

Staying Connected 80 – for 29th September 2021

This is the FINAL Staying Connected that John Randall has supplied since the start of the first lockdown – No 1 was dated 25th March 2020. Our sincere thanks to John for the choice of such appropriate words AND photos – almost all of them his own – throughout this period.



A secure refuge in God

As the autumn butterfly
seeks a hiding place to begin its winter rest:
so may we find a refuge in God.

As the autumn tree
sheds its leaves to begin its long sleep:
so may we lay down the labels we bear
and rest in the love of God.

As the autumn seed
falls into the earth that will nurture its growing:
so may we give ourselves to the God who brings life.

As the autumn rain
fills the lakes and streams:
so may the justice of God soak into our living.

As the autumn day grows short
bringing us the hours of winter dark:
so may we know the near companionship of God through the night. Amen.

Sunday Feature: How to Re-Build a City

This Radio 3 programme broadcast on 26th September caught my eye in the *Radio Times*. It tells the story of the re-building of Coventry after the blitz of the Second World War. Many of you will have visited the city and seen the link made between the ruins of the old cathedral and the new one that was created with its stunning stained glass and the Graham Sutherland tapestry. What I did not know was that the plans for rebuilding the city predated the war. This got me thinking about the rebuilding that perhaps we need to do as we emerge from the age of lockdowns. Recreating the past does not seem to be a sensible option with all the threats of climate change. And our faith too

needs re-creation. We need to be deeply rooted in the past without being imprisoned by dull repetition. We need new language, new pictures, new imagining, to communicate the unchanging gospel. I am hoping that this programme about architecture might offer us some food for thought. Here's the link: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0010155>



Lucy Winkett in the *Church Times* of 24th September 2021

'I met a priest friend in the street during August. We hadn't seen each other in person for two years or so. "How are you?" we both asked, and each paused as we decided whether we would tell the truth. He started bravely, just a little too cheerful, but, in among the "amazing opportunities", I also heard him say with a break in his voice: "I don't know if some of them will come back – have yours come back?"

... One of the (many) things that I've learned is how much the physicality of church matters to me. The muscle memory of the Eucharist, physically gathering to eat and drink, centres and stills us even while we know it is a broken-hearted celebration of love at the heart of all things. As the theologian Gustavo Gutierrez memorably commented, it matters where we put our bodies, because it mattered where God put God's body: on a cross.'

Prayer

Lord, teach us to see our world
as your love would make it;
a world where peace is built with justice
and justice is guided by love.

Let our wrestling
with your truth
bear fruit in this world
and bring your kingdom closer. Amen.

Hayle Estuary – Early Morning



Where is Palestine? A story of loss, inequality and failure

This is the title of a new Christian Aid publication as reported by Gerald Butt in the Church Times of 24th September. He quotes as follows:

‘Commenting on the Christian Aid findings, Hagai El-Ad, the director of B’Tselem, an Israeli NGO, said they should “serve as a wake-up call for UK policy-makers”. Without international action, Israel “will continue to enjoy blanket impunity while the world – the UK included – pretends that occasional *expressions of concern* will suffice. In fact, they never did, and they never will.’”