

## **Reflections Caroline Shaw**

**3<sup>rd</sup> February**

Isolation round two, part way through now. As David is also isolating this time what better to do to fill time than sort the loft. What a job, so many memories and so taking much longer as I have to sit and read or look at photos. But it does feel good to have a clear out.

Trying another poem.

Standing here this morning  
with a very heavy heart.  
Looking at the world around  
and thinking where is GOD!  
Then taking just a moment  
to reflect on what I see  
all this beauty surrounding me.

For our Lord is here  
He is everywhere.  
He is living and loving.  
He is all around.

Sitting in the evening  
reflecting on the day  
I notice all that's been achieved.  
and thank God for being there.  
A wander round the garden  
a phone call from a friend  
Jesus is Lord, surrounding it all.

For our Lord is here  
He is everywhere.  
He is living and loving.  
He is all around.

**21<sup>st</sup> February**

We are moving towards spring, the snowdrops look lovely and the daffodils are beginning to grow tall, the nights are starting to draw out which is always nice.

The vaccine for covid 19 is rolling out nicely now giving hope that we will soon be able to meet together again, it has been a very strange and challenging year for people, and we have all had to adapt our lives in some way. Some of us will have been reflecting on 20 year ago when foot and mouth took hold and we again had to change and adapt. These times are hard but with God in our lives we have a hope for better times and a belief that throughout it all He cares deeply. His love for us remains constant.

Other challenges in life happen and sometimes it can seem only to us and we can ask why?  
I have felt a bit like this just lately, my own health scare, my dad's battle over the last year and again issues since his vaccine, my children getting the virus, and this last week my nieces little boy Oliver (2-year-old) pulling a pan of boiling water over himself and requiring the air ambulance and the brilliant staff at Carlisle hospital.  
I have said "why me?" when praying.  
But I also know that we have to keep strong, have faith that our Lord can and does hold us close. He sends what he knows we can cope with and gives the strength to carry on.

These challenges are a bit like Winter, a bleak and dismal time of year with challenges of cold weather, snow and ice. Having to defrost pipes in sheds, or drive on roads we find a challenge, extra costs for fuel which can sometimes mean for some a choice of do we stay warm or do we eat. Thankfully I have never had to consider this, but it is real, and we see this in the need for our food banks.

Yet Winter can also be a time of real beauty, the snow makes things look beautiful, hard frosts make for some fantastic photographs, frozen water falls, trees covered in frost etc. And we celebrate the birth of our Lord in Winter, Christmas is a real chance to see the beauty of the season. We can give presents and also receive them.

So, my challenges at the moment are the beauty, I am well again and thankful that prayer was answered, I am able to move forward with my life.

Dad still with us and fighting each new challenge as it arises, I still have chance to talk with him daily, walk with him occasionally and share fantastic memories while making more memories. My children all recovered from the virus and making their way in life, a granddaughter who is growing and becoming a real little character, smiling and laughing and responding with love to her mum and dad.

Oliver, a very lucky little boy whose mum knew first aid and got cold water on him and stopped major burns.

The Lord was with me and is with me as I move forward. How wonderful.

Reading,  
Lamentations ch3 v 21-24

Hymn,  
200 Great is thy faithfulness.

So, as we begin a new week, some at work, some still on furlough and some retired. May the Lord bless us all in some way and if life seems a challenge just trust, pray and know you are held in our Father's arms.