



# The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 30: Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Friends,

As some of you know, earlier this month I celebrated my birthday. It was a day when, for some reason, a certain song by The Beatles came to mind. The song was written by Paul McCartney when he was just 16, although it is usually credited to both Paul McCartney and John Lennon. The song was apparently included in the 'setlist' for The Beatles' early concerts because it could be sung without accompaniment should their amplifiers break down or the electricity go off!



Some years later the song was included in the Beatles' 1967 album 'Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band'. Even those of you who are too young to remember the Beatles, may have guessed by now that the song I am referring to is 'When I'm Sixty-Four'.

The song describes a conversation between a young couple who are looking ahead many years into the future. The song begins:

*When I get older, losing my hair, Many years from now. Will you still be sending me a Valentine, Birthday greetings, bottle of wine? If I'd been out till quarter to three, Would you lock the door? Will you still need me, will you still feed me, when I'm sixty-four?*

Looking back, I remember the song from my own teenage years, and it is quite surprising now to have reached the age to which the song refers!

The song asks the question about how long the romantic love shared by the young couple will last. The question is asked in a humorous way – but maintaining love within any relationship over the years can be a challenge.

Changing circumstances can put pressures on friendships, relationships with parents or children and within marriages and, of course, the current additional pressures of this time of 'lockdown' can bring family tensions painfully to the surface.

What we can know is that the love offered us all by Jesus is not 'time-limited'.

In a few weeks we will celebrate Christmas and we will remember that in the very first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew we are told that Jesus will be called Immanuel which means 'God with us' (Matthew 1 v 23). In the very last verse of that same Gospel we read the words of the risen Jesus saying to his closest friends, "And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28 v 20). These two statements, coming at either end of Matthew's Gospel, provide the 'bookends' to the message of the Good News of Jesus – God with us.

In these challenging days it is good to remind ourselves that God's love is offered to us all in Jesus, not only until we are 64 – but to the 'very end of the age'.

Yours in His service,

*Chris Blake*

## Worship Reflection

To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens! (Psalm 123 v 1)

Hymn (StF 107)

I sing the almighty power of God,  
That made the mountains rise,  
And spread the flowing seas abroad,  
And built the lofty skies.



## Prayer

Loving God, as you have opened your heart to us, so help us now and always to open our hearts to you in joyful response and grateful service.  
Amen.

Bible Reading (Psalm 103 v 1-12)

Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits – who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel: the Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbour his

anger for ever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

### Reflection

November is a month which encourages us to remember. We start the month as we 'Remember, remember the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, gunpowder treason and plot' before we move on to pause on Remembrance Sunday and on Armistice Day itself.

Remembering is important in the life of our nation, but it is also important in our faith. In the Psalm which is our reading today, the Psalmist writes, "Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits..". Those words come to us as an important encouragement in these days of difficulty and challenge. The Psalmist goes on in the following verses to speak of God's forgiveness, help, and compassion, and to rejoice in the fact that God's love has offered us forgiveness and transformation.

The chorus "Count your blessings, name them one by one. Count your blessings, see what God has done" may not be sung much today, but the words of that song, like the words of the Psalm, encourage us to remember God's love for us all.

In these days of the new 'November lockdown' we can all find encouragement as we 'Count our blessings'. Reading slowly through the words of Psalm 103 printed above is a good place to start.

### Prayers of Intercession

We pray especially this week for:

- A peaceful and orderly transition of power to the new administration in the United States.
- Scientists continuing research on potential Covid-19 vaccines.
- All who are finding the 'lockdown' more difficult in November than they did in the Spring when the days were longer.

Gracious God, we ask these prayers through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour. Amen

### Hymn (StF 97)

When all your mercies, O my God, My rising soul surveys. Transported with the view, I'm lost, In wonder, love and praise.

Final Prayer : To God who is higher than our highest thoughts, yet closer than our closest friend, be thanks and praise, glory and honour, this day and for evermore. Amen.

## Glimpses of God's Glory



You are invited to submit a photograph or photographs that you or someone you know has taken which could be described as a 'Glimpse of God's Glory'. Please include 100 to 150 words describing what the photograph or photographs mean to you.

This week's contribution is from Joan Playfair from North Camp.



Sometimes at night when I cannot sleep, I focus my mind on places that I've been to at home and on holiday abroad. I have countless beautiful memories, but there's one that easily comes to mind in terms of beautiful places I've visited. It was a long time ago and was somewhere in the West Country. We were walking in light woodland in Springtime and everything was fresh. There were buds bursting on the trees. Unexpectedly, we came upon a large spread of glorious bluebells. It was breath-taking, and as I stood drinking in their beauty and the quietness of the moment, I felt I was being reminded of how wonderful is God's world, and how much we take it for granted. I've been on countless walks, but on that occasion, I felt very especially that God was speaking to me. During the busy lives in which we're living, it is a reminder that our God is with us whatever we have to enjoy or to endure.