

Speaking Personally (part four)

This is the last time I'll write one of these to you all. We may get a chance for proper goodbyes, but who can say in these strange times? There can be only one theme this time; thankfulness.

Thank you for: cleaning our toilets; teaching classes; cutting the grass; cooking; tutor groups; sorting out keys; caring for archives; prayer; testing fire alarms; doing the post; responding to emails; welcoming visitors; caring for sabbaticals; paying bills; meeting potential students; making beds; keeping us safe; updating policies; studying together; reading the Bible; fixing broken locks; filing; working online; serving teas and coffees; advertising campaigns; creating social media output; pastoral care; taking minutes; birthday and Christmas cards; flowers; polishing door handles;

noticing when today is a bad day; community; essay supervisions; colleagues; juggling diaries and calendars; taking messages; graduations; committees; showing visitors around; handling bookings; laughter; sponsoring toilet-twinning; fixing up placements; keeping in touch with Church House; sorting books; kindness; finding a vision; singing; hope; recruitment; ordering stuff; databases; planning every redecoration; covering leave; one-to-ones; eating meals together; assessment; art; essential routines; fun; surprises; gardening; washing up; restocking the vending machines; cake and biscuits; celebrations; weeping with one another; belonging to the Cambridge Theological Federation; chatting; sharing bread and wine; redrafting documents; going to the bank; sorting the heating;



serving the wine; clearing the rubbish; keeping on time; responding to God's call; reading; seminars; timetabling; rest; research; spotting what we've missed; taking pride in doing things right; ambition wedded to humility; love; understanding limitations; never giving up.

For 15 years I've known Westminster and a lot of people who have been in and out of its life. The place and the people will never cease to be part of me, and part of my family's story. I am glad that this is so. More glad than I can say.

In the end, as in the beginning, I give thanks to God, whose place this is, whose world we serve.

“By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.”

Galatians 5: 22-23

A Prayer



In your risky and wonderful ways, dear God, you trust us. You trust us with people and places, visions and dreams, hopes and possibilities. You share our world. You dare us to care. We know these things because, in Jesus, you have shown them to us. In his living and loving, his dying and rising, you have revealed your true self. You have broken the power of sin and death and let us truly live. Give us the confidence of this

faith as we rebuild after all that this virus has done to undo the world and all of its people. Give us the energy and wisdom to make the choices we must make. Give us the tools to renew not just Westminster's life and work, but to help others do the same where they are. Hold us up when we stumble. Encourage us when we are weary. Teach us when we don't know what to do. Bless your aching world with peace and healing. And let this renewal be a sustained transformation for those who have least, who need most, whose lives were always most at risk from the hard world of yesterday. Let a better world be the legacy of COVID-19. In Christ's name. Amen.

