



Walking with Micah: Children's, youth and all-age group session

THINKING ABOUT JUSTICE

This session is one of the conversation resources as part of the *Walking with Micah* project. The hope is to help Methodist groups to begin to reflect on what it means to be part of a justice-seeking church – and hear their responses.

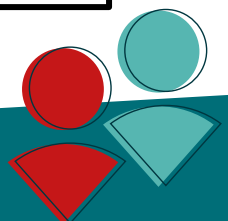
This session is designed to take up to 90 minutes to run, depending on the activities you choose and how long you want to spend on particular conversations. Activities can be split up and used over the course of a number of your group meetings. Different options are offered for most of the sections of the plan, so you can choose the facilitation method that will best suit your group.

You could also choose to use some or all of the *Walking With Micah* session plan designed for older participants, or the craftivism session plan – both of which can be found at www.methodist.org.uk/walking-with-micah-justice-conversations/

You might also consider running this as an intergenerational session, offering the chance for the children and young people in the group to talk with adults from the church family about the subject of justice.

After running the session, it would be really appreciated if you, as group facilitator, could send some feedback on behalf of your group to the *Walking with Micah* project, which is exploring what it means for the Methodist Church to be a justice-seeking Church. **It's important that the voice of children and young people be heard in these important conversations and completing the survey will help us to achieve that.**

The survey can be found here www.methodist.org.uk/walking-with-micah-send-your-response/#e-survey and it will ask questions along the following lines:



- feedback on priorities for action for a more just world
- feedback on how your group describes a just world
- any other feedback
- pictures of feedback from the event
- pictures of creative content

Groups are warmly invited to submit feedback in addition to the survey, which can be offered in creative ways, such as poems, pictures, films, craft and so on.

You can print of the [Sheet for note-takers](#) form which will help you or the notetaker collect your group's feedback during the session.

Important, before you begin:

This session has been designed, as far as possible, to encourage full participation of all those in attendance. The facilitator needs to be aware that there is a danger of people being reluctant to contribute, perhaps because of personal experience of injustice or fear that their views will be in the minority. We would therefore recommend that you encourage the participants to respect one another – particularly respecting confidentiality (where that doesn't infringe on good safeguarding protocol).

There may be a danger of some participants dominating the discussion if they have a lot to say. We therefore encourage you to circulate the discussion groups if you think this will help. You could also introduce different facilitation skills, such as a 'speaking object' (like a ball, talking stick etc.) or allowing people to write feedback as well as verbalising it, to allow maximum opportunity for all to participate.

Finally, there is also a risk that some people participating in this session will be upset by the topics under discussion, particularly if they have experienced injustices. The sensitivity of the subject needs to be acknowledged at the start of the session and participants need to be aware of the different ways in which they can seek support to help deal with issues – both during the session and afterwards. Whilst it is important, as outlined above, that participants have equal opportunity to speak if they wish, this should always be optional.

This session aims to:

- explore the need for justice today
- help children and young people think about their calling to act justly as Christians
- think about what a just world might look like
- identify key changes, needed to create a just world
- identify the practical next steps they can take
- generate feedback to be sent to the Walking With Micah Project.

TIMING	ACTIVITY	WHAT YOU NEED
5 mins	<p>Welcome and introduction</p> <p>Explain that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Methodist Church has always cared a lot about justice. • People connected to the Church, including children and young people, are being asked to talk about two questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What is justice? ○ What are the most important things that the Church should do to make justice happen? • These questions are from a Methodist project called <i>Walking with Micah</i>. • Micah is a book in the Bible's Old Testament, written by the prophet Micah (check people know what a prophet is). • In Chapter 6, verse 8, Micah tells us that God wants us to "do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with God." • Today we will talk about what it means to "do justice". 	<p>You might want the phrase from Micah 6:8 displayed for everyone to see – either on a flipchart or on a slide on the screen.</p> <p>Alternatively you could encourage participants to find the verse in the Bible/on their phones.</p>
2 mins	<p>Opening prayer</p> <p>Loving God. Thank you that you want your world to be a fair and a safe place for all. Help us to do what we can and play our part in making this happen. Please help us to have a really interesting conversation that inspires us to try to make the world a better place. Amen</p>	
10 – 15 mins	<p>What is justice?</p> <p>Activity option 1: Collage</p> <p>1) Ask participants to look through a pile of recent newspapers and magazines (or on Internet news pages) and find pictures and headlines that they think show something of what justice is. As they find things they like, ask them to cut them out and stick them to the large sheet of plain paper to create a 'justice</p>	<p>For option 1:</p> <p>A large sheet of plain paper, scissors, glue and a pile of newspapers and magazines (or access to the Internet and a printer and paper). You</p>

