



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 8: Sunday 24th May 2020



Dear Friends,

What a difference a year makes! Last year, in the ten days between Ascension Day and Pentecost, all the churches of our Circuit shared in a Prayer Pilgrimage which took us from Hartley Wintney to Alton, visiting each of the twelve circuit churches along the way. The route took us through some built up areas and out into the countryside and was about 45 miles in total. Over 100 people took part in the walk, and many others provided refreshments and transport to help us on our way.



The walk was part of our response to the 'Thy Kingdom Come' initiative which invited churches in many countries to share in prayer for the world and for their local communities. All those involved were also invited to pray for five individuals who did not yet know the love of Jesus for themselves.



To help us remember the five people that we were praying for, some of us wore bracelets of leather or string with five knots – one for each of the five people we were praying for over those ten days.

This year we won't be able to gather in large groups for similar prayer walks – but in these unusual days, when many people are reflecting on what is really important in life, you might like to spend the time between Ascension Day (May 21st) and Pentecost Sunday (May 31st) praying for our world and for your community – and for five of your friends.

Yours in His service,

Chris Blake

Worship Reflection

After he said this, Jesus was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. (Acts 1 v 9)

Hymn (StF 347)

Crown him with many crowns,
the Lamb upon his throne.
Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns
all music but its own.
Awake, my soul, and sing
of him who died for thee,
and hail him as thy matchless King
through all eternity.

Crown him the Lord of love,
behold his hands and side,
rich wounds, yet visible above,
in beauty glorified
All hail, Redeemer, hail!
For thou hast died for me;
thy praise and glory shall not fail
throughout eternity.

Prayer

Lord God, we praise you for your love and grace which reaches out to each one of us with each new day. May we worship you with our hearts and minds and serve you with our lives. Amen.

Bible Reading (Luke 24 v 45-53)

Then Jesus opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, 'This is what is written: the Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.'

When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them.



While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.

Reflection

Some years ago, I was with a group of Methodist Ministers who were being given a guided tour of York Minster, as part of a conference we



were attending in the city. At one point the tour guide invited us to look up and to see a particular gilded carving in the roof of the Minster. The carving represents the Ascension of Jesus which we celebrate this week. Around the edge of the carving there are images of Mary and the eleven remaining disciples, while in the middle we see only the soles of Jesus' feet.

We can never know exactly what the disciples saw and experienced when Jesus ascended to heaven, but it is good to be reminded that Jesus, in the words of the Nicene Creed, "ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father". Jesus is no longer limited by time or place but, as the risen and ascended Lord, He is with each one of us day by day.

Prayers of Intercession

During the ten days of the 'Thy Kingdom Come' prayer initiative, we especially pray for:

- the leaders of countries around the world that they might govern with the values of God's Kingdom
- our own country and community that the values of God's Kingdom might lead us in these days
- five people we know who do not yet know, for themselves, God's love made known in Jesus.

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

Hymn (StF 293)

All heaven declares, the glory of the risen Lord;
Who can compare, with the beauty of the Lord?
Forever He will be, the Lamb upon the throne
I gladly bow my knee, and worship Him alone

Final Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, may our lives as well as our lips proclaim you as King of kings and Lord of lords, to the glory of your name. Amen.

Cliff College – Festival at Home

The Cliff College Festival takes place over the late May Bank Holiday weekend.



Normally thousands of people gather on the beautiful Cliff College site to share in powerful worship, insightful seminars, events for all ages and a time of great fun and fellowship. During my time as Principal of the College, Festival was always one of the highlights of the College year. Festival 2020 will, of course, be different – but the current situation means that those of us with access to the internet can go to Festival without needing to travel up the motorway to Derbyshire. The Festival starts on Friday evening this week and continues through to the evening of the Bank Holiday Monday. The adult, young adult, children's and youth programmes for the weekend are available for download and can be found at <https://cliffcollege.ac.uk/cliff-festival/festival-guide>

The Story Project slot will be back next week and I'm looking for more contributions. Please choose a Bible or hymn verse, or perhaps a prayer that you have read or written and describe why that verse or prayer is particularly important to you. Contributions need to be no longer than 250 words.



For those without internet access, you are reminded that Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line. The free telephone line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044** – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.



The Methodist Church has set up a similar free phone service to provide prayers and news from the Methodist Church. Listen to a prayer: **0808 281 2514**. Listen to news: **0808 281 2478**



Bible Reading: © Biblica 2011. Prayers: Methodist Prayer Handbook © TMCP 2019. Some prayers taken from "2000 prayers for public worship" by Nick Fawcett. CCLI No 000295.