



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 20: Sunday 30th August 2020

Dear Friends,

I'm sure that, at one time or another, most of us will have had a 'well that's a new one on me' moment. I had one of those times last weekend when Joy and I were driving to Newport Pagnell to visit a relative. Not far from her home we found ourselves overtaking a robot delivering groceries.



This picture shows one of those robots in action. People order their groceries on-line and

someone in the supermarket puts what the person has ordered in a bag and places the bag into the robot. The robot then sets off to the person's home to deliver their shopping. The robot we saw was driving along the pavement but then stopped and seemed to be deciding if it was safe to cross the road!

When we see such examples of 'Artificial Intelligence' it's easy to begin to think that one day machines will do everything we do, but of course there is much more to being a human being than having the intelligence to get shopping from one place to another.

When Jesus was asked which was the greatest commandment, he replied by saying, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22 v 37). In doing so Jesus was not only quoting from the Old Testament, but he was also reminding us that, as human beings created by God, we are more than just minds – we are hearts and souls as well.

One day robots may be delivering all our shopping, but they will never replace the entirety of what it is to be human being, made in the image of God. As human beings we are invited day by day to offer our whole selves, hearts and souls and minds, as the followers of Jesus.

Yours in His service,

Chris Blake

Worship Reflection

Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. (Psalm 105 v 1-2)

Hymn (StF 608)

All praise to our redeeming Lord,
Who joins us by his grace,
And bids us, each to each restored,
Together seek his face.

Prayer: Lord God, as we worship you and as we reflect on the words of the Bible, may we know you meeting with us. Amen

Bible Reading (Romans 12 v 9-18)



Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practise hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Reflection: It was the American doctor and author, Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. who, in the nineteenth century, first used the phrase "There are some people who are so heavenly minded that they are no earthly good".

It's a clever phrase but doesn't really describe what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Saint Paul, when writing to the Colossians tells them to "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things" (Colossians 3 v 2) but the phrase 'earthly things' is referring to aspects of life such as the quest for financial gain or physical comfort. The verses from Paul's letter to the Romans, which are from one of this week's set readings, make it clear that although we are to 'set our minds on

the 'things above', our lives as the followers of Jesus are to be lived out in very practical terms as we care for others in very 'down to earth' ways.

It is challenging for us to read slowly through those verses from Romans and to allow each phrase to speak to us about how we are each called to show God's love to others in such practical acts of love and grace.

Prayers of Intercession

We pray especially this week -

- For all involved in the world of education as the new school term begins
- For our churches as they work towards the reopening of our buildings
- For those who face increased delays as they wait for hospital appointments.

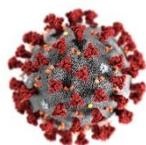
Gracious God, we ask these prayers through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour. Amen

Hymn (StF 504)

May the mind of Christ my Saviour
Live in me from day to day,
By his love and power controlling
All I do or say.

Final Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, live in our hearts, fill our souls and renew our minds so that we may know and love you fully just as you know and love us. Amen.

Re-Opening of our Church Buildings



Last week the Church Councils of our churches at Aldershot and North Camp met using video conference technology to discuss the re-opening of our Church buildings. It was agreed that we would work towards reopening for worship at North Camp on Sunday 13th September for a service starting at 10.30 a.m. while the Church at Aldershot will open for worship the following Sunday, 20th September, again at 10.30 a.m.

It is clear that worship will look and feel very different from what we were able to share in before the lockdown, but in both churches the Risk Assessment teams are working hard to make the services as safe as possible. Each

church will be informing its own members of the practicalities of the Sunday arrangements relating to their particular building. Rev Chris Blake will be leading the first service in each of our churches.

It is planned that, for the foreseeable future, North Camp and Aldershot will continue with just one service on a Sunday. Clearly the Risk Assessment teams will continue to monitor the situation and will respond to any changes in the guidance offered by the Government and by the Methodist Church.

Restarting our physical gatherings for worship will give many of us mixed feelings of excitement and apprehension. Please continue to pray for the Risk Assessment teams and the Church Stewards in each of our two churches as they put in place the practical measures required for our buildings to re-open.

The Prayer Course

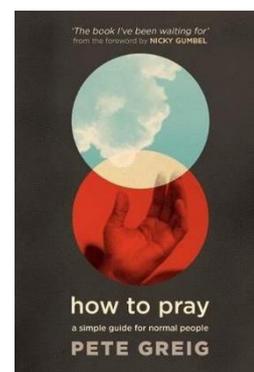
While we continue to be limited in the ways in which we can physically meet together, the use of 'Zoom' gatherings has enabled those with computer access to continue to meet together for worship, fellowship and prayer.



During September, October and November, those who are able to join through Zoom are invited to join in 'The

Prayer Course' which has been prepared by Pete Greig and others from the 24/7 prayer movement. The course has been adapted for use on-line and is based on the book "How to pray – a simple guide for normal people". The course works through the various aspects of prayer that are seen in the Lord's Prayer.

The first session of this eight-week course will be held on Tuesday 22nd September. More details of the course, the full list of dates and information about how to join the course will be circulated in early September. The course is free although participants are encouraged to buy the book which goes with the course.



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