

Merry Christmas to all!!

Hello from the Petersons in Arizona. We are enjoying another beautiful Arizona winter in our t-shirts and jeans. We are especially grateful this Christmas season to be all together as a family to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior. We have had a very eventful year and we know that it is because of our testimonies in the gospel and in Jesus Christ that we have grown closer and stronger through the tough times.

Matt is working very hard at building a new business. He was laid off at the end of August and was able to immediately start up a web developing/advertising business with his brothers and friends. It was an obvious blessing for him to be home all day when Alicia had to be put in the hospital for 4 weeks on bed rest. He was recently called to be a Primary teacher in church and is looking forward to those new experiences, but will miss being the ward mission leader. This year our ward had 14 convert baptisms. Also, his publisher for his book just told him that they are expediting the publishing of his book, so it will probably be done before we originally planned.

Alicia is walking without assistance now!! After being on bed rest in the hospital for 4 weeks her goal was to have the baby and start living again. Unfortunately during delivery her pelvis was separated 25 mm (normal is 5 mm) and she was once again crippled. She's been sleeping downstairs on a twin bed set up in the family room. After using a wheel chair and walker for 4 weeks she is finally walking without anything and is able to actually go upstairs, slowly. The vision that got her through all the hospital stay—being at home with all her children and husband on Christmas—will be coming true. She is loving being a mom in charge once again and is so happy to have her newest baby, Jared, at home too. Her calling in church is visiting teaching coordinator. This is the 3rd time she's had this calling.

David is our outgoing 7 year old. He loves to play with his brothers and friends and cousins. He is often found bouncing around with energy that his mommy wishes she could bottle up and sell. He is such a help to his mommy and is very caring of his new baby brother. All of the boys were thrilled to find out that they were now the “brothers of Jared”. He is doing much better at reading and piano and he actually did better than Dean on a recent spelling test. David is very imaginative with his drawing and coloring. He draws things that his mommy can't even draw.

Dean is our studious and caring 7 year old. He is very serious about his school work, but also loves to play with everyone, like David. His reading is excelling amazingly and he quickly learns new words. He is doing well with piano as well. He is also very aware and loving to his new baby brother. Dean is our singer. He has a very sweet voice and loves to sing all the time. David and Dean recently have been in a couple of choirs in church and school and have both done very well.

Trent is an outgoing 4 ½ year old who will talk your ear off. He loves to talk to everyone that comes in the house. He was the only one that got to go to the hospital to see Jared, on the day he came home. He thought that was very special. He goes to a co-op preschool and loves the new friends and fun times that he has there. He's learning how to say his “r” and “s” correctly and we hope to have that accomplished by school. His mommy can't believe that he'll be in all day kindergarten next year. She will miss him.

Jacob is a very talkative 2 ½ year old. He will say the “darndest” things sometimes. He prays almost every time we have a prayer, even if it’s not his turn. He likes to do everything that his brothers do. We almost had him potty trained and then mommy went on bed rest and everything went out the window. We’ll have to try again next year. He is starting to join his brothers with their chores and is a good little helper for mommy. He can hardly stand to not touch baby Jared all the time, but he is very gentle with him and is doing very well with having an addition to our lives. We keep the hand sanitizing gel very close for quick cleaning of the hands so he can touch the baby. Jacob is a master at opening fruit snack packages under the kitchen table with the kitchen scissors. Guess that’s one skill he won’t have to learn in preschool.

Jared is one month old and is home with his family. Since he has been home we’ve seen him grow and develop so much more than his 3 ½ week stay in the hospital. He had heart surgery when he was just 6 days old and pulled through the rough 24 hours after that. He’s doing so well for such a rough start. The only immediate issue we are dealing with is a feeding tube in his nose. He has severe aspiration when he drinks and so we have to feed him through the tube. He will be re-evaluated for that in a few weeks. There is one benefit of the tube feedings and that is that he has a continuous feed through the night from 9pm to 7am, which means that the nights are much more restful than most newborns. Mommy is especially grateful for that. We are almost positive that he has Noonan’s Syndrome, but we have not received the test results yet. Regardless of the results we know that he is meant to be here with us and we can’t wait to see him grow and develop and become part of our family of boys.

This year we have truly felt an outpouring of love and service from so many of our friends and family. We are overwhelmed with the help we have received. We want you all to know that we are so thankful for you and truly could not have gotten through all of our “bumps in the road” without you. We know that things happen for a reason. We know the Lord has directed our path and lead us in the direction that we needed to be facing in order to get through all of these things. We know prayers are answered. Most of all we know that Jesus Christ lives and loves us. We know that He lived a perfect life here on earth for us to try to emulate and that He suffered for our sorrows and pains, died and was resurrected, all that we might return to live together forever as a family with Him some day.

We love you all and wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!----The Petersons

Matt, Alicia, David, Dean, Trent, Jacob, and Jared

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