

# Worship from King's College Chapel Podcasts

## Season 3 – Wednesday Worship Winter Term 2021

### Episode 7 Transcript – Communion Meditation

#### *The Beatitudes: Blessed are the peacemakers*

**Voiceover** This podcast is brought to you by the University of Aberdeen.

**Introit** *Tantum ergo Sacramentum* Anton Bruckner (1824-1896)

**Rev Marylee Anderson** A very warm welcome to tonight's communion service here in King's College Chapel. My name is Marylee and I am one of the Chaplains here at the University, and it's great to see you all here tonight. A very special welcome to Neil, Reverend Neil Meyer, who has joined us from Kintore Parish Church which is my local parish church as well. So, it's great to have Neil along and he will be preaching for us later on in our time together. We also have a retiral offering, which this term we're collecting money for the Shining Light Scholarship which is a scholarship for refugee and asylum seeker students with those backgrounds. And as you follow your order of service, please join in with the words in bold. So we'll start with our opening affirmation.

Leader: Here in this place, there are no foreigners,

**All: for all are welcome in God's house.**

Leader: Here in this worship, there is only acceptance,

**All: for love is the language of faith.**

Leader: Here in our lives, there are no divisions,

**All: for God dwells in each of us.**

Leader: Come, let us worship in unity and love.

We'll stand together with Hymn number 83: I rejoiced when I heard them say.

**Hymn 83** I rejoiced when I heard them say

Please do have a seat. Let's join together in prayer. Let's pray.

God of creation,

In the beginning was darkness,

And with your whisper, creation existed

Birthered by the powerful words you speak

We thank you for the wonder of creation,

For your whispers of love in the gentle breeze, in the beautiful colours of autumn.

We thank you that in you is restoration and renewal.

God of love,

We thank you that you show yourself to us as our source of compassion

We thank you that in our times of essay fatigue and exhaustion you are with us always.

Thank you that your whispers of love and renewal are constantly present and among us in our lives and our worship tonight.

And we ask your gentle spirit to constantly open our hearts to the way of justice and peace.

God of peace,  
Forgive us when we have participated in ways that turn others against each other;  
For fueling anger and harboring vengeance  
For ignoring your call to love one another.  
Thank you that you are at work in us and with us,  
That your love enfolds us, holds us and strengthens us,  
Inspire us never to give up on the hope that your life offers us,  
And the courage to see past hurts and conflict,  
to see your peace and love as it surrounds us especially the times when we need it the most.

And together we pray the Lord's Prayer;

**Prayer and Lord's 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.**  
**Amen.**

Keith is going to come and share our scripture.

**Keith Bender** Today's scripture reading comes from the Gospel of Matthew chapter five verses one through twelve, the Beatitudes.

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:  
'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.  
'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.  
'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.  
'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.  
'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.  
'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.  
'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
'Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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

**All: Thanks be to God.**

**Rev Neil Meyer [00:12:55]** I bring you greetings from the church in Kintore. It's a real pleasure and privilege to be with you tonight, let us pray. Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus. Amen.

In 1872 the United States Government held trials to select a new service revolver for their military. The Colt's Patent Manufacturing Company designed a brand new single action army model for those trials and the gun very soon became the preferred sidearm for the US military. The Colt's 45 single action army revolver saw action from 1873 right up until 1941 in the American Indian Wars, the Spanish-American War, the Mexican Revolution and further afield in the Second World War and the Irish War of Independence. They dubbed the gun the peacemaker, and it was still being used in the First and Second World Wars. Even General George Patton himself carried an ivory handled peacemaker as his preferred personal sidearm. Blessed are the peacemakers.

