

# Key Insights for Christian Discipleship @ Jazz Evensong

## Week 5 Don't Let the Bullies Get You Down

**Genesis 50:19-20** *Do not be afraid! ... God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as he is doing today.*

This is a story about a bunch of bullies.  
In this case, they are all older brothers,  
jealous of the special treatment  
they think their youngest brother, Joseph, is getting.  
So, they get rid of him,  
sell him into slavery, essentially.

But the kid is resilient and resourceful,  
with more than a bit of divine assistance.  
He rises to a position of significance in Egypt.  
In a time of severe distress,  
his brothers end up in front of him  
pleading for their lives.  
What an opportunity for revenge!

And then this!  
Don't be afraid. God is with you and for you.  
No matter what you have done,  
you are accepted and appreciated  
for what you might yet do.  
This acceptance is God's gift of grace.  
The best way to respond to this gift is with gratitude.  
That's the rock solid rhythm, says God, that I lay down in my bass line –  
grace and gratitude, grace and gratitude.  
That, you have my word, will never change.

So, whatever happens to you,  
no matter how traumatic,  
no matter how life-threatening and life-sucking,  
there is always someone on your side.  
And that someone is the Creator of the universe!  
No one disrupts that energy's bass line.  
Nothing in all of creation can separate you from that love.

Those of us who trust in this force,  
in this God that we see most clearly in Jesus, the Christ,  
cannot eliminate the bullying in your life.  
But we can welcome you to a community  
where you will be nourished in God's grace to flourish,  
where you can sing the blues from the depths of your soul  
but never be defeated by the bullying of your fears.  
The music of heaven's love always wins out!



## ***The Brentwood Declaration***

### ***How Brentwood Presbyterian Church Understands Its Faith & Mission***

*In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth  
and declared them to be very good.  
God then created humanity, male and female,  
to cultivate blessing throughout the world.*

*Rejecting the limits of their power,  
our ancestors rebelled against God's vision of goodness,  
resulting in toil, tyranny, trauma, and death.*

*But God never gave up.  
In a definitive act of reconciling forgiveness,  
God became incarnate among us.*

*In the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth,  
God restored the original goodness of creation  
as a commonwealth enjoyed on earth as it is in heaven.  
The Holy Spirit continues to work out the fulfillment of that act.*

*Through the church universal in which we participate,  
the Holy Spirit nourishes us to flourish as God's friends  
through worship, learning, fellowship, and service.*

*By God's grace, in Jesus the Christ, through the Holy Spirit,  
we know what it is to be loved and to love  
amidst all the problems of the world,  
and we are equipped, empowered, and sent  
to sow the seeds of God's shalom in all of our circles of influence.*

*In the end, God's love will transform the heavens and the earth,  
and bring justice, peace, and joy to every dimension of creation.*

The Christian faith is a response of gratitude to God's grace in Jesus Christ. It is Gospel – good news - for all. The broad outlines of the story of how these good things happened and continue to unfold are found in the Brentwood Declaration.

There may well be some ideas and language in the declaration that don't make much sense to you. Participants in Brentwood are always open to exploring these matters further, especially our minister, Brian Fraser. He can be reached at [jazzthinkbrian@gmail.com](mailto:jazzthinkbrian@gmail.com).

Part of a 50-week series of reflections at Jazz Evensong, Brentwood Presbyterian Church  
For other insights, visit [brentwoodpc.ca](http://brentwoodpc.ca) and click the Jazz Evensong Reflections Archives