

# Pruning the vine

I offer this reflection as we continue to explore over the next few months how we move forward.

John 15:1-6

If I'm perfectly honest God -  
I'm not sure I want to be pruned.  
I am afraid of what that might mean,  
Of what it will cost,  
Of what I might have to let go.

That dead wood – yes if I am honest I have to admit that I know it is dead wood,  
But its so familiar, so comfortable.  
And if you prune it away – where does that leave me?  
What if nothing grows back?  
What if it is all in vain?  
What if - after all the pruning -  
The cutting,  
The reshaping,  
I find that I am worth nothing.  
There is nothing there to give,  
Nothing worth saving.

My child,  
Remember this:  
I am with you always.  
You are a part of me and I am a part of you.  
I know you -  
I know what you can be.  
But you stubbornly cling on to those things that are of no more use to you -  
If only you would let go,  
If only you would could see what I see,  
Then we could embrace the future together:  
And new good healthy fruit could grow

You call us to be part of you  
But not just you, but a part of everyone else too.  
We struggle with what you call us to do.  
It's tough - how can we take on the struggles of others?  
Here in our local church  
We are trying

- So many challenges
- So many people to reach
- So few of us to do the work
- So many demands
- So few resources

We can't keep ourselves going - let alone take on someone else's struggles

My children

That's the point

You cannot do this on your own.

As much as those other congregations need you - so also you need them

As much as you struggle - so do they

But together you are stronger.

Together I can work through you:

Together you are the branches,

A part of me

But God how do we know what is of you

How do we know what you are pruning?

How will we know what we should let go of?

And how shall we know what to take up?

We try and we fail -

What if no one hears?

What if no one comes?

What if ...

What if...

There are just so many what if's.

My children

You know already what needs to go

You may not admit it – but you know

You may resist it but deep inside you – if only you dare to look

You will know what has to be let go of.

And as for taking up those things that are new

- Sometimes you will get it wrong

- Sometimes what you try will fail

- Sometimes it will be a struggle

But the only failure will be if you don't try.

If you try - if you step out in faith

If you allow my spirit,

If you allow my love,

To guide you:

Then fruit will grow.

Together the kingdom will grow.

**Rev Linda Day 2010**