



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 53: Sunday 11th July 2021



Dear Friends,

This will be the final edition of 'The Anchor'. The first edition was produced for Palm Sunday 2020 at the start of the first lockdown. Over the last 15 months, with breaks only for holidays, and when I required eye surgery, the Anchor has tried to provide weekly material for prayer and reflection.

At the time of writing, it seems that there will be a significant easing of the lockdown restrictions from July 19th, a date which coincides with the day of the Circuit Farewell Service which will mark the end of my five years here, and so it seems appropriate to make this edition of 'The Anchor' the last.

You will perhaps remember that the name 'Anchor' was intended to remind us of the two churches who receive the mailing, Aldershot (A) and North Camp (NC). We thought of a range of words containing these three letters before settling on 'Anchor' as a reminder of the words found in Hebrews 6 v 19 , **"We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul....."** and I have been encouraged to hear from those receiving the mailing each week that they have found it to be a reminder of the anchor of our faith that we find in Jesus Christ.

This 'final edition' is different in that I want to introduce Gina and Philip to you as they take over the oversight of North Camp and Aldershot respectively. I asked each of them to write a short introduction to themselves and to provide a photograph to go alongside what they have written. I leave the Circuit knowing that you will be inspired by their leadership and safe in their care.

As many of you know, Joy and I are moving to a house provided for us by the Methodist Ministers Housing Society. It is on the northern outskirts of

Poole, not far from the road to Wimborne. We previously lived in Verwood, which is about 15 miles away from there for 11 years between 1990 and 2001 and so we will be moving to an area which is, to some extent, familiar to us.

In this final edition I want to thank my wife Joy, and also Kayleigh and Rachel from North Camp, who all helped produce 'The Anchor' each week by 'proof reading' and improving what I had written. Kayleigh deserves a special 'thank you' for thinking up the name 'Anchor'.

Clearly, the last 15 months have been really challenging for us all and, as I come towards retirement, I am very aware that the lockdown, combined with my eye surgery, has meant that I've not been able to do what I would have hoped to do in my final months in full time Ministry. I've not been able to visit people in their homes and we haven't been able to meet together as we might have done, but, during these unusual months, you have been much in my thoughts and prayers.

Having spent the previous 15 years away from Circuit ministry as a Chair of District and College Principal, I have valued the opportunity to be involved in local church life once again for my final appointment. Thank you all for the welcome and support that you have given Joy and myself throughout those five years. We pray that you will continue to trust in Jesus as a 'sure and steadfast anchor of the soul'.

Yours in His service

Circuit Service.

An open-air Circuit Service is being planned for Monday 19th July to say farewell to Chris and Joy and to celebrate the achievement of five newly accredited Local Preachers. Assuming that Covid restrictions are lifted the previous day, we plan to gather to sing and without numbers being limited. The service will be held at 'Little Oakley', Boundary Road, Dockenfield, GU10 4EU (not far from Alice Holt Forest). The service is due to start at 7.00 p.m. and the garden will be open from 5.30 p.m. – do bring a picnic and meet others before the service. If the weather is wet, the service will take place at North Camp Methodist Church. Tickets are not required, but, to help with planning, please let one of the Church Stewards know if you are expecting to be at the service.



Introducing: Rev Gina Hoff



Hello Everyone,

My name is Gina, I am presently the minister at Frimley Green, Cove and The Chapel at Ash Vale and have been in post since 2015.

I am married to Adrian and we live in Mytchett, which isn't too far from North Camp. I have four grown up children and three grandchildren who I love spending time with. I enjoy walking, swimming in the sea and gardening. I also enjoy being creative and take part in the Wintershall productions whenever possible. Recently I became joint chaplain for 'Green Christian' and I am supporter of Fairtrade and all it stands for.

I am looking forward to working alongside my additional church family at North Camp. There are big shoes to fill following Reverend Chris's retirement, however I'm confident we will get along just fine with our faithful God and the wonderful North Camp team on our side.

Looking forward to being with you all soon.

