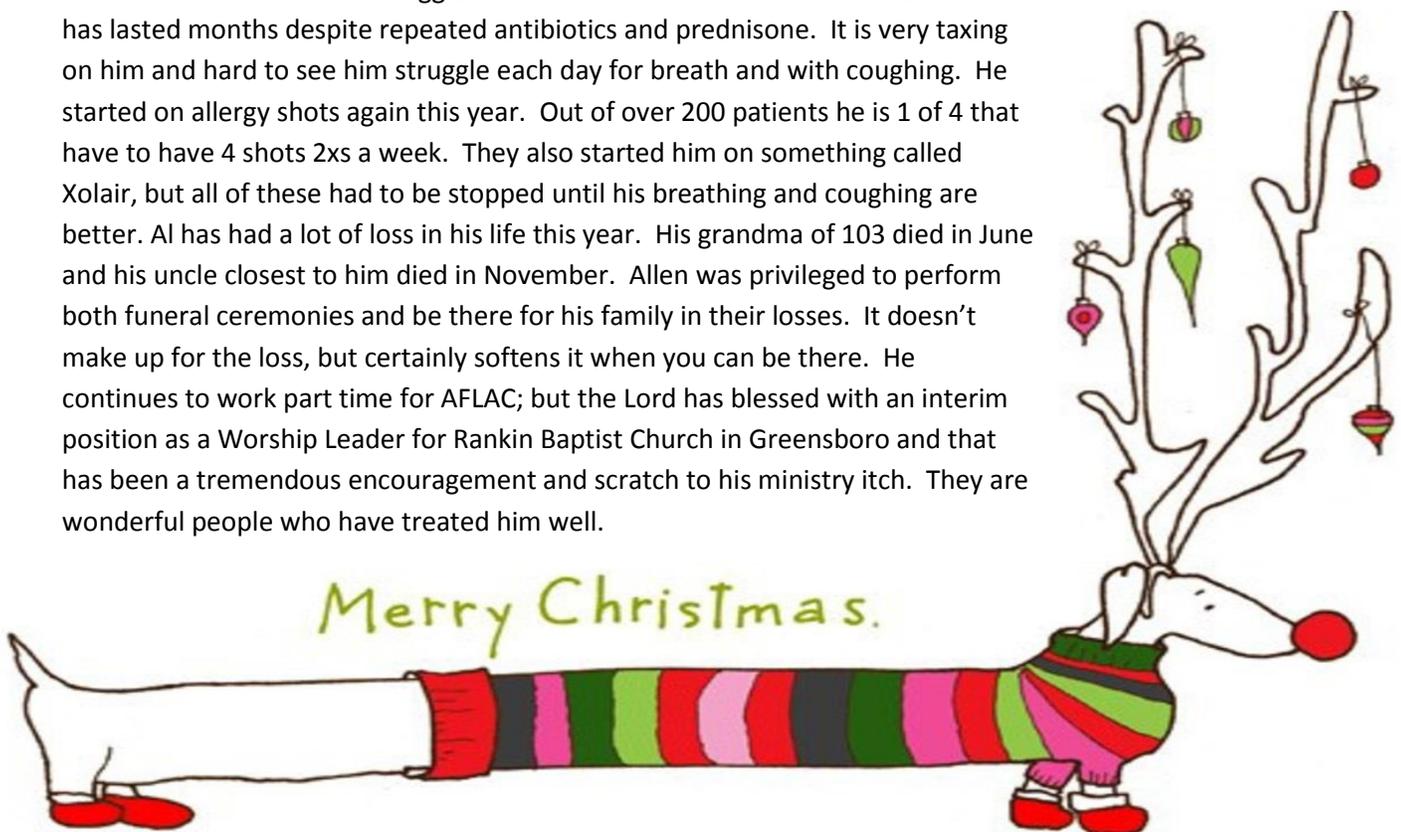


December 17, 2015

Dear Family and Friends,

It's a little over a week until Christmas and I still haven't been able to quit life long enough to think over 2015 and give the season its due of memories and good wishes for those we love. To say that 2015 has been full would be the greatest misconception. In looking over my Facebook statuses (for those who follow and/or stalk) it's pretty discouraging.... There is a recurrent theme of me sick, Al sick, me sick, Al sick, on and on. I've struggled with my Crohns most of the year...trying to get food allergies to behave themselves. I have to say although my symptoms haven't really cleared up, I feel better for taking out gluten, dairy and eggs. I am thankful God has brought me to the Integrative Health Medical practice in Winston to ferret out some of the gobbled-gook you hear on this diet and that diet. Tests make much more sense to me. So although I have to take a medicine cabinet full of vitamins and supplements...I'm at least upright and breathing and able to do the work God has put before me. Last week was crazy with an emergency visit due to sciatica neuralgia. They have gotten me to be able to walk (after four days of poor Allen having to walk me three feet across the room) and I'm back to work. I should get MRI news tomorrow or the next day and a shot so that I can make the trip north to see Christine and family at the end of the month. I am very much hoping to be off prednisone soon....I've had way too much of that in this life and look forward to muscles that work and an unclouded brain. I still work at ITW Texwipe full -time as CS Rep and have been moved up to first shift 8:30-5:30 which helps Allen and I see each other a little more since he turns into a pumpkin early each night. :D I am counseling with the Life Care Counselors for The Summit Church still. That is my joy and blessing in ministry at this time in my life. I am especially grateful that God saw fit to give me one last visit with my Aunt Doris before He took her home to Himself this year. It will always be a special memory of mine and I only wished I could have been there to honor her at her service.

