

- Seattle David Family News -
MERRY CHRISTMAS

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*** PANDEMIC EDITION ***

Who would have thought it would be Christmas 2020 that I would finally get back to my annual Christmas letter? Well, maybe you would have thought just that, given that everything else is canceled and we are all out of remotely appropriate streaming content. This is evidenced by our resorting to the *Disney Holiday Sing Along* for our evening entertainment this Friday night. In case you need a refresher, our kids are 9, 13, 15, and 18, and three of them are male so this is an indication of desperation.

While we are talking about this crazy year, I want to say that my heart aches for those who are struggling with this pandemic in ways we are not. I know that in our lives, the hardest times have brought the greatest growth in faith, resilience, and perseverance so we pray for those struggling now, that God's mercy and grace would shine brighter than it ever has before. This pandemic is being used by God in our family, yet the craziness of it all in our little home has to be documented for posterity and I thought perhaps it would be entertaining for some of you.

Since I last wrote to you all, our crew has grown up by feet, literally. Our oldest, Matthew, is now AN ADULT!!! He graduated high school last spring in a lovely ceremony on YouTube... Yup! On YouTube. He is gentle, patient and soft spoken, while still having a will of steel. He heads upstairs at his little sister's bedtime most days to read to her before bed and voluntarily cooks amazing dinners for our big old family. I am a proud momma! The picture below is from our first Christmas letter after he was born. Oh my!!! Look at this sweet little pumpkin! He is now a student at the University of Washington Bothell Campus where he will apply to the computer science or math department soon, BUT has yet to set foot in person.



Like everyone else around here, Matthew actually attends the David Academy for the Zoomed Out. The David Academy is an elementary school, middle school, high school, and University (also housing a Microsoft campus and nurse service) where we currently have "classrooms/offices" set up in the living room, our bedroom, Grace's room, Isaiah and Zach's room and last but not least, the office. That's a lot of desks, but still two less than the number we need, so there is some jockeying for positions daily. We thought it best that the children not get unaccustomed to fighting for their

position among peers. In this world of public school from home everyone needs to be in a room at a desk by themselves with a neutral background behind them. Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha Haaaa!!! We have four different lunches, two different instrument related classes. One instrumentalist is required to have their camera on the piano in the middle of the house and another who is learning (???) the recorder.

We have had a lot of good family time during this whole mess which has allowed me to get to know my hubby and kids even better. Andrew is an amazing husband with the patience of Job, who has gladly jumped in as tech support and math tutor while managing his crazy career and church responsibilities which have become more, not less busy. He is a blessing. His busy schedule, and home office in our bedroom means I sometimes

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
 Their old, familiar carols play,
 And wild and sweet
 The words repeat
 Of peace on earth, good-will to men!
 And thought how, as the day had come,
 The belfries of all Christendom
 Had rolled along
 The unbroken song
 Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,
 The world revolved from night to day,
 A voice, a chime,
 A chant sublime
 Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

...It was as if an earthquake rent
 The hearth-stones of a continent,
 And made forlorn
 The households born
 Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
 "There is no peace on earth," I said;
 For hate is strong,
 And mocks the song
 Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
 "God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
 The Wrong shall fail,
 The Right prevail,
 With peace on earth, good-will to men."

-HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW-
 Christmas Bells (abridged)



don't get a shower until the afternoon (all these webcams all over the house are kind of paralyzing at times), but it is well worth the sacrifice and we are grateful for his job.

Isaiah is a freshman in high school but has trouble remembering that because he has never actually been to high school. He is a hilarious, bright, social, creature who currently lacks an outlet for all that personality. As a result we get to enjoy large doses as a family which keeps us all entertained. His greatest stress at the moment is not knowing what to do with his life after high school. History is his favorite subject and his biggest pet peeve is kids and teens with limited knowledge and big opinions on politics and social issues. High school may be a long 4 years.

We had an amazing trip to India in Dec. 2019– Jan 2020 but I didn't write a letter last year. I will have to write one retrospectively because those memories must be documented!

Zachary is in the 7th grade and loves soccer, football, competitive anything (except word games), and talking and gaming with friends. He is also

lacking an outlet for his gifts and misses youth sports terribly. As with all of my kids I am suddenly incredibly grateful for Xbox chat and online games which allows them to connect socially under pandemic restrictions. Zach is self-motivated, determined, proactive and organized which mean he generally gets what he's after. He is also a faithful friend and an encourager to his teammates and peers which I love.



Yellowstone– Summer 2020

Gracie is a sweet 9 year old, 4th grader who is dreaming of the day she spend her days at school with friends again. She loves video calls with her best friend, singing, drawing, and design. She also still loves geology and has a crazy fascination with rocks and minerals. She is gentle, soft spoken, loves to make others happy and delights in the fact that her brothers all love her dearly. She does not always love being parented by all 5 of her other family members but takes it in stride.

I have been blessed to have reduced hours at work these last couple of months which has been a godsend given the kids' situation. I now work in care management at Allegro Pediatrics where I started my nursing career 22 years ago. I actually really LOVE what I do, and have to make myself stop at the end of the day. I also delight in the work I do with women at church and Andrew and I both dearly miss our Three Strands family, the young families group at church we mentor. Though I am not a touchy-feely person, even I can't wait to shake hands, hug, stand close, and even sing together soon!



Grand Tetons National Park this July. A blessed break from home this 2020.

—2020 Life in Picture —



With Love,
The Davids