

19 February 2017
Epiphany 7

Welcoming the Stranger – Welcoming the Christ

“Thinking allowed; thinking aloud allowed”

Minister: Rev Dr Robyn McPhail
Musicians: Dave Hallam KK Clyde Foster Kaeo
Readers: Helen Norman KK tba Kaeo

Bitterness is like drinking poison and hoping the other person dies.

Activity Space at Cornerstone

Children and young people, and those who like to do something while they listen, are invited to move around the Activity Space.

Plugging in

Gathering with all the Saints

Hymn *Creation sings and we are in the music* tune: WOV526ii

Prayer

Response calling on the Spirit, followed by a time of silence in which we let ourselves be open, let be who we are, “warts and all” as we say. During the time the picture on the screen will be of a very troubling time for those in the Christchurch and Banks Peninsula area.

Spirit of patience, Spirit of humility,
 Spirit of revelation, Spirit of truth,
 BREATH OF GOD, WE WORSHIP YOU.

Spirit of confidence, Spirit of hope,
 Spirit of peace, Spirit of joy,
 BREATH OF GOD, WE WORSHIP YOU.

Spirit of sacrifice, Spirit of forgiveness,
 Spirit of light, Spirit of beauty,
 BREATH OF GOD, WE WORSHIP YOU.

Spirit of holiness, Spirit of purity,
 Spirit of unity, Spirit of communion,
 BREATH OF GOD, WE WORSHIP YOU.

Spirit of the Father, Spirit of the Son,
 COME, HOLY SPIRIT!

<http://www.pomeyrol.com/liturgie.htm>

silence...

This is the good news: we belong to Christ. He is the One who comes bringing life and hope to all.
 BECAUSE WE BELONG TO CHRIST, WE BELONG TO GOD.
 THE HOLY ONE IS ALSO THE MERCIFUL ONE,
 WHO FILLS OUR HEARTS WITH LOVE.
 THANKS BE TO GOD, WE ARE FORGIVEN! AMEN.

Symbol of God's Presence

Hymn *Our life has its seasons* [Helen's choice]

Clarifying our Purpose

Conversation with the Word

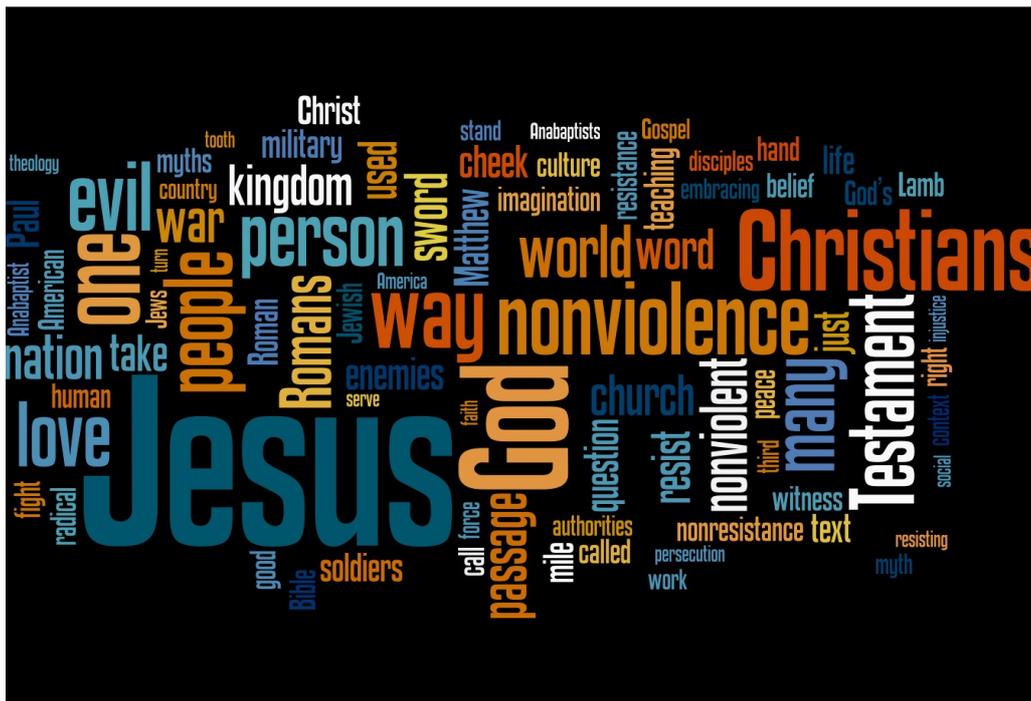
Today's reflection draws on thoughts from Sr Kath Rushton, a Christchurch based New Testament scholar and colleague of mine from the ecumenical distance education institute days.

