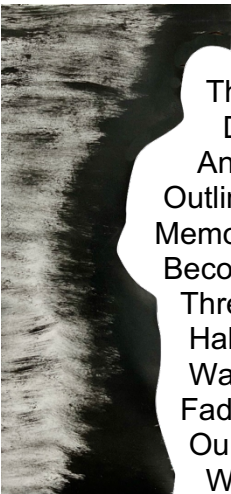


From Stuart, Vicar of St Gwyddelan's

September comes with its own sense of melancholy. Our cats are down to one and children none (though they have long been beyond that description.) Still, I'll make the long journey to deliver essential items to a student house in Cardiff. My mind drifts to an alternative Welsh travel guide, 'Nid ar yr A470'. Though summer feels like it was done weeks ago the weather seems like it might try to rally for a mild Gŵyl Bach Mihangel. The old St. Michael's church is our host on 29th September at 6pm for the service, then Songs and Violin to raise our spirits from the excellent Cass Meurig. The old Celtic seasons are just about holding their own so we are expectant of the last dance of colourful leaves. The trees slowing for their winter sojourn, knowing that they will be roused by the warming of the earth. This has now taken a dual meaning in our lifetimes. 1.5deg seems so small, yet so vital and the trees might yet be our salvation. Both cherishing them and thinking in their superior lifespans rather than our short ones.

All this brings us to the season of Saints and Souls. The project at Bryn-y-Bedd encourages us in our remembrances of those whose lives have passed. We're better at remembering than preparing. (There are plans for a Caffi Colled, which sounds much gentler in Welsh than the 'Death Cafe' to talk about death and dying.) A lesson we ought to have learnt by now from nature who knows that life comes full circle. The Celtic year begins marking death, yet life is to come from this in glorious resurrection at springtime. It cannot happen without. On Sunday 5th November at 11am we'll gather at St. Gwyddelan's church to remember those who have shared our own lives, and died. We'll gather names as fallen leaves to compost together - symbolic of the natural regeneration as one poet put it in a prayer 'let this dark grief flower.'



The shadows shine
Darkly behind all they were
An imprint of their lives upon our own
Outlines remain yet nothing inhabits the space
Memories on an ink pad never refreshed
Become background noise to the daily clamour
Threads all but gone yet woven still
Half remembered conversations drift
Waking dreams of lives entangled till
Fading echo's draw away
Our past theirs forever
What is gone. Is gone. No more.