	<p>collage’. Using the marker pens/paint they can also add some words and images of their own.</p> <p>2) Once the collage is complete, look at it together and encourage people to explain why they chose each particular image or word – what does it say to them about justice? Encourage people to ask each other questions – as long as they remain respectful.</p> <p>Activity option 2: Post-it ideas storm</p> <p>1) Working in pairs, ask participants to write down as many words and phrases as they can (one word or phrase per post-it note). These should then be stuck on to a large blank section of wall where everyone can see them.</p> <p>2) Once people have run out of words and phrases, ask everyone to look at the wall together. As a group start to sort the post-its, putting similar words and ideas together. Is there one word or phrase that comes up more times than others? What does that tell us? Are there any words and phrases that surprise us? If you had to pick your top three words or phrases, what would they be? (You could vote for these using a show of hands, sticky dots or by asking people to add a ‘tick’ to their favourites). Encourage people to ask each other questions about the words they chose – as long as they remain respectful.</p>	<p>can also provide marker pens or paint.</p> <p>For option 2:</p> <p>Lots of post-it notes and pens and a large area (such as a blank section of wall) to stick the post-it notes to.</p>
<p>10 - 15 mins</p>	<p>Our experience of justice.</p> <p>Activity option 1: Stories of justice/injustice</p> <p>1) Take a sheet of flipchart (or a large sheet of paper on a table where everyone can see it) and divide it into two columns. Give the first column the heading ‘Justice’ and the second column the heading ‘Injustice’.</p> <p>2) Ask the group to think about their communities - the town where they live, their school etc. What examples of justice and injustice do they see? Who in their communities is ‘doing justice’? Who in their communities might be experiencing injustice? Note: This conversation may need guiding carefully as participants may want to share personal experiences. Encourage people to listen to one another with respect and kindness.</p>	<p>For option 1:</p> <p>A flipchart or large sheet of paper where everyone can see it, marker pen.</p> <p>For option 2:</p> <p>You might want to provide pens and paper for people to take notes as they talk.</p>

	<p>Option 2: Justice heroes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Ask participants to discuss in pairs people they know who 'do justice' (or have 'done justice'). This might be someone famous, a historical figure or a friend, family member, neighbour or teacher. What specific things do these people do/have these people done that could be called justice? 2) Ask each pair to feed back to the wider group and then have a conversation about the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do you think these people do what they do? • Is it easy to do what these people do? • What injustices are these people challenging? Where do these injustices come from? <p>You might also want to watch the short film at www.methodist.org.uk/walking-with-micah-speaking-from-experience. It contains stories of personal experiences of injustice. Afterwards reflect together on what you have learned, what surprised you and how these personal experiences connect with what is happening in the wider world.</p>	
10 mins	<p>What does God's kingdom look like?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Depending on your group and their confidence level, before using one of the activities below you might want to ask them to give examples of stories or passages from the Bible that tell us what God thinks justice is/looks like. Alternatively, you could offer a few suggestions, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exodus 20: 2 – 17, the Ten Commandments • Luke 4: 18-19, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me..." • Acts 2: 43-47, life among the first believers • Galatians 5: 22-26, the fruits of the Spirit Read some or all of these passages together and have a conversation about what this tells us about God and what God wants for the world. 2) Remind participants about the Lord's Prayer, specifically the line "Your kingdom come." Tell them you are going to think about what God's kingdom 	You may want to print out some copies of the suggested Bible passages and also offer pens/ highlighters so that people can note the words that jump out to them as they read.

