

Slaley January 2022

We have had a very quiet Christmas due to our grand daughter going down with Covid on Christmas Eve leaving Ray and me to celebrate on our own. As a result of not having a large meal to prepare on the day itself and very little washing up, I was able to sit back and relax, that is until it was time for our family quiz on Whatsapp.

As a result of all of this time to myself I was able to think and contemplate life when I was out walking. I thought about how our lives have changed considerably since we moved to Slaley in May 2018. Letting go of our former life, animals, sheep, our own land and so on and getting used to a different lifestyle. It has been a time of getting to know our neighbours and people living in and out of the village. Learning about these folk, understanding them, where they have come from, not just physically but mentally, spiritually as well. They knew or remembered our names much more easily than we remembered theirs, but I think they had the easier task.

Not having lived in a village for more than forty years this was all exciting for me. Being able to go out of the gate onto a proper road and meeting with other folk. At first it was just 'morning, how are you' then as we became better known we would have at first a tentative conversation that gradually become longer until these days when we are out with the dog it can take considerably more time than we anticipated.

This is great, God didn't mean us to live in isolation but to belong to a community where we could love our neighbours giving them help when they needed it and receiving help when needed. Recently in and around Slaley there have been many calls for support for those who are suffering.

The churches in the Moorland Group have also welcomed me as a Reader hence attending five different churches during the week before Christmas.

During lockdown I suppose I have looked back on our 'old life' at Apperley. When problems have arisen in the house remembering all the hard work we put into our house there. When we started with a shell and worked for years to make it into a comfortable home. The land we used to have, the horses and the sheep, lambing times I have missed but God knew what he was doing when he sowed a seed in my mind that it was time to move on, we are getting older (as is everyone) and a house in a village, which is what we were both drawn to, was the best option for us. Not that we would have wanted this five or ten years ago but it seemed right for us now.

Sometimes it is hard to know what God wants us to do, but we have to trust and hope that we are making the right decision when making life changing decisions. Only time will tell, but if we feel good about something, that things fall into place, I usually take these signs as affirmation that this indeed was what we were being lead to do.