

Merry Christmas from the Ellett Family

We begin the church year with the end in mind. We have confidence in his coming not only because of the majesty of the life which the world has brought forth at his command, but because God has always proven that he is with us—even in our exile and struggle. That such a mystery could be acted out in history amazes me further—that the transcendent intelligence who sustains the creative process would be uniquely present in the life, death and resurrection of a Jewish Jesus— still wows me. And I pray that he still wows you, too, this season, for he holds us up...no matter what. Greetings!

I write these Christmas letters with some conflicted feeling, for I confess that in the past I've received other such letters and have been tempted to envy the lives of others filled with excitement, achievement and blessing. It's not that I think our lives and witness are particularly enviable this year: its just that I'm aware of an abundance of good health, and opportunity that rest on the gifts of others and the grace of God. By their nature these letters must suppress all the sin and struggle that besets all of us, and I write trusting you to know that we write as thankful people, surely thankful most of all for divine mercy on all our brokenness.

Without further apology let me just catch you up on each of us. We are thankful for our continued health, the health of Amy's parents, and that of my mother and grandmothers.

Amy did not so much quit her 18-year association with BSF International this year as much as she entered into the life that ministry had prepared for her. She continues leading the after-school art program on Thursdays. She teaches the kids at church. This fall her art was selected to go into the Speedway Center for the arts, where she has been selling some pieces as well as giving others away as gifts. She had the good sense to insist that Quentin place his 4-H painting in the center. It's an abstract piece which was later featured (along with a lengthy interview of Quentin) in the Indianapolis Star. Proud Mama! Still with all of this, Chloe's going to school this fall has allowed us to have time together more this year than in 16 years previously.



Quentin has been on what I think he would call a bold intellectual and spiritual search this year, and amidst all of this he has managed to remain friends to nearly everyone in Speedway Public High School. In fact the Superintendent of Schools stopped me the other night to say how much fun Quentin has (and helps everyone else to have) at school. It was a proud moment. He called me from school the day before yesterday to tell me that he had "aced" the college credit United States History exam. And we celebrated together. He continues in band, a cappella choir, and has had big roles in the school and summer plays. This fall he wowed us (and the community) with his performance of the Beast in *Beauty and the Beast*.

Christina Grace is equally well-socialized. Many of her friends come to church with us. She continues with her piano. However, her great passion now seems to be the Indianapolis Children's Choir. She fell in love with it at Butler this June, after having been recommended for the program by her music teacher. The June concert at Clowes Hall was magnificent, and the Holiday performance at St Luke's Methodist with all of the Choirs was inspiring. We are thankful for the return of her old chum from Kindergarten, Abby Isernhart, and we pray for great Christian friends like this as Christina goes into Junior High next year.



Christina's my helper (photo last year)

Chloe Faith finished up preschool in the spring. Her Mother and I enjoyed the final program at Chapel Rock Christian despite the Tornado warnings which interrupted things. Chloe loves to wrestle with me, snuggle with her Mother, and beginning this Fall, she has been telling us that she wants to be a teacher as well as a mommy when she grows up. She is already reading after a semester of Kindergarten. We had a bunch of her new friends over for a Halloween party in October. She delights us all...every day.



The year began with me still basically working two jobs: 1) I was trying to be faithful to our ministry, and 2) trying to finish the house. It's hard to believe at this time last year we did not have any of the new house finished. In January we managed to finish the living room and landing so that we could unload the contents of the kitchen into the living room and put the new kitchen cabinets into the landing. In February we gutted the kitchen and finished that. March-May allowed us to finish the upstairs, and during the Summer I worked more leisurely on the patio. We've since done lots of entertaining that would not have been possible otherwise. Lots of fun.

After a year where Kent traveled made separate trips to North Carolina, Idaho, India, and to Texas, the Elletts pretty much stayed home in 2011. And they loved it. In the spring, my Pastoral leadership friend, Nathan Wilson called, and asked me to begin writing for the Indianapolis Star. I have what has worked out to be a monthly column in the paper. After a long struggle our congregation is on the verge of purchasing four houses east of Speedway so the church can begin a community development ministry. This summer the Indiana Women's Prison asked me to serve on their community advisory board, and we are working on using some of the community houses as re-entry opportunities for selected in-mates. Revolution has continued to expand, reaching adults as well as kids so that we have about 90 active members and friends. This Fall I took the job of Parent Teacher Organization president and began meeting new people in the community in a new capacity. And we think we can continue to build on attracting a new and younger age-group of school kids this Spring.



With Syrian Orthodox friend in India last year.

Have a blessed Christmas and a wonderful time of rich discovery in the year that follows.

Kent, Amy, Quentin, Christina, and Chloe Ellett



Before



After