



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 43: Sunday 7th March 2021



Dear Friends,

In our home we have a number of large and beautiful paintings that Joy has painted over the years. The paintings remind us of particular times and of particular places where we have lived.

Joy painted the first in the serries when we were living in Cornwall. Joy used a selection of colours which worked well with the curtains and wallpaper in the room where the painting was to be placed.



The painting symbolises the Cornish cliffs and beaches and shows the sunset over the Western horizon.

In the picture which Joy painted when we were living in the Peak District, she used the same



colours to symbolise the Derbyshire drystone walls on the edge of the River Derwent, with the beautiful rockface which overlooks Cliff College shown in the distance.

More recently Joy has taken the same colours and produced a painting in a similar style to describe our experiences over the last year. Before the lockdown, Joy had been leading face to face 'Singing for Wellbeing' sessions for the



MHA Live at Home Scheme at North Camp and in Alton. Since the lockdown she has been continuing to run the sessions on

'Zoom' as a volunteer. Music, therefore, is part of the image. But alongside the representation of music, there is a candle. This represents the candle that we have had in our kitchen window during recent dark evenings as a practical affirmation that the darkness of the lockdown will not last forever.

These pictures are, for us, a reminder that wherever we have lived, and whatever experiences we have faced, the light of God's love has continued to shine into this world and into our lives.

Joy and I pray that, as we all continue to wait patiently for the easing of the lockdown restrictions, each one of us will know the light of God's love shining into our lives.

Yours in His service

Chris Blake

Worship Reflection

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19 v 14)

Hymn (StF 455)

All my hope on God is founded;
he doth still my trust renew,
me through change and chance he guideth,
only good and only true. God unknown, he alone
calls my heart to be his own.

Prayer: Sovereign Lord, for your blessings too many to number, and your goodness too wonderful for words, we give you our praise. Amen.

Bible Reading (John 2 v 13-22)

When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he



scattered the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, 'Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!' His disciples remembered that it is written: 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'

The Jews then responded to him, 'What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days.' They replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?' But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

Reflection

The description of Jesus turning over the tables of the money changers in the Temple is a very powerful one.



Matthew, Mark and Luke record this event as happening at the start of Holy Week, just a few days before Jesus is crucified. Interestingly John places this event at the very start of Jesus' three years of active ministry.

There are various suggestions offered to explain this difference, such as the fact that while John's Gospel records a number of visits of Jesus to Jerusalem, the other three Gospels only record the visit which took place over what we call Holy Week at the end of Jesus's life. Alternatively it may be that Jesus reacted in this way to what he saw in the Temple on more than one occasion. What is clear is that, for all four Gospel writers, it is the meaning of the event rather than the precise timing of the event which is of real importance.

Perhaps John places this event so early in his Gospel account because he wants his readers to know from the very start of his Gospel that Jesus'

arrival on the scene is challenging the religious traditions of the time with his message of grace.

The system of sacrifices in the Temple may initially have been a helpful reminder of people's dependence on God, but the system had been abused by the traders and moneychangers who had taken advantage of the pilgrims who had come to the Temple to offer their sacrifices.

The arrival of Jesus meant that no longer would this sacrificial system be needed. In Hebrews 9 v 28 we read, "Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many". His death on the cross was the sacrifice which means that all can know God's forgiveness and grace. What is required of us is not the offering of repeated animal sacrifices in the Temple, but the offering of our lives in thankfulness for what Jesus has already done for us.

Prayers of Intercession

This week let us pray especially:

- For the 'Covax' process which is working for the fair distribution of Covid vaccines around the world.
- For patience as we wait for the time when it will be safe to meet with family and friends once again.

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

Hymn (StF 501 v 2)

Help us, O Lord, to live
the faith which we proclaim,
that all our thoughts and words and deeds
may glorify thy name.

Final Prayer: Loving God, teach us to walk with you, confident that, although we do not know the way, you will guide our footsteps to our journey's end. Amen

Precious Memories



I've now come to the end of the 'Precious Memories' already sent to me. If you have an article for this part of 'The Anchor' then please send it to me at

chris.blake@methodist.org.uk so that I can include your article in a future edition.

Bible Reading: © Biblica 2011. Some prayers: Methodist Prayer Handbook © TMCP 2019/2020. Some prayers taken from "2000 prayers for public worship" by Nick Fawcett. CCLI No 000295.