



Christmas Blessings!

Christmas 1994

Greetings to each and to all,

The season of Advent is upon us and we await Christ's coming anew and afresh. May he also come afresh into our hearts as we celebrate with our families and friends.

Earl has been feeling better this summer and fall. In good weather, he walked around the Northwest Plaza across the road. In bad weather, he walks up and down stairs several times here at home. Yard work kept Earl busy, so his garden was small--tomatoes, green beans and corn. We always have asparagus, berries, pears, and apples. He is Mr. Stay-at-home and lets PJ do the traveling. He did spend a day this summer with his brother, Paul, in Indianapolis while PJ worked on updating her Renewal mailing list on the Miles' computer.

We both participated in Added Grace, our delightful Senior group, and in Caring and Calling--sending cards and visiting Grace members in hospitals, nursing homes and shut-ins.

PJ is still playing in the Chancel handbell choir and attends aerobics class ~~the~~ mornings a week. Other activities include UMW and circle, Aglow, Serendipity group and her Renewal prayer group. Her travels took her to Israel and Egypt, Cincinnati, Delano, MN, Washington, DC, and Southern Indiana near Louisville.

On Jan. 31, she was one of the ten Grace Church members who joined Bishop Woodie White's 900 person tour of the Holy Land. Highlights: Bishop White giving a challenging message to the combined group in two boat loads hooked together in the middle of the Sea of Galilee. He spoke to the entire group again at the Communion Service at the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem and on Sunday morning worship in our Jerusalem hotel. It was thrilling to see over 100 pastors and their spouses go forward when the Bishop called them up front. I welcomed the familiar sights around Galilee and Jerusalem seen when Earl and I were there 12 years ago. There were new places to see as well as changes in some we had seen before. The dig at Jericho especially, had a lot more to show than 12 years ago. We took the three day extension to Egypt and besides the Pyramids, the Museum and other sights, we visited a carpet factory, a perfume factory and were given a one hour ride on the Nile river in a feluci--a small sail boat that held 8 passengers. It was fun!

The last of April, I was privileged to attend the UMW Assembly. Every four years, United Methodist Women from all over the world meet to worship, study and learn. This year some 4000 met in Cincinnati. It was fun going from hotel to convention center and back on overhead walkways.

Early June brought graduation day for two grandchildren: Shawn in Delano, MN and Nikki, a week later, in Frankton. Shawn was in both band and choir. Nikki was Valedictorian and Grandma was thrilled when Nikki included a prayer in her speech. Linda and I flew to Minneapolis for Shawn's and were treated to 2 hours of seeing a few of the "wonders" of the Mall of America before heading to Delano from the airport. We visited Patty's apartment in Golden Valley several times in the few days we were there. She is weekend caretaker and security guard for a 11-story Lutheran apartment complex housing senior citizens. Patty still works at Beauty Craft Supply during the week.

*Nicholas is 10, a 5th grader, active in gymnastics.
and he enjoys reading poetry.

Elaine is nanny to 2 children. She received a diamond from her boy friend, Jeremy. They plan to marry next July. Shawn left for Lackland Airforce Base in Texas on Dec. 7. He had to lose some weight before they would take him. He wants to learn computer repairing. Alicia graduated from 6th grade while we were there, so she's in Jr. Hi now. Janet and Jerry both stay busy with their jobs. *

Our summer at church has been quite festive, celebrating our sesqui-centennial. The committee has had mugs, histories, licence plates and stained glass plates for sale. May 22, Bishop Sheldon Dueker, (our first associate pastor) preached. Carry-in dinners were held one Sunday a month. July 3 was Homecoming Sunday. Several former pastors shared memories of their time at Grace. Janet, Jerry and Alicia came for that weekend. Kokomo was celebrating 150 years also, and the Haynes-Apperson Festival parade that afternoon was a long one. Grace Church won a blue ribbon for their float in the parade--a replica of the first log cabin church. I marched with about a dozen other Grace people and the family found a shady spot from which to watch it. Dr. Leonard Sweet, of Union Theological Seminary, preached one Sunday in Nov. and challenged the church for the next 150 years.

August brought Aldersgate '94 in Washington, DC. My dear friend, Arlinda Baszner, drove. and took her two younger children, Meredith and Adam, plus a friend, Jessica. To break up the trip on our way, we stopped overnight at my cousins, the Picketts, in Pittsburgh. Great hospitality! The conference was great!

September was the Added Grace overnight to Clarksville and New Albany. We enjoyed a dinner cruise up the Ohio River and back, a visit to a buffalo farm, a tour around Corydon, Indiana's first capitol, and a 3 hr. train ride.

Other Added Grace trips included 3 trips to Beef & Boards in Indianapolis, and one to Wabash's Honeywell Center where we heard a piano concert by Dino Kartsonakis. WOW!

Shirley and Jeff, in Frankton, get to Kokomo rather frequently. Nikki is a freshman at Wesleyan Univ. in Marion. Nathan is a Junior in H S.

Darrell keeps very busy with his LawnSmith business and Melissa continues to teach 1st grade. Justin is in 7th this year. He called to tell us his confirmation class joined church--Belton UMC. They were going to try to come for a visit in Oct., but Megan's soccer games ending and Justin's basketball practice beginning plus other activities that crammed their calendar took priority. Megan is in 3rd grade now.

Linda finished her 2nd year of Spanish last spring and has been taking a World History course and Oral Interpretation this fall. She keeps busy with managing the Mid-Central Trophy shop and her home. Bill finished remodeling the kitchen and has started working on the new master bedroom. He had surgery the latter part of July to relieve the suffering from Crohns disease. Sara is a busy 6th grader, playing in PAL basketball and also Middle School basketball at Tri-Central. Kaitlyn Jo was born to Jennie and Todd, giving Bill and Linda a second granddaughter.

Patry comes the 17th and will return to Minneapolis the 22nd. Family Christmas will be at Linda's in the evening the 23rd. We enjoy and appreciate all the cards and letters that keep us in touch. May you experience JOY, PEACE, Health and Happiness now and throughout 1995.

Love,

Earl & Phyllis Jean

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P.S. my small W didn't always print right.

Enjoyed your Thanksgiving/Christmas
messages. sjs