

# Worship from King's College Chapel Podcasts

## Season 3 – Wednesday Worship Winter Term 2021

### Episode 3 Transcript – Communion Meditation (Blessed are the meek)

**Voiceover** [00:00:03] This podcast is brought to you by the University of Aberdeen.

**Introit:**                    *O taste and see*                    Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

**Rev Marylee Anderson** A very warm welcome to King's College Chapel today for our Communion Service. My name is Marylee and I am one of the Chaplains here at the University and it's nice to see you all here tonight. I am really delighted to welcome Rev Tanya Webster who is joining us from Midstocket Parish Church and she will be preaching with us later, you're very welcome with us.

Please as usual look at the back of your orders of service, there are different cafes, book clubs, bible studies are starting, they are all virtual at the moment and all the details are on the back of your order of service. Also, I'm just required to remind you that masks have to stay on throughout the service, obviously unless you're exempt, and for those of you who want to do so, when you come forward for communion. As we follow the order of service which you have, please join in the words that are written in bold, and we'll start with our Opening Affirmation:

When we stand at the edge of fear and worry,  
**God invites us to step into the waters of faith and trust.**  
When we stand at the edge of the world's pain and need,  
**Jesus invites us to step into the land of humble service.**  
When we stand at the edge of our hunger and thirst:  
**the Spirit invites us to sit at the Table of grace.**

Let's stand together and worship with hymn number 608, Spirit of truth and grace.

**Hymn 608** Spirit of truth and grace

Please do have a seat, and I forgot to say as well that after our service tonight please join us for tea and coffee, and of course a biscuit, over in James MacKay Hall and you get there by going between the lion and the unicorn in the quad but just follow people over but it would be lovely to have you join us for tea and a coffee.

Let's pray together:

Gracious God,  
We come together today hungry for your comfort,  
Hungry for your love,  
Hungry for a new way of living,  
Hungry for your word.  
We thank you for the beauty of today  
and for bringing us together safely.

We thank you that you are present with us and pray that tonight as we gather we may know your presence with us.

We are eager to taste your goodness in community and thank you for giving us this beautiful chapel and this precious time to worship together.

Bless us as we share this communion service together and be with Tanya as she preaches for us.

May our eyes be open to see you with us,  
our ears ready to listen  
and our hearts open and ready to respond to your love.

And together we pray the Lords Prayer;

**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  
And forgive us our debts  
As we forgive our debtors  
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.**

Vivek is going to come and do our reading.

**Vivek Chacko** The reading for today is taken from the book of John Chapter 13 Verses 1 to 17.

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.' After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master,

nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Rev Tanya Webster [00:11:43]** So our theme today is blessed are the meek and meek is one of those words that we don't really hear very much anymore and various Bible translations use other words or paraphrases of that, they talk about the humble, the gentle, the kind hearted, the sweet spirited, the self-controlled, the mild, the patient, the long suffering, the lonely, those who have no pride in their hearts and those who quietly trust him and do not try to get their own way. It's a lot of words to replace the word meek. And when I first heard this is what I was to preach on today, my first thought was there was an old prayer that people used to say to children as they went to bed. Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, might ring a bell with some of you. Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon a little child, pity my simplicity and suffer me to come to thee. It's actually the first verse of a Charles Wesley hymn. And I have to say my first thought when I hear this gentle Jesus meek and mild is to object to that. Because yes, Jesus could be patient and humble and kind hearted, but he's also been known to turn over the tables of the money changers in the temples and argue with those who accuse him of not respecting the Sabbath. Even argue with a woman who comes asking him to release her daughter from a demon. He's not a pushover. So when I see definitions of meek as gentle, quiet, submissive, enduring injury with patience without resentments I can kind of see that's gentle Jesus, meek and mild. But it's also described as deficient in spirit and courage and not violent or strong and then I start to say, no, that's not meek Jesus. When the situation calls for it, Jesus was courageous, spirited, strong and occasionally even violent. So how does that tie in with meekness as something for which people should be blessed? If we're talking about meekness as humility, then that could be a positive choice. It's not something that is forced upon us, and it's not weakness, it's strength under control. And humility is definitely demonstrated in Jesus' life. From being born in a feeding trough in a stable rather than a jewelled crib in a palace. Focusing his attention among the poor and destitute rather than the rich and powerful. Washing the disciples feet rather than demanding they wait on him. His self-emptying humility leads to his death on the cross of an outlaw rather than astride a war horse as a conquering hero.

Humility isn't seen as a desirable quality in our 21st century world, where people almost become addicted to the promotion of self; Instagram social media, look how well I'm doing. Look at me, all things great. And you don't see what's behind that. People who are deemed to be important are often those who have thrust themselves forward at the expense of others. But there are also many people who lack a sense of self-worth and self-confidence. Often because of childhood experiences or having grown up with a distorted view of themselves or because of cultural or racial stereotyping. Those who struggle with mental health issues and struggle to see themselves in a positive light, that can also lead to humility but one that is perhaps not chosen. Humility is not seen in our society as a positive quality. People are admired for their material success, for their prestige, even within churches, I dread to say it. There are those who strive for power and prestige and admiration, it's fairly human. So true humility is rare. But is that all that meekness it? I think that's a part of it, but not all of it. Meekness is essentially an attitude or a quality of the heart where a person is willingly giving up and submitting, without resistance, to the will and desire of someone else. And in the case of Christians, that's

God. Meekness is not the same as weakness, its strength harnessed for service. It involves self-control and gentleness and patience and letting go of pride.

