

Learning in Lockdown #5

Body Building

by Rev Dan Balsdon, 30th August 2020 | read online at www.revdanbalsdon.com

I enjoy games, I love Lego - I enjoy building. Here's a car I made last week – even has a boot and opening doors.



If you've seen any of the previous learning from lockdown episodes over the last few weeks you may have noticed a bit a thread that kind of runs through, circling around people, relationships and our sense of togetherness as a community that belong to God.

I've been recognising that by God at work among us, our relationships, connectedness and love and care for one another have been a key source of strength that have carried us through lockdown and the pandemic so far as individuals, Christians and church community.

“church is not the building it's the people” is an age-old cliché – but it's been true for us in new ways as we have laid our buildings to rest for a while through lockdown.

What we've been doing through lockdown is body building – living as the body of Christ, caring for one another, nurturing relationships, leaning on one another.

And it's been beautiful! Wonderful! Magnificent! As I've sought to minister and serve congregations and communities at a distance, my heart has been warmed and my spirit refreshed each time I hear more of the ways congregations have heeded God's call and supported one other, cared for one another and show love to their streets and neighbours. The church has truly been a community for the community.

In the Bible, in the letter to the Ephesians we are reminded that through the love of God for us all, the church, God's people, are one. One body, one community, one church who worship the one God who is above all and through all and in all. (Ephesians 4:2-6)

The letter goes on:

But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Ephesians 4:15-16

The way I've witness God's people supporting one another throughout this pandemic so far has shown just how important living as God's community is – living in and building one another up on love. Our love and care for one another has been a channel for the Holy Spirit to strengthen us with peace and love and endurance.

And it's also proven just how resilient God has made us – all humanity to be – and how resilient the body of Christ is. Christ who suffered at the hands of humanity, beaten, humiliated and murdered on a cross, knows what it is to suffer. And so as Christ knits the body of Christ together, Christ works within us to build us, challenge us and strengthen us for our living in the world.

Through the strength of Christ we have been able to bear so much these last months. Every corner of life as individuals, neighbourhoods and Christians community has been shaken. Yet worship has never ended, love has never ceased, hope has never disappeared from the horizon.

We may not have been able to use church buildings as we were used to, but we most certainly have had opportunity to keep the body building.

This experience challenges me for the future months and years of my ministry, but I think it challenges the whole body of Christ to reflect on how we emerge from lockdown and keep our focus on building God's kingdom, Christ's body, the church that is the community of Christ on earth, in love.

May our loving never cease, our hoping never wane, and our living as a community focused on God's kingdom, never end.

Reflect:

How will you help to keep the church focused on body building, building up in love, God's kingdom community on earth?

