

Westminster College

IMAGINE

Blessing

Praise God
from whom all
blessings flow,

Praise him all
creatures here
below.

A Midnight Hymn

*Bishop Thomas Ken
(1637–1711)*

IMAGINE

... a regular
reflection from
me as I journey
with you in this
adventure that
is our life
together at
Westminster.

NEIL

Walking With Art

The prayer labyrinth is quite a spot. It sits quietly in the lawn and becomes a magnet for all sorts of people. Amidst the noise and bustle of Westminster and the semi-perpetual building site we currently enjoy it offers a space that deliberately is different. It creates a pathway that beckons us towards slowness. It turns prayer into footfall.

I love the fact that it is permanently there, an open invitation on offer to everyone if we but take time to respond to it. As Westminster's wider work across the URC continues to grow the labyrinth is one of the gifts we offer. Already we've had people come not only to pray and walk it, but also to explore its design in order to create their own. Recently we lit it with candles—a wonder!

Soon it will be joined by a com-

With thanks to God

I'm writing this on Saturday 27th August. In an hour or so I'll share with others in a service of blessing in our chapel for Hannah and Nathan, who were married yesterday. You'll know Hannah, or will get to know her, as our Domestic Manager.

panion on the back lawn. Having had to cut the art studio we originally planned for our development in order to keep costs to our budget, careful work means we can now reinstate it. We hope that well before this Christmas we'll finally get the art studio. It will be available to all of you as a place to be creative. It will enhance all we offer to folk here on sabbatical and to the wider church as we encourage people to enjoy being creative.

I see it as a fabulous complement to our other resources. Along with the profound gifts of knowledge and insight held in our library and archives we bring an embodied prayerfulness even more to the fore. Just as the chapel symbolizes prayer and worship in the heart of Westminster, so the labyrinth and art studio symbolize prayer made

It's a deep blessing that the college community can be part, not only of our saddest times, but also of our most joyous. In a host of ways God is blessing us. Today's celebration makes that very visible. But it is a constant thread woven into all we seek to be, to do and to become here.



physical through footsteps, in clay, and on paper and canvas.

The South African theologian John de Gruchy wrote superbly about art and theology whilst on sabbatical at Westminster in 1998. He sets a good direction for us: "There is...an urgent need for the visual arts to find their rightful place within the life and witness of the church. This is particularly so within Protestant churches, notably the Reformed..." (*Christianity, Art and Transformation*, p. 4). We are inviting such witness.

As I pray for Hannah and Nathan so I pray for all of our staff, students and friends across the world. We are blessed in you. May you be blessed by belonging here too.

