



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 45: Sunday 21st March 2021



Dear Friends,

I imagine that during these lockdown months, many of us have found ourselves watching a number of television programmes that, in a normal year, might not have attracted our attention.



One personal example of this is that over recent weeks, Joy and I, have been watching 'The Great Pottery Throw Down' on

Channel 4. Now, although we have in our home a number of pieces of pottery that friends have made, neither of us has much personal experience of making pottery. However, what makes this programme (and all the similar programmes involving baking, cooking, clothing design or dog grooming) interesting, is, of course, the people involved. We learn about them as we watch them face each week's new challenge.

I don't think that having watched the series is sufficient for me to become a good potter, but the programme has reminded me of the important lesson that all potters need to learn. That lesson is that when using the potter's wheel, the clay needs to be placed in the very centre of the wheel.

This task is called 'centering', and, if it is not done well, the process of 'throwing the pot' will end in failure as the pot begins to distort and fall apart.



As I think of that important lesson, I ponder the words of the reflective hymn by Michael Frye

*Jesus, be the centre
Be my source, be my light
Jesus*

*Jesus, be the centre
Be my hope, be my song
Jesus*

*Be the fire in my heart
Be the wind in these sails
Be the reason that I live
Jesus, Jesus*



Lent is a time to make sure that our lives have Jesus at the centre – for only in that way can Jesus shape our lives so that we become the people we were intended to be.

Yours in His service

Chris Blake

Worship Reflection

I will declare your name to my people; in the assembly I will praise you. (Psalm 22 v 22)

Hymn (StF 361)

Man of Sorrows! What a name
For the Son of God who came
Ruined sinners to reclaim!
Alleluia! what a Saviour!

Prayer:

Search us, O God, and know our thoughts.
Examine us and reveal our faults
Cleanse us and make us new
Touch us and make us whole
Equip us and give us strength
Meet us and speak your word
Hear us and accept our worship
In Jesus' name. Amen

Bible Reading (John 17 v 9-19)

I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰ All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. ¹¹ I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of^[b] your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. ¹² While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be

fulfilled. ¹³ 'I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. ¹⁴ I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. ¹⁵ My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸ As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

Reflection

This week's Bible reading is taken from John's Gospel chapter 17. In these verses we hear Jesus praying for his disciples. The gift of knowing that, as followers of Jesus, we follow the one who is praying for us, is perhaps a gift that we too easily overlook.



The Lectio 365 prayer app which I use as part of my daily prayers, provides 10 minutes or so of prayer and reflection on a passage of scripture each day. There is a basic structure to each day's reflection so that as you listen you can relax into the pattern of the prayers and become more fully open to hearing God speak through what is said.

During these Lenten weeks, the Lectio 365 pattern has been reflecting on suffering and the question of unanswered prayer and one of the repeating prayers used in the daily reflections has been this:

Holy Spirit, when I feel alone, I am comforted because You pray with me. When I am silenced by suffering, I am grateful that You pray through me. And Jesus, when I feel helpless, I am strengthened because You're with the Father, right now, praying for me.

When we face challenges and difficulties, we can find comfort and hope in the amazing and wonderful truth that Jesus is praying for us.

Prayers of Intercession

This week let us pray especially:

- For those who work in the NHS and the care sector that they will know they are appreciated and valued.
- For the family of Sarah Everard, for all families who grieve the loss of a family member in tragic circumstances, and for all who feel unsafe in their communities

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

Hymn (StF 446)

I will offer up my life in spirit and truth
Pouring out the oil of love, as my worship to you
In surrender I must give my every part
Lord, receive this sacrifice of a broken heart

Final Prayer: Gracious God, we want to live for you, love like you, trust in you and walk with you. Teach us your ways and help us follow where you lead. Amen.

Re-opening of our Church Buildings

The Church Councils at Aldershot and North Camp have met and have both agreed that our churches will open when the country enters what is known as 'Stage Three'. Currently the first Sunday in 'Stage Three' will be May 23rd. This is Pentecost Sunday which would be a very special day to start meeting together in our buildings once again. However, if the start of 'Stage Three' is delayed, then our re-opening plans will also be delayed.



General Church Meetings: Dates for your diary



The following dates for General Church meetings have been agreed. All are welcome.

Aldershot: May 5th at 7.30 p.m.

North Camp: June 16th at 7.30 p.m. (to be followed by the Church Council)

The Aldershot meeting will be by Zoom. A decision as to whether the North Camp meeting will be in person or by Zoom will be made nearer the time.