

Worship at Home - Sunday 16 January 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

As we make our journey from the Feast of the Epiphany to Lent, help us to see the signs of your kingdom in the world around us.

Hymn: STF101 Before the world began

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here:

<https://youtu.be/xt6jygkmSc8>

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Before the world began,
one Word was there;
grounded in God he was,
rooted in care;
by him all things were made,
in him was love displayed,
through him God spoke, and said,
'I am for you.' | 3 The Word was in the world
which from him came;
unrecognised he was,
unknown by name;
one with all humankind,
with the unloved aligned,
convincing sight and mind,
'I am for you.' |
| 2 Life found in him its source,
death found its end;
light found in him its course,
darkness its friend.
For neither death nor doubt
nor darkness can put out
the glow of God, the shout,
'I am for you.' | 4 All who received the Word
by God were blessed;
sisters and brothers they
of earth's fond guest.
So did the Word of grace
proclaim in time and space
and with a human face,
'I am for you.' |

*John L. Bell (b. 1949) and Graham Maule
(b. 1958)*

Let us pray together;

As your people, O God, we come to give you thanks and praise. You reveal yourself to us in creation, in the life, death and rising of Jesus and in the continuing work of the Spirit in our lives. We hear and reflect on your self-revelation in the life of Jesus, and of the impact his life had on those around him.

We know that we do not always live up to the challenge of Jesus's story. So, in silence, we reflect on our failings as individuals, on our failings as a church and on our failings as a society.

Silence

We know that in Jesus God says to us 'Your sins are forgiven.'

Living God, in Christ you make all things new.
Transform the poverty of our nature
by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen. (*MWB collect for the day*)

Today's Reading from the Old Testament Isaiah 62.1-5

The Vindication and Salvation of Zion

¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.
²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.
³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.
⁴You shall no more be termed Forsaken,
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate;
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;
for the Lord delights in you,
and your land shall be married.
⁵For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your builder marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.

Today's Gospel Reading: John 2.1-11

The Wedding at Cana

²On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. ³Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ⁴When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' ⁵And Jesus said to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come.' ⁶His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.' ⁷Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁸Jesus said to them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they filled them up to the brim. ⁹He said to them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward.' So they took it. ¹⁰When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, 'Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now.' ¹¹Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Time to Reflect

In today's gospel reading Jesus and his disciples find time to join his mother for a celebratory event. When the crisis emerges, he is reluctant to help but the end result is, it seems, excellent wine. It is a sign (v11). It is striking that Jesus' first recorded 'sign' in John's gospel is about domestic embarrassment, when others are typically about life-changing conditions (think of Bartimaeus or Lazarus).

This is a story about the way God is revealed in Jesus, a central theme of the Sundays after Epiphany. Here, and elsewhere, a feature of God's self-revelation in Jesus seems to be exuberant generosity.

Perhaps the messages for us include the notion that it is not for us to judge what God can or should do for us. God is not bound by what we think is proper, or for that matter by what we think is fair. We do not and cannot control God. God's good gifts are sometimes unexpected and beyond our comprehension.

Another message could be about responding in the moment to the need we can see. That certainly seems to be what Jesus did at this wedding in Cana. Even though his hour had not yet come (v4), he responded to the host's need and to his mother's plea. What might be our response to God's unexpected generosity?

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

Let us pray for the church and the world.

For the church around the world in uncertain times. With the Methodist Prayer Handbook on day 16 especially for the Church of Bangladesh, the Church of Pakistan, and the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka and for the Methodist Church in Ireland. For the congregations we know. That all our words and actions may accord with God's will for us and for all people.

For the world, for all in positions of power and influence, .

That they may strive for justice and for peace. For our own country and neighbourhood.

For those in need, for those fleeing conflict, for prisoners, for those who are sick or awaiting diagnosis or treatment. For those known to us, .

Draw near to all in need with your saving love and bring healing and hope.

For ourselves that we may follow the example of all your saints and of those who brought us to faith. .

Bring us with them into the fullness of your eternal joy.

The Lord's Prayer

Modern Form

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come;
your will be done;
on earth as in heaven.

Traditional Form

Our Father, who art in heaven
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours, now and for ever.
Amen

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who
trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory
for ever and ever
Amen

Hymn: STF35 The trumpets sound, the angels sing, (the feast is ready to begin)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here:

<https://grahamkendrick.co.uk/songs/graham-kendrick-songs/make-way-for-the-cross-let-the-flame-burn-brighter/the-feast-is-ready-the-trumpets-sound>

or sing a verse of a hymn that comes to mind

1 The trumpets sound, the angels
sing,
the feast is ready to begin;
the gates of heaven are open wide,
and Jesus welcomes you inside.

*Sing with thankfulness songs
of pure delight,
come and revel in heaven's
love and light;
take your place at the table
of the King,
the feast is ready to begin,
the feast is ready to begin.*

2 Tables are laden with good things,
O taste the peace and joy he
brings;
he'll fill you up with love divine,
he'll turn your water into wine.

*Sing with thankfulness songs
of pure delight,*

3 The hungry heart he satisfies,
offers the poor his paradise;
now hear all heaven and earth
applaud
the amazing goodness of the Lord.

*Sing with thankfulness songs
of pure delight,*

Graham Kendrick (b. 1950)

A prayer of blessing

May Christ the Son of God, born of Mary, fill us with his grace to trust his promises /and may the blessing of God, Spirit, Son and Father, be with us and those for whom we pray, this day and always. Amen. (adapted from MWB)

Please be assured that we are still here if you need anything at all during this time.

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Words for the hymns are reproduced under CCLi 1243274

Original Materials by Dudley Coates administrated by Ministries: Vocations and Worship in the Connexional Team with grateful thanks to all the Ministers and Local Preachers from around the Connexion who have contributed to Worship at Home.