

### **A motto**

Welcome to our reflection for Church without Walls

Here are some ideas of how to use these reflections:

*Pray that God will lead your thoughts.*

Sit comfortably, take a few deep breaths and relax.

Let your mind wander as you read the reflection. Write down your thoughts in a notebook. If you are busy, try and pick out something to take with you in odd moments during the day.

You may wish to memorise the Bible verse. Write it out and stick it up somewhere.

### **Bible Verse**

*The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth and even forevermore. (Psalm 121:8)*



### **Reflection**

Some of you will be familiar with Nymans, the National Trust garden in Sussex. The door in the picture opens, or once opened, into the house at the centre of the garden, now largely destroyed by fire. Above the door, engraved in stone, are the words DUM SPIRO SPERO, while I breathe I hope, or, more loosely, while there's life there's hope. It is a motto dating back to Roman times and still used by a number of families and organisations. Its positivity appealed to me, its sense of not giving up, but the mention of breathing means more to me now than it might have done a year ago. It also caused me to reflect on my own breathing – shallow and

anxious or deep and steady. I found myself enjoying the fresh, clean country air, enjoying the walk and feeling encouraged by being out and about. Perhaps we have all thought more about breathing recently, something we tend usually to take for granted. However it is our breath that Covid 19 threatens. We see images of those gasping for air and sometimes the relief as oxygen is supplied. We know there is much suffering for lack of breath.

We might wish to give thanks for the air we breathe and for our bodies so beautifully adapted to process it. You could fit the words of your prayer to the in breath and the out breath.

We might pray for those who are sick with Covid19, that their breathing might be eased and their lungs healed – also for the NHS Staff who care for them.

The house at Nymans is in ruins but around the door you see lush and rather exotic plants, all thriving – maybe not the kind of more traditional planting that would originally have been there but something new, hopeful and unexpected which has been chosen to give a new lease of life to that part of the garden.

What gives you hope at this time?

In these difficult days, where do you see signs of new, unexpected and hopeful things happening? Could you do something of that kind yourself, even in a small way?

The motto above the door is the statement of a principle or a particular focus; it says something about the people within, how they live, what they think, and how they wish the world to see them. If you could choose, what would your motto be? Spend some time thinking about the words you would have written over your door.

The picture of the door reminded me of Psalm 121. Our doors may be more often closed than usual at this time and going out may have a different feel to it.

What gives you peace when you are indoors at home?

What gives you courage and strength when you go out and about?

*Lindsay Farley*