Al has had his own health struggles with his asthma and a bronchial infection that has lasted months despite repeated antibiotics and prednisone. It is very taxing on him and hard to see him struggle each day for breath and with coughing. He started on allergy shots again this year. Out of over 200 patients he is 1 of 4 that have to have 4 shots 2xs a week. They also started him on something called Xolair, but all of these had to be stopped until his breathing and coughing are better. Al has had a lot of loss in his life this year. His grandma of 103 died in June and his uncle closest to him died in November. Allen was privileged to perform both funeral ceremonies and be there for his family in their losses. It doesn't make up for the loss, but certainly softens it when you can be there. He continues to work part time for AFLAC; but the Lord has blessed with an interim position as a Worship Leader for Rankin Baptist Church in Greensboro and that has been a tremendous encouragement and scratch to his ministry itch. They are wonderful people who have treated him well.



He also has performed several marriage ceremonies for couples either through his Lay Pastorate with The Summit Church or through contacts he has made on the web. It has been wonderful to see all the counseling and input God has allowed each of us in lives around us when we are not being solely supported by a church.



Jon is a Sophomore at ITT Technical Institute in High Point, NC. He is just starting to really enjoy his classes now that he is getting in to parts of the computer sciences he doesn't already know. He continues to be a joy to us, supporting us, caring for his invalided parents (lol) and fixing our technical issues with TV and computers. We remind him daily that we taught him to walk, talk, and ride a bike so he can't be judgmental. :D He has a lovely girlfriend, Mariah, who often is included in our double dates and has started to acclimate herself to the Bacon craziness.



Since I started with the youngest, I will continue with Candace and Joe. They live here in Kernersville, NC, also...or maybe we should say we live here also since they were the first. Lol They have their first home! Yay! It's a beautiful little place they are renting to buy and we are all so pleased to see them spread out their wings and fly together. They've been very patient living with Joseph's parents and in Joseph's grandma's home for their married life. It's good to see them doing so well.



