

## **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=aICQ7fb0hEA>

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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Local Churches please insert CCCLi No here

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

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

Jesus Praises John the Baptist

<sup>7</sup>As 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? <sup>8</sup>What then did you go out to see? Someone<sup>[d]</sup> dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup>What then did you go out to see? A prophet?<sup>[e]</sup> Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written,

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

<sup>11</sup>Truly 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

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

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

<sup>7</sup> As 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? <sup>8</sup> If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. <sup>9</sup> Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.”<sup>[c]</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Truly 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.