



Christmas 2016

Dear Friends & Family,

In this season as we celebrate the coming of the Christ child, it is good to be reminded of the qualities of wise men and wise rulers. We need to be vigilant and active to promote compassionate communities and government, and not let ugliness prevail. Needless to say, I am not happy with the direction this election is taking our country. May God inspire each of us to work for peace and the common good.

It has been a quiet year for me, except for the graduation of both my grandchildren. I traveled with Mark and Jeanne to Northfield for Emily's graduation from St. Olaf College the last weekend in May. It was a



lovely outdoor graduation ceremony. No rain in the forecast. Oops! There was a good shower, but we survived! Now Emmy is a PhD candidate in Mechanical

Engineering at Iowa State in Ames, with a concentration in

wind energy. She has a two year NSF fellowship.

After the long trek to Minnesota, the next weekend was just as hectic for us womenfolk, as I drove to Cleveland, and the three of us drove to Cincinnati Thursday for a PEO convention, and then back to Cleveland for Will's graduation from high school Sunday afternoon. On the way to Cincy we picked up a 6 inch spike in one tire! Thank goodness for smart phones – Emmy found a truck repair place nearby



The spike!

and they had us back on the road again quickly. They were just waiting for us! Will is in his first year at the Cleveland Institute of Art, and plans to major in Industrial Design.



Kris, Will, Emily, Mark, Jeanne after graduation ceremony

Psalm 72

A Prayer for God To Guide and Help the King (Pres.)

- ¹ Please help the king to be honest and fair just like you, our God.
- ² Let him be honest and fair with all your people, especially the poor.
- ³ Let peace and justice rule every mountain and hill.
- ⁴ Let the king defend the poor, rescue the homeless, and crush everyone who hurts them.
- ⁶ Let him be as helpful as rain that refreshes the meadows and the ground.
- ⁷ Let the king be fair with everyone, and let there be peace until the moon falls from the sky.
- ¹² Do this because the king rescues the homeless when they cry out, and he helps everyone who is poor and in need.
- ¹³ The king has pity on the weak and the helpless and protects those in need.
- ¹⁴ He cares when they hurt, and he saves them from cruel and violent deaths.

My gardening continues. This was a challenging year because of a very dry period this summer, but tomatoes, peppers, and apples did well. In fact I estimated that I harvested around 100 pounds of GoldRush apples, after last year was a bust. I need to be more aggressive about pruning the tree and thinning the fruit, so I get a better balance of fruit from year to year, and don't get so many tiny duds. But the GoldRush is a delicious late fall apple that keeps very well, so now the trick is to try to keep them from freezing in the breezeway. I've made lots of applesauce, apple salad, apple cobbler, and yesterday discovered they are very tasty sliced very thin and dried. They are affected by 'sooty blotch' which makes them harder to give away, though that scrubs off fairly easily and is not dangerous. They are also unsprayed, so are by no means perfect.



Some of this year's apples – note two mouse traps – have caught a dozen mice that were nibbling on the apples.

I've had fun with our local Scandinavian Club, of which I'm the treasurer. Our activities are documented here: <http://tinyurl.com/ScandiClubToledo1> (a page on my website), including a visit to our Toledo Museum of Art to learn about the history of beer making and our annual Julfest. I was Lucia this year, because we couldn't find a young girl who was available.

Church activities include choir, circle, a modest little community garden, secretary of the St. John Women, and preparer of their yearbook (PEO chapter yearbook also). Thank you to son, Peter, who keeps me in working computers! In spite of all the current vitriol (thanks to the campaign of a certain presidential candidate), it has been very rewarding to get acquainted with the women in our local MultiFaith Women's group. We have had some interesting discussions, and worked on some helpful service projects together. Did you know that Toledo has been designated a Compassionate Community, thanks to the efforts of our MultiFaith Council of NW Ohio? There are lots of stories at <http://compassionatetoledo.org/>

The garden will keep me busy this winter as I get out on sunny days and cut down the native flowers and grasses which grow in much of my wild yard, and burn, shred, or compost them. I actually have salad greens growing under LED shop lights in the back room.

I continue to maintain my website, www.MercyViewMeadow.org, and continue teaching an occasional class on good nutrition as Toledo chapter leader for the Weston A. Price Foundation – see www.WAPFToledo.org for what we have been doing, and local food sources. I'm happy to note that the USDA Dietary Guidelines "no longer consider cholesterol a nutrient of concern" – love those eggs – though they still have an unjustified fear of natural saturated fat. And there is ever more evidence that low fat foods do not promote weight loss or good health, and kids who drink whole milk tend to be slimmer than kids who only get skim milk. And of course, I always advise people to buy organic or trusted local food, to avoid the genetically engineered foods and associated pesticides, that Congress and the food industry would be just as happy if we didn't pay any attention to. With chronic disease continuing to rise, even among our children, it pays to eat a diet of unsprayed, non-GMO, unprocessed foods. And that includes meat and eggs from animals raised on properly managed pasture, and fermented foods to nourish our "microbiome".

To your good health in 2017!

Kris

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