

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a bright blue sky with wispy white clouds. In the lower third of the image, there is a lush green hillside covered in a dense field of yellow wildflowers.

AND LET THEM **MAKE** ME
A SANCTUARY, THAT I MAY
DWELL IN THEIR MIDST.

✚ **Exodus 25:8**

MAKE WAY

✕ **MAKE WAY** *IN US*

✱ **MAKE WAY** *THROUGH US*

Removing the Barriers | Isaiah 40

ICEBREAKER

Have you ever gone out of your way to prepare for someone's visit? What did you do to make them feel welcome?

OR

What's something you've had to move, fix, or get out of the way before you could accomplish something important?

SMALL GROUP WEEK 3 VIDEO (5:46)

Watch this week's small group video by visiting the Fairhaven app - *Make Way* tab. Before beginning the rest of your discussion, take time as a group to respond to the questions in the video.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout Scripture, we see God making His way toward people because He desires to dwell with us. As we experience His presence, our hearts and lives are transformed, and He invites us to help others encounter Him, too.

In Isaiah 40, God calls His people to prepare a highway for His coming. This picture reminds us that making way involves removing barriers in our own hearts and helping others see God's goodness more clearly.

What stood out to you most from this week's message?

INTO THE WORD

Read Isaiah 40:3-5 and Luke 3:3-6.

What does it mean to "prepare the way of the Lord"? Why do you think God often calls us to prepare before we can see what He is going to do?

Read Luke 3:7-14.

John the Baptist challenged people to demonstrate repentance through their actions. What do his instructions teach us about removing barriers that might prevent others from experiencing God's love? How might our willingness to remove barriers today create opportunities for others to encounter Him tomorrow?

Read Isaiah 40:4 and Psalm 139:23-24.

Before we can help remove barriers for others, we must allow God to work in our own hearts. What might the valleys, mountains, uneven ground, and rough places represent in our spiritual lives?

Read Isaiah 40:9-11 and Isaiah 40:28-31.

What do these passages reveal about God's character? How might a clearer understanding of who God is help someone overcome barriers to trusting Him?

Read Matthew 5:14-16 and 2 Corinthians 5:18-20.

How does God call us to help others see and experience His presence? What are some intentional ways we can respond with obedience?

E M B R A C E A N D E M B O D Y

As we continue through *Make Way*, we're being invited to prepare today for what God alone sees tomorrow. That preparation begins in our own hearts and extends to the people God has placed around us. Sometimes making way means surrendering pride, confronting sin, or allowing God's truth to replace discouragement. Other times, it means extending an invitation, building a relationship, showing compassion, or helping someone feel welcomed and valued.

As a group, read Psalm 139: 23-24 again out loud (ESV).

Create space for the group to reflect on and share the following: What is one barrier God may be asking you to remove in your own life? How might removing that barrier help someone else encounter Jesus through you?

PRAYER PROMPT

Close by praying for one another, specifically lifting up the barriers group members shared and asking God to help each person overcome what may be hindering His work in their lives. Pray for humility, repentance, and a greater awareness of His presence. Ask Him to help your group reflect His love in ways that make it easier for others to encounter Jesus. Pray specifically for the people God has placed in your lives who need to experience His hope.

This Week's Next Right Step — Make God Known:

Identify one person in your life who may be facing barriers to experiencing God's love. Pray for that person by name, and ask God to show you one intentional step you can take to help them see His goodness more clearly.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Check out the *Make Way* tab in the Fairhaven app to access helpful resources including prayer guides, reflection questions, the weekly Participant Guide (like this one) based on the sermon, and small group videos.