

Hymn of the Week – Trinity XII

King of Glory, King of Peace

Words: George Herbert (1593 – 1633)

Tune: Gwalchmai by Joseph David Jones (1827 – 1870)

This well-known hymn refers to God, particularly Jesus Christ, as the supreme ruler over all creation, embodying both power and profound peace. The hymn references Psalm 24, identifying God as the powerful, glorious sovereign who brings reconciliation and tranquility to those who seek Him.

George Herbert M.A. was the fifth son of Richard Herbert and Magdalen, the daughter of Sir Richard Newport, he was born at his father's seat, Montgomery Castle, April 3, 1593. He was educated at Westminster School, and at Trinity College, Cambridge, graduating B.A. in 1611. On March 15, 1615, he became Major Fellow of the College, M.A. the same year, and in 1619 Orator for the University. Although favored by James I., intimate with Lord Bacon, Bishop Andrewes, and other men of influence, Herbert took Holy Orders after contracting tuberculosis and succumbed to the disease after only three years of ministry.

Joseph Jones in contrast to Herbert was born the son of a Wesleyan preacher into such poverty that – it is said – his parents could only afford one year's schooling for him. So, to the detriment of all other subjects, he immersed himself in music. He began to write hymn tunes in his teens and had several published to some success. In 1851 Jones was appointed headmaster of the British School in Towyn, Denbighshire. While gaining a degree of success with his compositions, today he is best remembered for his hymn tune GWALCHMAI. The origin of the tune's name is obscure – it may refer to a town in Anglesey.

Given Herbert's time at Trinity it is fitting to hear his hymn sung by the choir of the College, the largest and most wealthy in Cambridge.

<https://youtu.be/yL816w46rP4?list=RDyL816w46rP4>