Non-violent resistance to evil is the key descriptor for her of what she the poetic, dramatic, and pictorial sermon that makes up Matthew chapter 5. Not a rule book but a collection of disruptive, transformative “for examples”. Things that will jolt listeners out of the way of thinking surrounding everything which presents itself as reality – no alternative. Right from the beginning of the Beatitudes “blessed are the poor in spirit” we are surely dealing with an alternative reality. God's reality, God's basileia – the Greek word translated “kingdom” or “realm”. God's way.

Jesus is inspiring the imagination of all listening to resist the values of Rome's kingdom. And for his disciples he is getting them to understanding more deeply the way of life they – we – have committed themselves to. He's reshaping them.

Matthew 5:38-48

Hymn *He came singing love* WOV636



Please note well that the translation “do not resist the evil door” doesn't exactly reflect what the text says. Do not *violently resist* is the essence of the Greek. Resist evil, yes. That's Jesus' whole life purpose. But this new way, or really the old way back from the beginning of Israel's relationship with their God, but it's been lost with accommodation to the powers that be and as faith has been turned into a rule book for being orderly citizens; this new old way resists evil but without using force. That is, without resorting to evil's primary tool. Be it physical or, just as bad, by coercing or manipulating, etc.etc, it's a form of violence.

So there are not just two options against what's bad – submit or fight back. Jesus is showing us a third way. For example....

For what follows are four examples of non-violent, non-coercive resistance. They are not telling us this is literally what you must do, if hit by someone, for example. They are part of this picture of what God's way of resisting evil looks like. Stirring our imagination, inspiring us to be creative in our resistance to what's wrong. Each example relates to an aspect of established life – the way things are according to the system. Each offers a way to show up the system as out of (God's) order, totally out of tune with the true spirit of life.

1. First, the slap on the cheek. That's a gesture designed to insult because it's only acceptable in the context as the act of a master to a slave. Non-violent resistance – which is not submission – is to turn the other cheek. There's defiance in that – I dare you to treat me again as if I were not equal to you. But also: The slap is with the back of the hand, right hand to right cheek. What's a right handed bully to do faced with the left cheek. Pat it gently?

2. The legal system requires one garment to be left in surety. Fine when you're well off and have clothes to spare. Almost bearable when you have the basics, one undergarment and one overgarment. At least you have one layer remaining to help get through the cold night. But giving the other garment as well, you're left naked and the legal system is shown up for what it is. The creditor taking the cloak is shamed and dishonoured by the person standing unclothed before them. Something's surely wrong with the system.
3. The extra mile. Because they can, the forces of law and order (in this case Rome's army) can requisition people to do work for them, like carry a soldier's pack for a mile. Because they can. Carrying it the second mile shifts the balance. This is not power having its way. This is a person choosing to do something which isn't required of them, just like the first mile should not have been required of them, if things were done God's way, in tune with the true spirit of life.
4. Charitable giving in Jesus' (and Matthew's) context has got itself locked into another kind of power differential: benefactor and beneficiary. High status for the benefactor, the person of means who gives to particular people they choose, low status for the beneficiary, who comes dependent upon the benefactor. No picking and choosing when it comes to responding to need. No making another person obliged or indebted to you. Jesus' way in this example, as in the others, is to seize the moral initiative. Find an alternative to coercion and violence. Assert your humanity. Keep your dignity. Shame the oppressor. And be willing to suffer as part of the process of modelling the kingdom way.

Conversations around the Table

The enemy:

love them

The oppressor:

walk the mile with them

The Master:

turn the other cheek to them

This doormat faith

seems too much to bear

in a world where those who bully

always seem to win

The enemy:

imbalace them with love

The oppressor:

shame the law that oppresses

The Master:

turn the cheek as an equal

This rebellious faith

seems too much to bear

in a world where those who bully

are loved back to justice by the bullied

But this is heaven's revolution

and we are called into it

come let us worship

love's rebel, Jesus

Roddy Hamilton, posted on *Mucky Paws*.

Continuing the Conversation

Prayers

Ecumenical Prayer Cycle: France, Germany, Monaco

Thy will be done

This is not to bow to an unavoidable reality. It is not a mute or blind submission. Nor is it a resignation to what must be accepted. It is to enter freely into the project of God, recognizing God's will that we speak of not only is good but also that it goes in the direction of our freedom, our healing, that it goes in the direction of life.

<http://www.pomeyrol.com/liturgie.htm>, adapted

...prayer book prayers...

Confession of faith

We believe that God loves us.
We believe that God stands patiently at our side.
We believe that when we hold out our hand
God takes it to help us discover peace and joy.
God invites us to take on a new identity,
as sons and daughters, following Jesus Christ.

