

Worship at Home - Sunday 16 January 2022

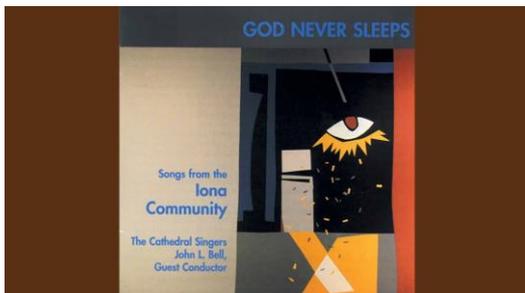
This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use at home. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people across the Methodist Connexion are sharing this act of worship with you.

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: 101 Before the world began

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



<https://youtu.be/xt6jygmSc8>

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.'

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.'

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.'

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)*

Prayer

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

For 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.
² The 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.
³ You shall be a crown of beauty in the
hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your
God.
⁴ You 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.

⁵ For 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

¹On the third day there was a wedding in
Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus
was there. ²Jesus and his disciples had also
been invited to the wedding. ³When the
wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to
him, 'They have no wine.' ⁴And Jesus said
to her, 'Woman, what concern is that to
you and to me? My hour has not yet
come.' ⁵His mother said to the servants,
'Do whatever he tells you.' ⁶Now standing
there were six stone water-jars for the
Jewish rites of purification, each holding
twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷Jesus said to
them, 'Fill the jars with water.' And they
filled them up to the brim. ⁸He said to
them, 'Now draw some out, and take it to
the chief steward.' So they took it. ⁹When
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,
¹⁰'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 know 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

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to this version of StF 35 from the author

<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>

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.

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.

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

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)

Original Materials by Dudley Coates

All

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Local Churches CCCLi 363

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Local Preachers from around the
Connexion who have contributed to

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and Worship in the Connexional Team.

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)