



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 41: Sunday 21st February 2021



Dear Friends,

If this was a quiz, my question this week would be to ask, 'What is the link between the Aldershot Garrison and Swindon Town Football Club?'

One answer might be to say, "Chris Blake, the Minister at North Camp and Aldershot was born in Swindon and has been supporting their football team for over 50 years". That would be a correct answer – but not the only one. The answer that I have in mind is the fact that when, in 1960, Swindon Town Football Club wanted a new stand along one side of the ground, they bought a second-hand grandstand from the Aldershot Military Tattoo! Here it is in the photograph below.



As a lad I can remember standing on the terraces there, and on special occasions, sitting in the seats on the upper level. That upper level, with its wooden seats and flooring, was closed to the public after the Bradford City fire in 1985 and the stand was later replaced by a more modern concrete stand – but it does perhaps say something about the football team that I support, that, when I was growing up, our largest grandstand was not new but was second-hand!

As we start our journey through Lent, it is perhaps good to make sure that what we call 'our' faith is not actually 'second-hand'. We are, of course, thankful to God for those who have shared their faith with us – but we need to make that faith our own. We are each invited personally to respond to the call of Jesus to discipleship and we are each invited personally to receive God's forgiveness as we accept that Jesus died on the cross for us.

As we travel through Lent, I would encourage you to make this a special season of Bible reading, prayer and reflection as you journey with Jesus to the cross. Jesus's death was for each one of us personally and there really is no such thing as 'second-hand' faith.

Yours in His service

Chris Blake

Worship Reflection

Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths. Lead me in your truth, and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all day long. (Psalm 25 v 4,5)

Hymn (StF 236)

Forty days and forty nights
You were fasting in the wild;
Forty days and forty nights
Tempted and yet undefiled.



Prayer:

Lord God, you are always forgiving, always loving and always offering new beginnings. We bring you our praise and thanksgiving, this day and for ever. Amen

Bible Reading

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.' Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Man shall not live on bread alone."' The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, 'I will give you all their authority and splendour; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. If you worship me, it will all be yours.' Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Worship the Lord your God and serve him only."' The devil led him

to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down from



here. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." Jesus answered, 'It is said: "Do not put the Lord your God to the test."'

When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time

Reflection

Computers these days often include 'spell checking' software. If you mis-spell a word, the computer will suggest what it 'thinks' you intended to write! A little while ago I was meaning to write 'Support bubble', but I must have made a mistake and the computer replaced it with 'Support Bible'. This started me thinking about way in which the words of the Bible can support us in our daily lives.

When Jesus was in the wilderness, at the very beginning of his three years of active ministry, He responded to each of the temptations with a Scripture quotation.

As we travel through Lent, and as we face the ordinary temptations of our daily lives, we can find help and strength as we turn to the pages of our 'Support Bibles' and prayerfully reflect on what we read.

Prayers of Intercession

This week let us pray especially:

- For our communities, that the vaccine rollout would not lead people to be complacent about social distancing
- For each other, that we might all use the season of Lent to grow in our faith.

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

Hymn (StF 235)

Christ our Redeemer knew temptation's hour
in desert places, silent and apart;
and three times over met the tempter's power
with God's word written, hidden in his heart.

Final Prayer:

Sovereign God, give us strength to love you,
serve you and stand firm for you, even when faith
involves sacrifice and commitment entails cost.
Amen.

Precious Memories

You are invited to submit a short article describing a significant person, place or event under the heading of 'Precious Memories'. You might like to describe how that person, place or event was significant in your own faith journey.

This week's 'Precious memory' is from Rachel Burrell, the Families Worker at North Camp.

The last holiday I had was back in February of last year. During that half term, we had two storms pass by but, having only ever holidayed in Britain as a family, a little bit of weather never stopped us!



On one of many beautiful walks, we headed out to Towan

Head, a headland at one end of Fistral Beach near Newquay in Cornwall. Although the worst of the storm had passed, the wind speeds were still very high. Standing at the top of this outcropping, surrounded on three sides by nothing but open water and clear blue sky, the wind was so strong you could lean on it. The wind was loud too, and it drowned out the noise of the other people gathered there.

I felt really close to God: close to the beautiful world he had created stretching out in front of me, close to his power and his might as the wind roared in my ears, and close to his hands and his heart as an invisible force kept me upright. For somewhere so turbulent, I felt a real sense of calm.

It was a powerful reminder of the presence of God: the one we lean on when standing on the precipice.