

Old Leaves and New Buds

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

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:

(Ecclesiastes 3:1)



Reflection

Already our days seem quite autumnal. Last week, whilst starting to clear up in the garden, I noticed a lot of fallen leaves under the hedge. This took a moment of mental adjustment, thinking – fallen leaves? Autumn? Almost, but not yet! I then

realised that these were last year's leaves and noted my own expectations: once autumn is over the dead leaves are gone, fallen, swept up or crumbled away into the earth. Job done! But of course the processes of God's creation are far more subtle and continuous than that. Out of sight and while I have forgotten about them, the leaves are indeed decaying and will enrich the earth but in God's time and not in mine.

From this I began to reflect on life. You might ask yourself similar questions.

Are there things that can't be rushed?

Where do I need to be patient, to wait, for something to work out, to develop, to become clear?

What is happening out of sight?

Thinking along these lines, I stood up and noticed the lilac tree in front of me. Another surprise! Buds? Already? It's not spring yet! But they're there. Those buds will endure the storms of autumn and the frost and snow (should we have some) of winter and grow into beautiful scented blossom next spring. A wonderful sign of hope. I found myself thinking again how God's process of creation is underway, constantly, preparing and renewing.

So, learning to wait and hope, I got on with the gardening.

Where do you see signs of hope? Perhaps when you do not expect them.

Are there lessons you are learning from observing God's creation?

Look around you in the week ahead and allow something to surprise you.

Lindsay Farley