Daniel and Sonya (with little Arianna- 2 years) are expecting baby #2 in July. We've had several Skype sessions with Daniel and Arianna (she lasts about 2 minutes :D). It's been good to catch up with them and their lives way over in Northern Ireland. Daniel has just begun an apprenticeship with a bakery there in Armagh and although it's early hours (1 am) he is very excited about the possibilities. They have started a Baby Toddler Group in the community on Wednesdays which has really taken off and just recently they have met another couple of like ministry mindedness and are starting a Polish speaking house church. Dan preaches and the other young man interprets for the Polish speaking congregation. Dan preaches and the other young man interprets for the Polish speaking congregation. It is still in its infancy, but you never know what God will do. We miss them much, but know God will take care of them...and we can't wait to hear more about baby #2, grandbaby #9.



Arianna 12-9-13



Benjamin and Amanda (with Noah – 4 years and Caleb – 1 year) are still busy as ever in the Reading, PA, area. Ben preaches from time to time for their church as well as for a friend who lives close by that has a church. He is finishing up his certification classes this month and is in store for a nice promotion the first the year. He has gotten very involved in Spartan races all over the East Coast and does great in them. Amanda has even done one or two 5k races with him. Noah started preschool this year and loves it. Amanda keeps busy with the boys and her very lucrative business Measurements By Amanda. We get to see them 2-3 times a year and it is always a blessing.

Noah – 11-01-11  
Caleb - 06-05-13



Carolyn and Cameron (with Hayden – 9 years and Chloe – 4 months) are here in Kernersville, NC, with us. They close on their first home together next Monday, December 21, with the move in date Christmas Eve. Chloe is the big story this year. She was born August 16<sup>th</sup> with a TE Fistula and a small hole in her heart. After a couple of weeks of complete terror and dependency on the Lord, she came home in a record 10 days from birth after surgery. Initial reports were that she would probably be in NICU for 3-6 months. God was so gracious. She is healthy, happy and the spark that lights the world on fire around these parts. Hayden has been the perfect big brother and of course, Mommy and Daddy are exhausted but totally in love with their little bundle. They just moved into their first home together yesterday. Cameron works for his step-dad’s company and Carolyn is still working in Customer Service at a local company near here....hoping to stay home in the future with Chloe-bug.

Chloe Marie 8-16-15



Hayden 11/6/2006



Cousin love – Noah with Chloe and Caleb



Christine and Mark (with Evie - almost 6, Miles – almost 4 and Elyanah Jane – born November 24) live in St. Johnsbury, VT. Mark works for Cabot Creamery “making yogurt” according to Miles and Christie works part time at Union Baptist Church in St. Johnsbury. She has her hands full with three little ones. She home schools Evelyn and is using the Northeast Kingdom Classical Conversations Program. We have great fun watching the videos and having her do her presentations via Skype to us. We will be making the long trek north at the end of the month to make our grand-parenting debut with Miss Elyanah and can’t wait to hug and kiss and spoil.



Evelyn – 01-07-10, Miles – 2-12-12, Elyanah Jane 11-24-15

Our letters are always so long....I think it has to do with all our young’ins...but in scrolling down through all this...I see so many blessings...and I think that’s really what Christmas letters are all about. Jesus came to earth as a child to bless us with salvation if we so desired to accept His free gift...then He goes about taking a life of total chaos (2015) and making it into something beautiful and holy and pleasing to Himself.

We don’t “talk” near enough with any of you; but you are always on our hearts and on our minds...often on our lips in prayer and we are so thankful for each and every one of you. May your lives be filled enough with chaos to make you reach for our blessed God several times in 2016...may He remind you of your need of Him throughout the year. May you be just sick enough to need Him and His wisdom...and healthy enough to be of use to Him in the coming year. May your losses be ones that are bearable because of His great love and comfort in your lives and your memories be more sweet than bitter. May your hurts be opportunities for growth and wisdom as well as godliness in character. And “may the hair on your toes never fall out.” I had to add that for you Hobbits out there.

We love you all so much and are thankful for your lives touching ours.

Many Blessings on Christmas and in the New Year Ahead,

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