We believe that Jesus Christ came to embody God's love.
We believe that that love has been given in his acts and words
to men and women like us.

We believe that he gave himself to God
to make God's Kingdom come.
We believe that his suffering testifies to the pain God feels
in the face of human suffering.

We believe that his rising from the dead demonstrates
that God is present in all our darkness.

We believe that the Holy Spirit enables us to receive God's love.
We believe that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world today,
and that he is sending a great company of men and women on their journey.
We believe that the Holy Spirit helps us recognize the signs of the Kingdom in the here and now.
We believe that within the Christian community
the role is passed on to keep watch and to tell our hope to the world.

<http://protestantsdanslaville.org/liberalisme-theologique/liba.htm>

Learning from the Children

Lord's Prayer

Sent to Carry Healing and Hope

Serving in the Week Ahead

In the community

... being Christ shaped

Offering Song *Let our love shine out* HIOS88

Dedication

We will not only offer our gifts but follow you, Gracious God, all the extra miles needed so the hungry might be fed, the homeless might be sheltered, and your compassion would be showered on all those around us.

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Blessing

We go on our way
to act in accord with Jesus' words and deeds,
to be the salt of the earth,
to seek justice,
to build peace,
to protect the creation,
and to gain life. Amen.

Amelie zu Dohna

Kia tau/The grace

...[singing] *A-men, a-men, a---men*

Robyn McPhail, 19.02.2017

NOTICES FOR TODAY – 19 FEBRUARY 2017

Parish email: admin@kkup.org.nz

Church Office at Cornerstone: 09 407 8250

Minister: Robyn McPhail (DD) 09 283 4802, 021 0247 6280

minister@kkup.org.nz

Find us at www.kkup.org.nz and on [Facebook](#)

Notices: Jenny Phillips 09 407 8883 jenny.jane@xtra.co.nz

KK Pastoral: Jessica Scott 09 407 5555 jomscott2@gmail.com

ROSTERED FOR NEXT SUNDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2017

Musicians: Kato Akau'ola KK Clyde Foster Kaeo

Readers: Jean Andrewes KK tba Kaeo

Door and Tea: Elaine and Ian

LECTIONARY READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK:

Exodus 24:12-18 Psalm 2 or 99 2 Peter 1:16-21 Matthew 17:1-9

AN EVENING WITH COLIN GIBSON: details on flyer. Sunday evening 5 March, in Cornerstone – Whare Karakia o Manako

BIBLE STUDY: Monday 20 February 1.30pm - 3.00pm in the Cornerstone Meeting Room, focussing on some or all of the readings above. A chance to share responses, hear some of the background, and dig out, and be fed a little for the journey of life.

PARISH COUNCIL: Tuesday 21 February at 7.00pm in Cornerstone Meeting Room

MORNING TEA for the Northern Presbytery/Kids Friendly WOF Leadership training day for people working with children and youth. We have offered to provide morning tea as part of the hire of Cornerstone for this event on Saturday 4 March. Can you help? Options for help are home baking and/or serving tea, coffee, etc. Contact Robyn

CHILD MINDING Saturday 4 March. It can be hard getting leaders for working with children and young people. One challenge is getting someone to look after their own little ones. Can anyone help with child minding during the Training Day for youth and children's leaders at our Kerikeri premises in a month's time? More details available tomorrow.

KAURI LODGE COMMUNION: Friday 24 February at 11am. Supporters welcome.

KERIKERI RETIREMENT VILLAGE CHAPEL SERVICES: Every Sunday at 4.00pm at the Ted Robinson Chapel. Our parish leads the service (with Communion) on 26 February.

CAR BOOT SALES: Next sale is on 25 February 7am - 12noon at Cornerstone. Contact Mary 407 1117.

TAI CHI CLASSES: Tuesday afternoons at Cornerstone: Seated Tai Chi 2.00 – 2.30; Beyond Beginners 2.30 – 3.15; 3.30-4.00 a mostly seated class for people living with Parkinsons Disease Syndrome; Standing Beginners 4.00 - 4.45; Queries to Jill 407 5054 (not after 7.30pm please) or jilldfreemn@gmail.com

CORNERSTONE Kerikeri will be open each day this week from at least mid morning to mid afternoon. Pass the word around. Invite people to call by to visit.

VOLUNTEER HOSTS: *Can you help increase the team?* Get in touch with Robyn if you could spare a couple of hours, late morning or early afternoon, through the week. Whatever will work for you.

GUEST WIFI: volunteer hosts in particular, please email Robyn for code for Guest Wifi, if you'd like to bring your own tablet or laptop to potter on while you're at Cornerstone.