

Looking through the Window

Like many others, my primary school was a Victorian building, with deliberately high windows so that children couldn't look out and daydream. Yet time spent doing 'nothing' is not time wasted, and as we turn to look metaphorically and literally through different windows in these long days, we can come closer to God.

The west window, the dying of the light...one where we tend to feel melancholy and sad. And while it's not good to spend too much time dwelling on the past and what might have been, there is a time for lament. It's OK to not be OK.

"Cheer up! Don't worry – be happy!" people may say to us. Yet if we are grieving over loss, we should acknowledge it. Maybe a person you loved, a job that fulfilled you, your health, a longed-for holiday, a special birthday, a new baby?

The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

If I turn to the south, I see my garden. Gardens that face south are favoured because they receive many hours of warm sunshine. Even in these dark, cold days there are people who warm our hearts by their love. They may be family members, people from church, other friends or neighbours. They may even be people we've never met before who say 'hello' as we pass on our daily walk, or people who make a doctor's appointment or a shop visit more pleasant with a cheerful word or smile. Who has brightened your days with a phone call, a letter, a good deed or a smile?

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Turn east next, to where the sun rises to herald each new day. We are living through a crisis, but that may not be all bad. It can be defined as a crucial stage or turning point in the course of something, when things can get worse – or better. For some, losing a job has given them the impetus to leave a field of work in which they had never been happy and follow a different path. Each day has twenty-four hours – what will you do with yours today? The snowdrops remind us of a new season of hope, a time of rebirth where everything looked dead.

*See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.*

Polaris – the North Star – is not the biggest or brightest star in the sky, and yet for centuries travellers have used it to set their course. I went out looking for it the other night and although I couldn't see it, I was sure it was there. Clouds had obscured it, and sometimes, especially now, we have to 'hang out in the fog'. There are many unanswered questions in my life and even when I can't see the way ahead I am learning - often painfully slowly - to trust in God. There are many things in the Bible that I don't understand, but I understand enough to know that God loves me so, so much and that come what may, he wants the best for me.

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Based on an idea by Rev. Shaun Lambert in 'A Book of Sparks'