It's the plot of every action movie you've ever watched. There's a bad guy terrorising the family or the town or the village or the country or the planets or the galaxy, and soon enough in rides a good guy riding on a white horse or driving an Aston Martin DB5 or flying a Millennium Falcon and the key thing about our hero is that he has a bigger gun. He has a peacemaker and by the end of the movie our hero has made peace, violence notwithstanding. Walter Wink called this plotline the myth of redemptive violence. It's the idea that peace is worth fighting for. But peace is something that must be made and that any amount of violence is justified in the process of making that peace. Certainly, those who listened to Jesus as he preached his sermon on the Mount would have been familiar with the Roman Peace, the Pax Romana, a stable peace that had been thrust upon the Jews and countless other nations through military invasion, and was maintained by cruel violence and public executions such as crucifixion. The Romans and every other empire before and since knew how to make peace. But Jesus' listeners were also Jews and the Jewish concept of peace or shalom was very different to the Roman concept of Pax. Pax might have been and might be understood as the absence of conflict, a form of control that made sure that no uprisings could take place. It was, if you like, a product that could be made by any means possible. Shalom, on the other hand, was a state of being that encompassed the wholeness of everybody involved. Shalom could not exist, for example, in a situation where some were oppressed by others or where some lived in fear of others. It is therefore not something that can simply be made, it's something that must be lived and experienced. The process of creating Shalom is part of Shalom itself. Martin Luther, therefore, when he translated the Bible into German used in this beatitude, the word *friedfertig*, peaceable or peace loving even. Imagine reading that Beatitude differently; Blessed are the peaceful, not the peace makers. And the Greek is perhaps deliberately ambiguous here, because the word can be translated both passively or actively and maybe that's the point really, true peace, shalom, can only be created by peaceable means or to use Gandhi's famous quote, "There is no path to peace. Peace is the path." As with each of the Beatitudes, it's fruitless to try and distil an interpretation of the blessing outside of the New Testament. If you want to know what the blessing is, you really need to look at Jesus' example. What does the Beatitude look like in Jesus' hands? And in the case of peacemaking or peace being it's Saint Paul in his letter to the Colossians who explains to us the example of peace creation as carried out by Jesus. He writes as follows: 'For in Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to

himself all things, whether on Earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. Jesus made peace by the blood of his cross. He didn't draw a bigger gun to shoot the agents of the oppressive Roman Empire. He didn't call down armies of angels to mete out more violence upon the violence. Instead, he allowed violence to be done to him, absorbing within himself the violence due to the outcasts and sinners he came to save. Standing on the side of the weak and confronting the strong. Not to set in motion a violent type of peasants revolt but to create the context in which reconciliation, healing and wholeness, shalom, could begin. Now, maybe this all sounds very idealistic and bleeding heartish, overly pious for us to be listening to this on the day before, we will be called to remember those who went to war against probably the most cruel tyrants of the modern age and I really don't want to get into a debate here tonight about just war theory. You're welcome to have that debate amongst yourselves afterwards. I will simply say this, that history is not without examples of peace achieved by means other than violence. In my own country of birth, South Africa, they say that during the CODESA talks, during the handover of power from the apartheid regime to the black led African National Congress, the talks came to a grinding halt one day. Back in their caucus chambers, the ANC negotiators were ready to walk away from the table but Nelson Mandela ordered them to return to the talks. "What's the point", they said, "what's the point of talking anymore? Why should we go back and talk to these hardheaded boers?" Mandela replied to them, "Because when the talking stops, the fighting starts. Go back to the table." I don't know who you're fighting with in your own life or your own situation but Jesus invites us to this table. Blessed are the peacemakers.

In the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

The hymn is number 659: Put peace into each other's hands, number 659:

**Hymn 659** Put peace into each other's hands (tune: St Columba-598)

Please do have a seat.

## **Holy Communion**

### **INVITATION**

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.

Let us pray.

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. Amen.

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**        *Prayer for Peace*                      Fridrik Walker

And together we pray:

**All: 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**

We'll stand together and sing our final hymn, number 527: Lord, make us servants of your peace.

**HYMN 527 Lord, make us servants of your peace**

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 sung by Choir**

**Recessional**      *Trio sonata no. 4 in E minor BWV 528,  
1st movement*

J S Bach (1685-1750)

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