

Happy new year everybody! No, I haven't quite gone mad yet even if it does seem a strange time to be wishing you happy new year. As we move into September it is a new year for many people. For children starting or going back to school, moving up to a new class and a new teacher, or even going to a new school, having to make new friends and start all over again; for students getting ready to go to university, moving away from home, becoming independent and embarking on a whole new life. Farmers will have got the grain harvests in and will be preparing the land for next year's crops and for our Methodist friends, of course, it is the start of the new connexional year.

In church life in general it is full steam ahead, back to the hurley-burley of all the clubs and societies restarting after a summer break and soooo many church meetings of one sort or another. August was such a quiet month now we all have to hit the ground running. For me personally, however, this year is going to be very different. For much of August I have not been very well and it may be a little while yet before I can jump back into the normal, hectic church life. It goes very much against the grain, as it is for many Christians, to sit at home twiddling my thumbs is so very unnatural.

There is a reflection by St. Teresa of Avila with which I very much identify:

*Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.*

Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good.

Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world.

*Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
yours are the eyes, you are his body.*

*Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.*

Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

I hope that I will soon be able to once more play my part. Meanwhile it's over to you!

Happy New Year,
Janet.