	<p>looks like and whether we can see signs of it in the world already.</p>	
<p>15 – 20 mins</p>	<p>Building God’s kingdom</p> <p>Activity option 1: Brick by brick</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Place a large pile of card, cut into ‘brick’ shapes, and some pens in three different colours, where everyone can reach them. 2) Ask people to think about things they notice in the world around them – either locally or on a global scale – that show signs of God’s Spirit at work and glimpses of God’s kingdom in the world. Use just one of the pen colours to write each example that they can think of on to a brick (one idea per brick) and use these bricks to start to build the foundations of a ‘wall’ on either the floor or a large table. 3) Now ask participants to think about things they see in the world that tell us that God’s kingdom isn’t fully here yet. Why do we need to keep praying for God’s kingdom to come? What do we see happening around us that isn’t what God wants for the world? Use a second pen colour to write each example they can think of on to a brick. Use these bricks to start to build the wall higher. 4) Next, ask for examples of what we might see if God’s kingdom was truly here in all its fullness. What if we lived in a perfect world that was how God would like it to be? Write each example that they can think of on to a brick in a third colour and add to the top of the wall. 5) As a group look at each brick in the bottom layer in turn. Ask participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we join in with what God is already doing in the world? (You might want to prompt them to think about this creatively. How do we encourage and support people who are doing this work? How do we help them to tell the story of what they are doing? How can we offer practical help?) 6) Now look at each brick in the middle layer of the wall in turn. Ask participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would have to happen for that brick to be removed from the wall? • What do we have the power to change? What could we do? 	<p>For option 1:</p> <p>Lots of pieces of card cut into ‘brick’ shapes, pens in three different colours. You will also need lots of floor space or a large table.</p> <p>For option 2:</p> <p>Somewhere for participants to get comfortable (chairs or even space to lie on the floor).</p>

- Who does have power to make a difference? How could we encourage them to use that power?
- 7) Then move on to look at each brick in the top layer of the wall. Ask participants:
- What steps can we take to move towards this ideal world?
 - What can we pray for, based on what is on these bricks? What might we need God to help us with if we are to make a difference?

Activity option 2: I dream of a world...

- 1) Invite the group to make themselves comfortable in a seat or even lying on the floor. Ask them to close their eyes (if they feel happy and safe to do so).
- 2) Explain that, using our imaginations, we are going to go time travelling into the future. We are travelling to a time in the future when the world is exactly as God intended it to be. Ask the following questions, with a pause between each:
 - What does it look like? What do we see?
 - If we went out for a walk in our neighbourhood, what would we notice about the place and the people? What different places, spaces and people would we walk past?
 - What would we hear as we walked?
 - What would we smell?
 - How would this world make us feel?
 - How would this world make others feel?
- 3) Now ask participants to open their eyes (and if they were lying down, sit up). Ask them:
 - What steps can we take to move towards this ideal world?
 - Do we know of any people or projects that are already working to bring this perfect world into being? How can we join in with what they (and God) are already doing? (You might want to prompt them to think about this creatively. How do we encourage and support people who are doing this work? How do we help them to tell the story of what they are doing? How can we offer practical help?)
 - What can we pray for? What might we need God to help us with if we are to make a difference?

5 – 10 mins	<p>Next steps</p> <p>Finally, from these conversations, ask the participants to come up with a list of ways in which they themselves can 'do justice'. Write these on a flipchart. Then discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is anyone already doing any of these things? • Is there one thing on the list that you would like to work on as a group? What is the next step and how are you going to make sure you do it? Do you want to spend time the next time you meet making some plans? 	A flipchart and pens.
3mins	<p>Wrapping up</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain that you will be sending some feedback to the <i>Walking with Micah</i> project, sharing some of the group's thoughts on what a just world looks like and what key steps we need to take in order to get there. This will help the Methodist Church to learn what justice looks and feels like to many different people in the Methodist family. 2. Ask each group member to name one thing they will take away from the session and how they will act justly and differently as a result. 3. Consider saying The Grace together or closing with a prayer. 	

After the session you might want to ask the group if they are happy to display any creative work they have done.

And please visit www.methodist.org.uk/walking-with-micah-send-your-response/#e-survey to submit your responses to the survey and help shape the Methodist Church's priorities for justice in the future. Thank you.