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Dear Family and Friends,

It is hard to believe another year has passed! This year has been a bit of a roller coaster for us – but in all the highs and lows we've felt God's presence and are thankful for all of his blessings.

Taylor is in 1st grade this year, and still really enjoys school. Her favorite subject is writing. She often writes in her journal before bed, and like her mommy has a knack for remembering seemingly every detail of what she has seen. She loves writing so much that one day at school she cried when she found out it was not her day to do writing station! She still loves gymnastics, and has proven to be a natural at rock climbing. In late November, she also lost her first tooth!



Brooke is 5 this year. She will start Kindergarten next year, and this year again attends World of Wonder preschool 2 days a week. She loves learning, and even likes to spend some of her free time working on reading and math worksheets at home! She is really motivated, we figure, trying to keep up with her big sister. She also started taking gymnastics lessons this year and, like Taylor, loves it. She has really excelled at it, being promoted to the next higher skill class after just a few months. Last year, we mentioned that Taylor is such a focuser, she never notices when someone is watching her at gymnastics practice. Well, true to Brooke's personality, she ALWAYS knows when someone is watching her. Even though the observation area is upstairs behind a glass wall, Brooke somehow knows the moment I get there to watch her, turns around and smiles and waves.



Jeff continues to enjoy his research at MD Anderson, and was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure this year. Dana was able to come with for a conference in Fairbanks, Alaska in June. We enjoyed the midnight sun!! We traveled to Barrow, the northernmost point in North America, went white-water rafting on Dana's birthday, and got to meet Mary Shields, the first woman to complete the Iditarod, the dog sled race from Anchorage to Nome. We also attended the weddings of Jeff's cousin Michael (who finished his PhD this year!) and stepsister Andy, and also had a nice visit with Jeff's stepsister Amy and her family in Maine.

Last February, we found out that Dana was pregnant, expecting in October. We quickly told the girls, who were very excited about the news. In early April, after about 12 weeks, we had a miscarriage. It was devastating, but the support of

many friends and family helped us through that tough time, as did the knowledge that we would get to meet this baby one day in heaven. Then, in May, we found out that we were pregnant again!! We were so thankful to be blessed with another baby so soon after losing one! We are now expecting a baby boy in early February! Although he was too modest to tip his hand, we suspected from the first ultrasound that it was a boy, since he had his legs crossed at the ankle, and hands clasped behind his neck, with elbows out. Since it was just before football season started, we figured he was in his recliner position ☺ Dana and this very active baby are doing well, and we are eagerly anticipating February!



God bless you and your family this Christmas!!

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