with attitude and a humble story

SYLVA – A young woman, who has lost her way

DANEHART – A pawn who thinks he's a king

PREFECT – Satan in thin disguise; local leader of "The People"

PERDU – The quintessential deacon

WILSON SISTERS – Sisters who finish each other's sentences

CHOIR/CONGREGATION – An assortment of the church triumphant and those who fall away.

SYNOPSIS:

Standin' on the Mountain is set in the future, and is about a church that comes under pressure from outside sources. A sinister group called "The People" is trying to change the church or to shut it down. The church members are sifted like wheat, but eventually they are shown to be victorious in Christ; although for some of them that victory takes place in Heaven. The themes of the story are that God is faithful and that we have victory in Jesus, no matter what. Another theme is that Christ is coming back one day soon.

The play opens with a soloist standing on a darkened stage, calling out for Jesus to return soon. She is joined by others and, as the lights come up, we can see that they are all standing in a rocky wilderness; as if on a mountain. Their voices mix together calling for Jesus to "**Come to Jerusalem.**" Then the scene changes to a church worship service where they sing "**Be Our God.**"

The Pastor and Ruth Ann, who is the church Choir Director, are the main characters. Together they make a good team; all quibbling aside. The Pastor is a faithful follower of Christ and leads his congregation well. Ruth Ann is bigger than life and has a lot of attitude. But she is always there, offering good advice and wise counsel... as well as comic relief. A young woman named Sylva, who is searching for God, receives some of that advice, when Ruth Ann shares what Jesus' love means to her, when she sings "**At His Feet with the Perfume.**"

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While Sylva continues to seek the truth about God, her young husband, Danehart, foolishly chooses a different path. He is determined to try and impress the group that is causing all the trouble for the church. The local leader of The People is known as the Prefect. He takes Danehart under his wing, supposedly to train him, but actually he has other plans in mind.

Despite the upheaval going on around them, life at First Church continues as usual. The annual Church Picnic takes place as planned and everyone is there; even Sylva and Danehart. The Pastor and Church members sing several fun old songs, including **"Solomon, He was a King,"** which retells the Bible Story of the Wisdom of Solomon. Sylva, who feels convicted by the songs, wonders if it might really be true that God exists and that He actually loves her. She sings about her thoughts to Danehart, who mocks her in the song **"Toddle on Off to Jesus."**

The routine of her life is not lost on Ruth Ann and the day after the Picnic while she is working in the office as usual, she sings **"I am Just a Servant"** in my Father's House." She is interrupted and then joined in her singing by Perdu, one of the Deacons, who likes to tease Ruth Ann.

Danehart and the Prefect come to the church to close it down and to arrest the Pastor, unless he agrees to stop preaching about Jesus. When the Pastor refuses, the Prefect kills Danehart and falsely accuses the Pastor of the crime. The church is shut down and the flock scatters.

Ruth Ann goes to the Prefect's office and tries to force the Pastor's release, but fails. Worst of all she sees Sylva there being hailed as the widow of the Glorious Danehart, and believes she is lost to them for good.

The Pastor is found guilty in a mock trial and is sentenced to death. While he awaits execution, he prays through the night in his prison cell and sings about his inner conflict of Fear and Faith in the song, **"Jesus of Gethsemane."**

Sylva, who finally believes, comes to the prison to rescue the Pastor, but he refuses to go; choosing to sacrifice himself rather than to endanger the others by going with them. Sylva and Ruth Ann escape into the Wilderness, where Sylva recovers her hope and starts telling others about Jesus. In the Finale, the Church Triumphant is seen standing on the rocks where they were in the first scene, and they sing about God's Faithfulness in the play's signature song, **"Standin' on the Mountain."**