

Saturday 1st September 2018



Every day a new journey

Although September is the ninth month in our calendar year, for many, September is the beginning of the year. For over eight million children and 438,000 staff members, the 1st of September is the start of the academic year. Across the country, children will be trying on new school uniforms, staff will busily be getting classrooms ready and many parents will be giving thanks that the long summer holidays are over.

Before I went into the ministry I was a primary school teacher. The beginning of September always came with a mix of emotions – excitement for all the potential that a new school year holds; trepidation at the as yet unknown challenges to be faced; and in many ways, anticipation for what could and would happen in the next year.

As Christians, every day of our journey is a little like the first day back at school. Every day there is the excitement of what the new day holds: Who will we meet? How will we feel God's presence? There is also a little trepidation: What challenges lie ahead of us? What obstacles are there to our faith today? But there is also anticipation, because anything could happen on our adventure with God today. I hope and pray that your adventure with God today is exciting, and that you feel God's presence with you, whatever challenges you face today.

If, like me, hymns speak to you, a well-known one to think about during your journey today with God would be *One more step along the world I go**, which asks God to journey with us. A more recent hymn, *Come with me, come wander, come welcome the world*** is written as Jesus inviting us to walk alongside him, and to see what happens when we do.

*Surprising God,
We praise you for the excitement of a new day,
with all its adventures and challenges.
We thank you that you bless us with your strength, hope and insight,
whatever we may face today.
May we see the world through your eyes,
with all its wonder and potential.
May we know your presence and guidance when we face obstacles or opportunities.
And as we journey on, to whatever this day brings,
may we go knowing that you walk beside us, every step of the way.
Amen*

* Sydney Carter, *Singing the Faith* 476

** John Bell and Graham Maule, *Singing the Faith* 462