

New Kilpatrick

Palm Sunday Podcast

5th April 2020

Introduction & Notices

Welcome to The New Kilpatrick Podcast. You can download a script from the website and follow along if you wish. It is Palm Sunday and today we offer you a journey, a pilgrimage into the shadows, the intrigue, and unease of Holy Week. From our own places we travel together, into that holy echo: the moment love and fear clashed, and salvation was born.

Song: Ride on, ride on

Palm Sunday

When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, "Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me."

There are screams and cries,
the sound of people shuffling,
moving out the way.
A bag drops,
pomegranates roll,
a scuffle,
before the hooves are heard,
the sound of feet marching on the cobbles
that echo up the stone walls and are released into the air
above Jerusalem's gate.

The crowd hush,
transfigured before their rider
who looks like he should be here,
owning the scene,
It is for him after all.

The crowd move back,
clearing a way
through the morning stalls
selling passover requirements.
And he looks around
almost confused by these primitive rituals.
But it is of no concern to him.
Pilate moves on towards the palace
his white stallion decked in emperor regalia,
reminding the crowd who is in charge.
The soldiers march past, guarding the prefect of
Judaea



and the crowd breathes again,
while on the other side of the city
a donkey brays
It's almost a laugh.

Here a smaller crowd
but with bigger cause
gathers.
Dangerous intent
enters the city and the faith through the narrower gate
in mockery of Roman might.
Nothing about this is holy.
This is planned meticulously:
Heaven's conspiracy
against empire
and a religion that conforms
and the leader
receives the sardonic hosannas
of a crowd that does not know what has begun.

Jesus against Pilate.
Heaven against empire.
It is not a question of whose parade we shall join,
rather whose parade we are already marching with,
but to make a choice, now,
is already too late.

Short reflective prayer

*Wait. Wait and listen
Listen for the pause of the story tellers
The pause between events, the pause between
Between crying out 'No! Stay - don't go on.'
And understanding what comes next.
Wait. Wait and listen.*

Perfume

Six days before Passover, we were invited over to Lazarus' house, the one whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Lazarus' sisters, Mary and Martha were there too. Martha was serving as she always did. But Mary disappeared for a time. A short time later she came back in the room and I couldn't believe what happened next. She had with her an expensive jar of pure nard, a jar of expensive aromatic oils and she proceeded to anoint Jesus' feet with it before wiping them with her hair. The air may have been filled with the beautiful fragrance but...



Everyone watched. Nobody said anything. Nobody stopped her. Can you believe it? A woman bold and even brazen enough to do that - to lay at Jesus' feet and do such a thing. And if that wasn't bad enough, what about the money that could have been made from selling it. Furious I was. So, I asked, "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor?"

After all, I look after the common purse and needed to make sure there was enough in it -with some for me – expenses you know. But Jesus replied,

"Leave her alone. She bought it so that she might keep it for the day of my burial. You always have the poor with you, but you do not always have me." Whatever that meant. He keeps saying these things in parables, but I don't really know what he is going on about most of the time.

I never said anything after that, but I wasn't happy. Soon a whole crowd of Jews and others arrived, not just to see Jesus but to see Lazarus. The man Jesus had raised. Some of the Chief Priests were there and I could see they were planning something. They are not happy either because so many Jews are deserting and beginning to believe in Jesus.

Short reflective prayer

Wait. Wait and listen

Listen for the pause of the story tellers

The pause between events, the pause between

Between the compassion and fear and love

And understanding what comes next.

Wait. Wait and listen.

Temple

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables.

The religion of the temple
was the religion of power:
limiting,
controlling,
managing the people.

Now heaven was gate-crashing
this way of keeping people in place,
this was the unbinding of Lazarus,
the crumbs for the Syro-Phoenician woman.

The table-turning anger of heaven
was a word to the wise:
"God notices what is done to the least
because the least among you, is God "



And the Saviour of the least stole the moment
and taught religion a lesson:
religion can survive without power
instead of sacrifices, prayer;
instead of temple religion, compassionate communities;
instead of money-changers, generosity and charity.

And as the tables clattered
and coins rolled along the stone pavement,
and as the wings of the escaping doves cracked
and the authorities smarted,
the rebel saviour turned and left,
and religion got wise
to its chief of enemies.

Short reflective prayer

*Wait. Wait and listen
Listen for the pause of the story tellers
The pause between events, the pause between
Between the shouts of anger and chaos
And understanding what comes next.
Wait. Wait and listen.*

Betrayal: John 13: 21-32

Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, “Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me.” **22** The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he was speaking. **23** One of his disciples—the one whom Jesus loved—was reclining next to him; **24** Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. **25** So while reclining next to Jesus, he asked him, “Lord, who is it?” **26** Jesus answered, “It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread when I have dipped it in the dish.” So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he gave it to Judas son of Simon Iscariot. **27** After he received the piece of bread, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, “Do quickly what you are going to do.” **28** Now no one at the table knew why he said this to him. **29** Some thought that, because Judas had the common purse, Jesus was telling him, “Buy what we need for the festival”; or, that he should give something to the poor. **30** So, after receiving the piece of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.

