



Dear Friends,

Yesterday Janet said; 'You have got fatter. You must have put on extra layers.'

This morning, snow. So that is why.

But now I can't think of such things without grieving for Ukraine – and beleaguered Russian soldiers too. Of course there have always been wars and there are Putins throughout the Old Testament, sometimes called 'God', (cf Numbers 33vv 52, 53, among many), but I can only think that the fact we have, try to have, an hour a day praying over Ukraine, has embedded this particular tragedy in my consciousness. I saw the very pretty street lights in Monmouth, and thought if only we could send the power we use across to the Ukraine. It reminded me of my children when small, if they didn't want something, would say, "Give my orange to the children in Africa who don't have them." If only we could.

Of course here in our corner of the Welsh hills we face nothing of the sort and have gone on much as before, but a permanent ache is there. Here the grounds flourish, we ourselves almost keep afloat, day by day. Sometimes like everybody else we have crises, like ending with both cooks sick and one of them having to cook just the same. Which I find hard to watch. We have beans growing in chapel (part of a different Advent wreath spread out on the floor in the sanctuary. Katharine wrote a lovely leaflet for Advent which I am still using.) I am also very aware that conflict starts in the human heart..... a propos of which we did do a course on Non violent Communication based on needs and feelings rather than shoulds and oughts. Interesting but takes time to assimilate. I like looking at that kind of thing though.

Katharine was re-elected Rev'd Mother, and her enormous energy and creativity have combined to produce a year of interest and celebrations in 2023, our hundredth year at Tymawr. Schedule on the website, lots of interesting people including my Goddaughter Cath, Pippa's daughter. www.tymawrconvent.org. In addition Rowan Williams is our warden and comes once a month, to nourish us. Our chaplain who really came on board when we closed, has lived and worked for decades in Wales, also nourishing us, a Sister from another community is coming to the end of 12 years of helping us grow and our Bishop Visitor, Bishop Dominic, so perhaps it is not just extra clothes that fatten me! For half a dozen ordinary women up a Welsh hillside, that's not bad!

Cath had a daughter this year, and at about the same time my other goddaughter had twins! Busy busy busy.

When Barnabas died so suddenly many of our family, who were fond of him, donated towards a lovely bench, it is just right, visible, and he liked to be visible, and you can see from it all the comings and goings, and he did like to know what was going on. In the picture are Vijay, beard and long hair, and Martin, beard and hat. Martin used to be the gardener and brought up his son and daughter at the lodge, Vijay is now bringing up his son in the same lodge. Martin comes over to work alongside Vijay generally once a week. Vijay has done magnificent and fascinating work, cultivating wild life and spreading the growing season throughout the year, planting hundreds and hundreds of trees. Lots of initiatives. But also tidy gardens and lawns have vanished, so not everyone approves.



Mair came to Tymawr this year. She sent a picture of a group that had been young Quakers together. Now they are middle aged Quakers ... and still friends.



Mair gets about, she is free! She sends me cards from nice places, mountains, sea Catrin's life is very different, centred round children, friends and work, and especially the family with a daughter in Sydney, who is finally home after 356 days at the hospital. But Catrin and Pete took their own family on a massive tour in West Australia with family. And now Carole is with them at the coast, so the kids are having a ball!



I missed my retreat at Wantage, covid got us. Same as everyone else! Maybe next year; I can't think that far ahead really. I am sure Wantage would let me come at another time but the person I had asked to take the retreat is moving....

Now it is Christmas week but you wouldn't know – we don't do anything Christmassy until we get there. Well Victoria would know because she has been madly baking.

We continue to be non-stop. I expect it is a good thing, someone said she would rather burn out than rust out. My cousin had a splendid 80th birthday party at which lots of relatives turned up. She lives near Wantage and I had been going to visit her but alas Ditto a lovely priest who lives nearby.

So as a lot of us are getting older and facing different issues, just as challenging, I wish you the very best for yet another busy year.

Something about God finding us in the busy-ness

Happy Christmas! Lizzie/Elizabeth

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