



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 7: Sunday 17th May 2020

Dear Friends,



Our kitchen window is getting rather crowded!

We have rainbows from our grandchildren and teddies (one mine and one Joy's - both almost as old as we are!) to help us remember to encourage our neighbours with signs of hope.

We have paper bunting to help us remember VE Day on the 8th May and (as Joy's father is from Guernsey and was evacuated from the island as a schoolboy during the war) we have a Guernsey Flag to help us remember the island's Liberation Day on May 9th.

And, in the bottom left hand corner, we have a palm cross and a painting of the empty tomb, (painted by Joy's brother) to help us to remember the Good News of Easter.

We think of each of these things with mixed emotions. We remember the cost and pain of warfare and of the current pandemic – and we remember the celebration of VE day and the bravery of today's 'front line' workers.

And similarly, it is as we reflect on the victory of the empty tomb that we are reminded of the cost of that victory that was made possible by Jesus on the cross.

So much to remember – no wonder the window is so full.

Yours in His service,

Chris Blake



Worship Reflection

May all the peoples praise you, O God;
May all the peoples praise you. (Psalm 67 v 3)

Hymn (StF 628)

Faithful one, so unchanging
Ageless one, you're my rock of peace
Lord of all I depend on you
I call out to you, again and again
I call out to you, again and again
You are my rock in times of trouble
You lift me up when I fall down
All through the storm
Your love is the anchor
My hope is in You alone

We have this
HOPE
AS AN **ANCHOR**
for the soul
FIRM & SECURE



Prayer

Living God, for your love beyond price and your goodness beyond measure, receive our praise. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Bible Reading (John 14 v 15-21)

'If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you for ever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me any more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realise that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.'

Reflection

In our Bible reading, Jesus is speaking to his closest friends. The tension is increasing, day by day, and it won't be long before Jesus is arrested and sentenced to death.

In this moment of crisis, Jesus speaks to his friends and offers them reassurance and hope. That reassurance and hope is rooted in the truth that they will not be left to face the future alone.

Although the word 'Trinity' doesn't appear in the Bible, the reality of the Trinity is seen time and time again in the Bible.

In these few verses from John's Gospel, Jesus speaks of the close relationship that exists between the three persons of the Trinity and of how, in the days ahead, his friends will know not only the love of the Father but also the presence of the Spirit of Truth. These are powerful statements.

The friends of Jesus will know the Holy Spirit with them as the 'Advocate'. Just as a barrister will defend and speak up for their client in a court of law, so the 'Holy Spirit Advocate' will defend and speak up for the followers of Jesus when times get tough. In addition to this promise, Jesus also tells his friends that the Father will adopt them into the family of the people of God. They will not be left as orphans to face the future alone.

These words of reassurance and hope are also for us today. We too are invited to know the love of the Father, to experience the presence of the Spirit of Truth and to rejoice that, because of Jesus' words of promise, we are not left to face the future alone. Even in the toughest of times, we can know that God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit has adopted all who trust in Jesus into his family.

Prayers of Intercession

In the power of the resurrection we offer our prayers to God. We pray for:

- Those who carry the painful memories of war and for whom the VE Day celebrations were a reminder of loss.
- Those who are headteachers, school staff or parents and who are anxious about the restarting of some primary schooling.
- For those we know who feel lonely and isolated and long to be with their families and friends once again.

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

Hymn (StF 503)

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven to earth come down;
Fix in us thy humble dwelling;
All thy faithful mercies crown!
Jesus, Thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love Thou art;
Visit us with Thy salvation;
Enter every trembling heart.



Final Prayer Living God, help us to live each day for you, so that your life may shine each day through us, to the glory of your name. Amen

The Methodist Church is encouraging us all to 'tell our stories'.



You are invited to choose a Bible or hymn verse, or perhaps a prayer that you have read or written, and to describe why that verse or prayer is particularly important to you. Contributions need to be no longer than 250 words.

This week's contribution is from Kayleigh Waldon who works as the Administrator at North Camp Methodist Church.

"I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13 v 5)

"The year 2019 was a pretty rough year. My mental health declined rapidly from traumas of childhood and adulthood interlinking with one another from triggers that I had not prepared for.

I pretended for a while, but really, I was suffocating. I prayed for disconnection to stop the pain; I was on a downward spiral, and I was unreasonably contemplating death as a resolution.

One morning I awoke from a dream singing a sentence I didn't recognise "Stay with me, darling" but my hardening heart rejected it. I flumped my way through the morning wishing to just be back in bed.

After dropping our two youngest to school I dragged my feet back to the car, started driving and listening to the radio. The man on the station was "bigging up" a brand-new release by Freya Ridings. The song was called 'Unconditional' and the first line was "stay with me, darling". I felt as though my soul had just drawn a breath. I burst into tears.

I knew Jesus was talking to me using this song saying "There's nothing you could say, that would make me go away, no danger you are in, and I wouldn't step in the way, you're not alone anymore 'Cause this love's unconditional".

It reminded me of the promise in scripture "I will never leave you nor forsake you" It was from that moment, strengthened by God, that I sought professional help and I have, since then, been on a journey of recovery and reconnection with Jesus who loves us unconditionally. Praise God."