Every blessing,

Gina

Gina will be taking over oversight of North Camp from July 20th. You can contact Gina by email on ginahoff92@googlemail.com or on 01252 517045



Introducing: Rev Philip Simpkins



Dear Friends,

We are so grateful to Chris for his ministry amongst us and wish both Chris and Joy God's blessing as he retires.

I feel privileged to be asked to have pastoral care and oversight at Aldershot in the coming year and to get to know you more as we share in the life and work of the church.

Coming from a farming & landscaping background and being brought up in a village called Luckington, in North Wiltshire I followed a sense of calling into ministry. Having then attended theological college I became a Lay Worker in East Yorkshire before candidating for the presbyterial ministry. My first appointment was in Bude, Cornwall and we have since served in a number of circuits over the last 25 years, moving to Alton in 2017. I am married to Angela who works within a Pre-school setting and we have two adult sons, Dan working as a camera technician in London and Luke doing a degree in Applied Theology at Moorlands College, Christchurch.

My love of both sport and gardening continues along with the shared pleasure of countryside walks.

Philip

Philip will be taking over oversight of Aldershot from July 20th. You can contact Philip by email on philip.simpkins@methodist.org.uk or on 01420 83167

Worship Reflection

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; for he has founded it on the seas and established it on the rivers. (Psalm 24 v 1-2)

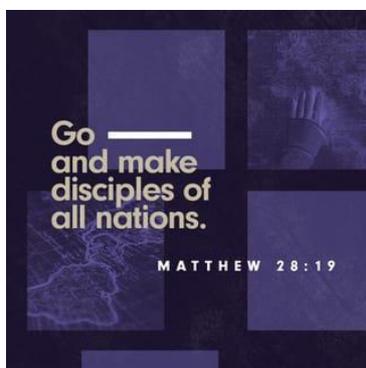
Hymn (StF 340)

Ye servants of God, your Master proclaim,
and publish abroad his wonderful name;
the name all-victorious of Jesus extol;
his kingdom is glorious and rules over all.

Prayer: Gracious God, who shared our humanity from birth to death so that we might share your eternity, receive our grateful praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bible Reading: Matthew 28 v 16-20

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."



Reflection

On the first Easter Day, Matthew tells us that the risen Jesus meets with the women as they run from the empty tomb, and instructs them to tell the disciples to go to Galilee where they too will meet him.

Our Gospel reading this week picks up Matthew's account at that point. The eleven disciples do what they have been asked to do. They travel to Galilee and there they encounter the risen Jesus for themselves. However, it is clear from Jesus' words, that their journey to Galilee is just the first of many journeys in which they will be involved. Through their travels, and through their preaching, the message that Jesus is alive will be proclaimed to 'all nations'.

Today, we follow in their footsteps. Like those first disciples, our first journey must be towards Jesus so that we can meet him for ourselves. Then, once again like those first disciples, we are invited to journey towards others with the message of Jesus' love for them.

For some people the call to "Go and make disciples of all nations" will take them far from home as they travel as missionaries to other parts of the world. For others, this same challenge will involve sharing their faith with those they work with, with those who live in their street and, perhaps most difficult of all, with those within their own families.

Our response to meeting with Jesus might take us around the globe, or it might take us across the street, but in both cases the task is the same – to share with others the message of God's love which is seen most clearly in Jesus and his death upon the cross. To share our faith with others can seem a real challenge – but, as we share with others how Jesus has changed our lives, we can find comfort, strength and encouragement in the words of Jesus who promises us, as he promised those first disciples, "I am with you always, to the end of the age".

Prayers of Intercession

This week let us pray especially:

- For opportunities to speak to others about Jesus and what Jesus means to us.
- For all who are anxious about what the future holds in a time of change.

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

Hymn (StF 341)

All for Jesus--all for Jesus,
this our song shall ever be;
for we have no hope, nor Saviour,
if we have not hope in thee.

All for Jesus--all for Jesus--
this the Church's song must be;
till, at last, we all are gathered
one in love and one in thee.



Final Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, help us to follow in your footsteps, walking where you might lead us and trusting in your guidance. Teach us that wherever you ask us to go, you will be walking with us, matching us stride for stride. Amen