

Phil's Picture Posts 6: Crossing places



Bolton Abbey, 2010

There is something fascinating and daunting about crossing a river on stepping-stones. It requires balance, agility, a need to keep an eye on bank ahead and on your feet below. When the stones are wet there is a danger of slipping, and the final step onto the far side may be taken with a feeling of relief. They can also be great fun, especially for the young! When the stones are as busy as this, you cannot easily stop or turn around. We all face moments of crossing in our lives in many different ways. Making such crossings can be a challenge, requiring an act of commitment, but reaching the other side can also bring its own reward.

Tyneside, 2006

The Gateshead Millennium Bridge has an unusual design – it tilts to allow boats to pass underneath, and hence its nickname of the ‘blinking-eye’ bridge. Nearby is the memorial to John Wesley, whose outdoor preaching demonstrated equal imagination in crossing boundaries of a different kind.





Hong Kong 2017

The quiriness of the Star Ferry contrasts with the skyscrapers and modern office block of Hong Kong Island. Here, the legacy of the old colonial power crosses paths with the modern communist state. The recent protests for greater democracy show the tensions that this situation brings.

Bingley, 2013

The crossing at Beckfoot offers a choice of either bridge or ford. My immediate inclination to use the bridge was replaced by a desire to wade the ford – ‘through and out’ rather than ‘up and over’.
Different forms of crossing offer different kinds of experience.



To think about: The name of our city highlights a point of crossing, as the ‘Broad Ford’. To cross the ford today, near to the Cathedral, is an almost unnoticeable act, with the waters of the beck culverted and paved over. Amidst the diversity of Bradford however, there are plenty of other crossings that we could make in terms of our human and community relationships – reflect on some of the opportunities and challenges of living in a multi-cultural city today.

Next time: Rock of ages