

Award of the

Menno Simons Sermon Prize to Daniel Kaiser

on September 26, 2021 in Hamburg

On Sunday, September 26, 2021, the Center for Peace Church Theology (University of Hamburg) will award the international Menno Simons Sermon Prize to Daniel Kaiser, head of the cultural editorial department of the radio station NDR 90.3. The public award ceremony will take place following the service of the Mennonite Church of Hamburg-Altona (10:00 a.m.), in which the laureate will preach. All interested parties are cordially invited to follow the live broadcast via the YouTube channel of the Mennonite Church of Hamburg and Altona (<https://www.youtube.com/c/MennonitengemeindeZuHamburgUndAltona>).

The award-winning sermon on "The Anointing in Bethany" (Mark's Gospel 14:3-9) captivates with its clear, unambiguous language, without flattening the content. Daniel Kaiser entertainingly retells the incident in which a woman enters the "men's circle" of the disciples and anoints Jesus with expensive oil. Scandalous, because the proceeds from the sale of this oil could have helped many poor people! Kaiser does an excellent job of transposing this story into the present context of the Corona pandemic. Moralizing considerations recede into the background when the question of immediate needs is allowed: What is needed here? Who needs what here? - Compassion, attention, tenderness. Here, Jesus becomes the "Christ" (i.e., the anointed one). "Because where we waste ourselves, where we give ourselves away, precisely there, in this precious moment, heaven and earth touch," the sermon concludes.

Daniel Kaiser, born in 1972, studied protestant Theology in Neuendettelsau, Heidelberg and Hamburg after graduating from the Katharineum in Lübeck, but eventually switched to journalism. After stations at Radio Hamburg, NDR 2 and NDR Info, he is now head of the culture editorial department at Hamburg radio station NDR 90.3 and is one of the hosts of the popular book podcast "eat.READ.sleep." Kaiser is an elder at Hamburg's main church, St. Petri. He preaches regularly on a voluntary basis in various northern German parishes, always has his flute in his luggage and occasionally plays the organ.

The international Menno Simons Sermon Prize is intended to encourage and honor sermons that present the biblical witness in light of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. In the horizon of lived ecumenism, they should promote peace church orientation and convince through credibility in order to offer spiritual strengthening. Furthermore, the sermons are intended to stimulate substantive discussion of current issues in public life - beyond one's own denominational boundaries.

The award was presented by Dr. h.c. Annelie Kümpers-Greve (1946-2017), member of the Mennonite congregation Hamburg-Altona. It is endowed with 2,000 Euros, half of which goes to the prize winner, the other half to the home congregation of the preacher.

The jury consists of Mennonite theologians, chairperson is Prof. Dr. Fernando Enns (Endowed Professorship 'Theology of Peace Churches'), Prof. em. Dr. Hans-Martin Gutmann (Practical Theology, University of Hamburg) acts as external reviewer. Other members of the jury are: Lukas Amstutz (Switzerland), Pastor Christina Duhoux (Netherlands), Pastor Birgit Foth (Ludwigshafen), Pastor Dr. Christiane Karrer-Grube (Netherlands) and Heinrich Wiens (Detmold).

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