

Worship at Home - Sunday 11 December 2022

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use at home. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people across the Methodist Connexion are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Make way, make a way,
Make a way for justice,
Make a way for peace,
Make a way for truth,
Make a way for love.
Jesus is come,
He is coming again.
Make a way in your hearts.
Make way.

Hymn: STF 264 Make way, make way
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=alCQ7fb0hEA>

Make way, make way, for Christ the King
in splendour arrives;
fling wide the gates and welcome him
into your lives.

*Make way (Make way), make way (make way),
for the King of kings (for the King of kings);
make way (make way), make way (make way),
and let his Kingdom in.*

He comes the broken hearts to heal,
the prisoners to free;
the deaf shall hear, the lame shall dance,
the blind shall see.

And those who mourn with heavy hearts,
who weep and sigh,
with laughter, joy and royal crown
he'll beautify.

We call you now to worship him
as Lord of all,
to have no gods before him,
their thrones must fall!

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950)

Let us pray together

Loving God, with you there is always room for us, in you there is room for the outcast, the stranger, the hopeful, and the hopeless. With you there is always room for us, for you are love itself.

In you the widow finds a welcome, in you the refugee finds a home, with you the excluded are included.

When we don't see as you do, and exclude rather than include forgive us.

When we judge unfairly, not seeing difference as good, forgive us.

Remind us, that we are always included, for you make a way for us.

Remind us of your forgiveness and grace, that always goes before us, and follows behind us.

And set us free in that grace to be people of love, justice and peace.

AMEN

Today's Gospel Reading: Matthew 11: 2-11

Time to Reflect (a poem)

What did you expect to see?

Asks Jesus,

Were you really looking for riches,

Someone soft and silver tongued?

What drew you to John?

That wild man crying out,
Prepare, prepare?
Were you prepared at that time to change,
To respond to his challenge of repentance?
Or were you looking for a simpler, less costly
comfort?
He was not what you expected, wild man,
with wild ways, but you responded anyway!
Now go, go tell him; what he was looking for
is here;
The lame walk, the sick are healed, the blind
see, and the lepers are cleansed.
Go tell him, the good news is here, for all to
receive.
The way has been prepared.
The one he spoke of is here.

.....
Reflect on the short poem above, and then try
to put yourself into John's shoes, filled with
doubt, locked up in prison he is asking
questions, so he sends his followers to Jesus
to ask him.

Jesus responds, and then speaks to the people
about John. John has been faithful to his call,
he has delivered his message, and he has seen
the one he has spoken of.

So often we don't see as John saw, but are
called to prepare a way for the kingdom to
come both within our lives, and in the
communities around us. How will you pray
today? For your self, and for your community?
How might you act to bring about God's
kingdom, in a small way in your locality?

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Loving God this world is yours, and while at times
our prayers seem inadequate, we know that you
long to hear and to answer them.

So, we pray.

We pray for this world, for justice, mercy and
truth in the nations, and the right use of power
by those charged with it.

We pray for the governments of this and other
lands, may they always value people before profit
and power.

We pray for our land in these difficult days, for
those who serve in foodbanks, and in clothing
banks.

We pray for those who make a way of welcome
for the outcast and the refugee.

We pray for those struggling with decisions about
heating and eating, and we look for your justice
in our communities. Show us where we can be
bringers of justice.

We pray for the church in the world, that we
might be bringers of your kingdom, messengers
of salt and light, brining out your flavours and
your colours in your world.

And we pray for ourselves, that we might be
agents of peace, joy, justice, truth, and most of all
agents of love.

We look to make a way for your kingdom to
come.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer
Our Father

Hymn: Listen to: Make me a Channel of your
Peace or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to
mind

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g8eorCEMIK4>

A prayer of blessing

Blessing:

From where we are to where you need us,
Jesus now lead on.

From what we are to what in you we will be,
Jesus now lead on.

Lead us on in your blessing; the blessing of
God our Creator, of Jesus our Saviour, and of
the Holy Spirit our Equipper and Guide.

AMEN

Original Materials by
Reverend Sally Coleman

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We are grateful to all the Ministers and Local
Preachers from around the Connexion who
have contributed to Worship at Home. This
resource is administrated by Ministries:
Vocations and Worship in the Connexional
Team and will end at the end of 2022.

For more worship resources see

[The Bible \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)

[Singing the Faith Plus \(methodist.org.uk\)](http://methodist.org.uk)

Messengers from John the Baptist

²When John heard in prison what the
Messiah^[a] was doing, he sent word by
his^[b] disciples ³and said to him, 'Are you the
one who is to come, or are we to wait for
another?' ⁴Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell
John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind
receive their sight, the lame walk, the
lepers^[c] are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead
are raised, and the poor have good news
brought to them. ⁶And blessed is anyone who
takes no offence at me.'

Jesus Praises John the Baptist

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to
the crowds about John: 'What did you go out
into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken
by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to
see? Someone^[d] dressed in soft robes? Look,
those who wear soft robes are in royal
palaces. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A
prophet?^[e] Yes, I tell you, and more than a

prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is
written,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you."

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women no
one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet
the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than
he.

Matthew 11: 2-11

²When John, who was in prison, heard about the
deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³to ask
him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should
we expect someone else?"

⁴Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what
you hear and see: ⁵The blind receive sight, the
lame walk, those who have leprosy^[b] are cleansed,
the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good
news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶Blessed is anyone
who does not stumble on account of me."

⁷As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to
speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go
out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by
the wind? ⁸If not, what did you go out to see? A
man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear
fine clothes are in kings' palaces. ⁹Then what did
you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and
more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about
whom it is written:

"I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you."^[c]

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women
there has not risen anyone greater than John the
Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of
heaven is greater than he.