

Merry Christmas from the Petersons!

Wow! Has 2016 flown by! Can't believe it! We are feeling extremely blessed this year. The gratitude we have for our Savior Jesus Christ is especially great as we celebrate his birth and life at this time of year. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas season and may your 2017 be even better!!



Matt got a new job this year! He works for Arizona Arthritis and Rheumatology Associates as their IT Director. It is closer to home and a great job. We are hopeful that after a year or so he will have a smooth running system and it will become the true dream job he's been hoping for. Matt is still Elder's Quorum Instructor at church. He loves to teach, so it couldn't be better! Matt was featured in US Business Weekly for his innovative approach to IT! So proud of him for this great recognition! Alicia surprised him with a trip to St. George for their 19th anniversary. They watched Hunchback of Notre Dame under the stars in the Tuacahn theater.

Alicia continues trying to juggle the life of 7 children and all that that entails. She recently described her life with the kids from potty training to drivers' ed! From ages 1 to 17, what a crazy range! She still has the best calling ever--Primary Music Leader. It is so much fun. Alicia teaches a co-op preschool for Alora and a few other kiddos. That is always an adventure! She is no longer managing rental properties, except for their own! Such a relief! She really enjoyed the ropes course and the craft room at Aspen Grove. Going to the St. George Temple with Matt was another highlight of their anniversary trip.



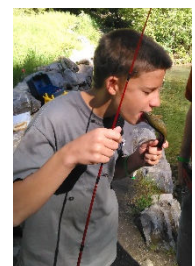
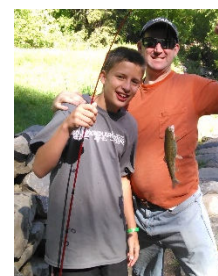
David went to LDS prom for the first time this year. He had a great time with a huge group! He also was asked to Sadie Hawkins for the first time! Lots of fun! David was on the summer swim team and the school swim team. David went to District Finals again with swim! He lettered in swim and academics again this year! David got his first real job this summer as a life guard for the City of Peoria. He also started instructing at the end of the summer which means next summer he'll most likely be a swim instructor as well as a life guard. David's favorite class thus far in his Junior year is choir. D&D recently did a gig as the Weasley Twins and are thinking there might be a fun future with that! David wants to be a Mentalist when he grows up!

Dean did a lot of the same things that David did—prom, sadies, summer swim, school swim, first job! Dean also got Rookie of the Year for life guarding. He actually got a chance to save someone's life while guarding. It was pretty scary and exciting all in one! Dean won 2 medals at district finals for breaststroke and 4x100 Freestyle Relay. Dean also got to go to state with the swim team! So that was really fun! Dean enjoyed another year of pole vaulting. He got first place on the JV team in district finals. This coming year he hopes to improve even more. Dean loves his sports med class and is looking into the medical field for the future.



Trent graduated from 8th grade in May and started high school in August! He also did summer swim. Along with high school comes early morning seminary! He is the secretary in his seminary class! He joined his brothers on the school swim team and has enjoyed that. Trent's favorite class is definitely drama class. He has done very well on his dramatic presentations and improv. He plans to be part of the spring musical coming up in a few months. Trent is constantly asking to go back to the library to get more books to read!

Jacob got to go to outdoor ed with his class last year. Matt enjoyed the 3 days of 6th graders too! The zip-lining and repelling was definitely a highlight. But he really liked the GaGa ball. He went to his first longer scout camp and he is almost a Life scout. He recently built his own green screen stage and has enjoyed working with stop animation. More creativity to come with that! He got braces in September and is trying to learn to talk again with the



expander in his mouth. Jacob also really improved his backstroke time during summer swim. Jacob caught a fish and kissed it at Aspen Grove!

Jared also got braces this year and is handling them really well! During summer swim the coaches all showered Jared with love and attention. He even got more gear to be a full-fledged coach! This summer he also did youth drama camp. They performed Seussical Jr. He had so much fun, he can't wait for next year! Jared recently earned his Bear badge. We can't believe we're starting our last year of cub scouts! WOW! Jared is an avid reader and can often be found walking around reading a book.



Alora turned 3 this year and started preschool. Another huge step is that she is totally potty trained! AND she gave all of her pacifiers to the "Pacifier Fairy" for which she received a few small gifts! She has definitely grown up a lot this year! She loves singing songs, telling stories, and using her imagination. Now, if that imagination didn't have to involve scissors and hair....Mom would be a bit happier. She would probably be happiest playing outside in the nude for the rest of her life! She really enjoyed her group at Aspen Grove—The Stompers! She had a blast!

Alexis officially became a Peterson this year! We adopted her on June 30th. We sealed her to us in the Phoenix Temple on the very same day. It was an amazing day (we also closed our foster license that day)! She started walking this year also. She talks a little, but certainly will let us know when she needs something. Her cute little nods and shakes of her head always steer us in the right direction. And if that doesn't work she knows how to yell, in a deep voice, "MOM!" It's pretty hilarious. Also, our youngest child now goes to nursery!! It was actually a really hard day for Matt because he was the one that always took care of her while Alicia did primary music.



Besides adopting our sweet little Lexy (best day ever!), our big family highlight this year was our trip to Aspen Grove in Provo Canyon, in Utah! We loved the vacation so much! Each person had their own age group with tailor made activities! There was never a dull moment. We had our own cabin as a family and we got to spend some really quality time together!

We love you all and hope all is well in your lives! Check out our family pictures on our website: www.mattsfamily.com It's been updated recently (click on Pictures)! Love, Matt, Alicia, David, Dean, Trent, Jacob, Jared, Alora and Alexis Peterson!