And the weight of the night
curled itself round him like thick smoke
as Judas pushed himself through the dark
the questions suffocating him
as he tried to justify what he was about to do



But he is a figment in this story
a storytellers tool
that enfleshes the worst of who we are
and passes the blame to an individual
for what we all do

and in the dark of our humanity
Judas is our saint
betraying the best of heaven
with the worst of earth

and as Judas breathes hard
at the temple gate
under a crisis of reason
that does
and does not make sense
into this wreckage
the coins of betrayal are thrown
and he is surprised how cheap they sound
as somewhere in the city a child cries

Short reflective prayer

*Wait. Wait and listen
Listen for the pause of the story tellers
The pause between events, the pause between
Between the voice of God and Jesus
And understanding what comes next.
Wait. Wait and listen.*

Feet Washing

Jesus, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. 5 Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet

Peter: You take off your outer robe

Jesus: This long sleeved garment does not make me a master. It is what I wear underneath, this shorter garment that shows you who I am, a servant who will wash your feet

Peter: And you tie a towel around you

Jesus: It is the very symbol of our deepest act to serve, give of self.

Peter: You take a bowl and pour water

Jesus: For I am going to wash your feet. I am going to wash that part of you that symbolises in our tradition, our activity, our behaviour, I will wash away the ill-effects of your actions. This is an act of forgiveness.

Peter: And I ask you if you are going to wash my feet

Jesus: Of course I am Peter. Can I not be the servant?

Can I not serve you with forgiveness and possibility?

Peter: You tell me I have no share in you otherwise

Jesus: You need a share of forgiveness. I need you renewed. It is my gift to give. I do not want my relationship to be about what you have done wrong, but about being full of new life.

Peter: Then wash my head and hands, wash everything

Jesus: Your feet are enough

Peter: My whole being

Jesus: Your loyalty is generous

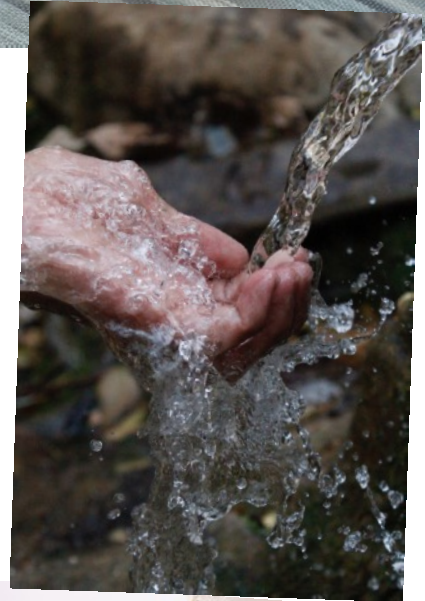
Peter: My intent and passion

Jesus: Already they have found new life, Peter, come let us eat the supper

And so they ate, the passover meal, of the bread that spoke of exodus and escape; and the cup of bitter wine, the taste of things to come.

And into this story Jesus broke a new one, that same bread now a body, broken; and that same wine, now blood, poured for the many. And if they did not understand that, they were to understand even less in the hours to come.

They ate the bread and shared the wine and none of it made sense. Even the silence that descended, left the disciples each with their own thoughts, felt heavy and confusing and before a question could be formed, the light of the world left them at table, and the room dimmed.



Short reflective prayer

Wait. Wait and listen

Listen for the pause of the story tellers

The pause between events, the pause between

Between the water, and blessing, and forgiveness,

And understanding what comes next.

Wait. Wait and listen.

Epilogue Prayer

After Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the Kidron valley to a place where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.

Holy God
in the story we live out now
in our communities and world
we do not know the ending
and we know how disciples felt
and how saviours worried

This garden
this place between willing the future
and worrying about it
here is where we find our place of prayer

amid tangled olive trees
and shadows that move beyond us
an unfamiliar and frightening place

in the midst of such a place
in our own gethsemane
we are hanging on to what we trust
it is all we have
and we find ourselves here
willing cups to be removed
yet trust such love that sees us through

so we bring our prayers
for people who are ill and families that grieve
those isolated and feel so

medical staff and all who support
those who are ill and families that worry
for those men and women
who continue to serve their communities
in services that are essential to keep us fed
and warm, and connected

we bring our leaders
scientists, researchers, politicians
facing decisions beyond their experience

we bring our neighbours
our local communities
our volunteers

and in this place today, as then
find your disciples are our companions
confused in an unknown landscape
where what was familiar



seems foreign now

yet even here
we have seen a love
that will not let go
and in this place of snarled trees and darkness
somehow
we will believe
everything will be made new

So be it
Amen

Song: Lay down your head

Blessing

Go in peace
and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
The love of God
and the commonwealth of the holy spirit
be with us all
evermore
Amen

Intimations

Thank you to Angela and Christian Schneeberger who sang and read, Gillian Dinsmore who read and Jeanette Peel for sharing in writing and presenting this podcast and thanks to Iain and Kirsteen Maclean taking part last week which I omitted to say - my apologies.

Please visit the website nkchurch.org.uk for things to fill in your days, stories and poetry, some laughter and activities, daily prayers, meditations and a whole bundle of past bits and pieces from our worship too.

There are also the opportunity to sign up to a weekly email of everything going on sent out on a Monday and a weekly bulletin to download on a Friday.

Please keep safe and keep isolating. We hope you are able to tune in next week when it will be Easter Day. Take care.