Perhaps one of the illustrations that might be used for meekness is one of the powerful, majestic stallion that's been brought into submission. It hasn't lost any of its stamina, it's just that where it once had a will of its own it now yields willingly to the will of another. The braking process is complete, and now all it needs is a gentle tug on the reins to know what to do. At Calvary, Jesus could have called down legions of angels to save him, but instead he chose to submit to his father's will. He is our example. That means submitting each decision to God, taking direction from him, letting him make whatever changes he deems necessary. Learning when it's time to wash someone's feet, to show compassion, when to step back, and when to step up. Meekness means acknowledging God's work, and that sometimes in our own enthusiasm we can get in the way of God's work unintentionally, unwittingly, instead of standing back and acknowledging that God's got this. Meekness means letting others take the limelight and has us serving quietly without fanfare.

The Beatitudes invite us to transform our sense of where God is at work, not simply or even primarily in places of strength, but particularly in places of vulnerability. Amidst our grief, alongside those who exercise mercy and work for righteousness and in so many other activities that the world considers not just meek but weak. God, that we know in Jesus often shows up where we least expect God to be. Similarly, God shows up in our acts of sacrifice and mercy, humility and kindness, rather than through assertions of will and attempts to collect worldly power and goods. And Jesus combines meekness and majesty and power in his ministry. He shows his power through miracles, stands up where he sees injustice. But he also serves willingly, puts God first, is not above washing the disciples feet.

So we learn to be meek, not weak. Willing to accept and submit without resistance to the will and desires of God. Acknowledging his way in all things. Calling on his strength and courage to exercise appropriate self-control, humility and gentleness, in God's name. Amen.

Let's sing together our next hymn, it's number 510, Jesus calls us here to meet him.

**Hymn 510** Jesus calls us here to meet him

**Rev Marylee Anderson** [00:23:13] Please, do have a seat. We are going to move into a time of communion now, and for some of us, this is our first time that we've physically been in person to have communion together so just wanted just a couple of notes for how we're going to do it. Gillian or Wendy will guide you when it's time to come forward for communion, for those of you who would like to come forward for communion, and all are welcome at this table. If you keep your masks on and then just take your mask off just before you take the bread and then the wine and if you put it back on as you head back to your seat.

This is the table,  
Not of the church, but of the Lord.  
It is to be made ready  
For those who love him and who want to love him more.  
So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little,  
You who have been here often and you who have not been for a long time,  
You who have tried to follow and you who have failed.

Come, not because I invite you; it is our Lord.

Lord God, as we come to share the richness of your table,  
we cannot forget the rawness of the earth.  
We cannot take bread and forget those who are hungry.  
Your world is one world and we are stewards of its nourishment.  
**Lord put our prosperity at the service of the poor.**

We cannot take wine and forget those who are thirsty  
the ground and the rootless,  
the earth and its weary people cry out for justice.  
**Lord put our fullness at the service of the empty.**

We cannot hear your words of peace and forget the world at war or, if not at war, then  
preparing for it.  
**Show us quickly Lord, how to turn weapons into welcome signs and the lust for  
power into desire for peace.**

We cannot celebrate the feast of your family and forget our divisions. We are one in the  
spirit but not one in fact  
history and hurt still dismember us.  
**Lord, heal your church in every brokenness.**

## **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

The Lord be with you.  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Gratitude, praise, hearts lifted high,  
Voices full and joyful:  
These you deserve.  
For when we were nothing, you made us something.  
When we had no name and no faith and no future,  
You called us your children;  
When we lost our way or turned away,  
You did not abandon us.  
When we came back to you,  
Your arms opened wide in welcome.  
And look, you prepare a table for us,  
Offering not just bread, not just wine,  
But by your very self, so that we may be forgiven, healed, blessed  
And be made new again.  
You are worth all our pain and our praise.

So, we join our voices to those of the Church on earth and in heaven;

## All: Hymn 651

organ  
Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly Lord, God of  
power and might. Heav'n and earth are full of your glory. Ho-san-na in the  
high-est. Blessed is he, O blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
- Ho-san-na in the high-est, ho-san-na in the high-est.

On the night on which Jesus was betrayed, he sat,  
At supper with his disciples.  
While they were eating,  
He took a piece of bread, said a blessing,  
Broke it and gave it to them with these words.  
“This is my body.  
It is broken for you.  
Do this to remember me.”

Later on, he took a cup of wine, saying,  
“This cup is God’s new covenant, sealed with my blood,  
Drink from it all of you to remember me.”

So, as we do in this place  
What you did in an upstairs room,  
Send down your Holy Spirit on us,  
And on these gifts of bread and wine  
That they may become for us your body,  
Healing, forgiving, and making us whole  
And that we may become, for you your body,  
Loving and caring in the world  
Until your kingdom comes.

**Amen.**

These are the gifts of God for the people of God.  
Taste and see that the Lord is good.

## SHARING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

**Agnus Dei**

*St Anne’s Mass*

James MacMillan (CH4 653)

**Communion Anthem**

*O sacrum convivium*

Giovanni Croce (1557-1607)

**Rev Marylee Anderson** Let's pray together.

**Gracious God, we thank you for the love  
which brings us food from heaven,  
the life of your dear Son,  
and assures us that we belong  
to the company of all his faithful people  
in heaven and on earth**

**Grant that, strengthened by the fellowship of his  
Holy Spirit  
We may continue his work in the world  
until we come to the glory of your eternal kingdom;  
through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.  
Amen**

Let's stand together and worship with our final hymn number 177, O God of blessings.

**HYMN 177**                      O God of blessings (vv 1,3,5,6)

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord  
And may the blessing of God,  
Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer  
Be among you and within you  
For now and evermore.  
Amen.

**Recessional**              *Prelude in C major, BWV 553*              J S Bach (1685-1750)

**Voiceover** [00:42:47] This podcast is brought to you by the University of Aberdeen.