

Dear Friends,

January 15, 2019

On New Year's Eve, I was ready to say good-bye to 2018 and move into 2019. 2018 was a very challenging year for many reasons – Mom falling and passing away unexpectedly in February (on Dad's 92nd birthday), losing Dad only two months later, along with Jim finding out that he had thyroid cancer in September. Autumn was filled with the surgery, radioactive iodine treatment, and numerous doctor appointments and scans. Add to that all the things that had to be done to clean out and sell my parent's house. So much change – and I don't like change!

Yet, as I reflect back over the year, I have seen God's goodness. God was with me giving strength for each day, His timing was perfect, His hand was evident, and His love surrounded me. As I observed the dying process, during the week I sat with Mom, and then Dad, it made my mortality much more real. It has given me pause to think about what I want my remaining time on earth to be about – **"To know God and make Him known."** My mission statement from college still reflects the beat of my heart today.

I also became more aware of God's unconditional love for me.....personal, intimate, real. God expressed his love in ways that were meaningful to me. He knows me, I can trust him.

So as we move into another year, **thank you** for walking this road with our family. Your prayers have lifted us, your financial gifts have been our provision, and your encouragement has enabled us to keep going when the going got tough. God has used YOU to say **"I LOVE YOU."**

FAMILY UPDATE

Change entered **Amber and David's** world as they welcomed their fourth boy, **John Paul**, on September 18th. The big brothers enjoy talking and singing to him and handing him baby toys. Once Amber walked into the living room to find John Paul in his bouncer covered from neck to toe in toys—he is loved! **Daniel** is in first grade at a Montessori school and he is a HUGE baseball fan. **Peter** attends preschool and loves fire trucks and drawing. **Isaiah** is 2 and does whatever his brothers are doing, but especially likes football. David continues to work at Better Angels, a non-profit he helped to found, with the mission of bringing Republicans and Democrats together to find common ground. They now have over 6,000 dues-paying members in all 50 states and were featured last year on ABC, CBS, MSNBC, Oprah Magazine, The Washington Post and the front page of USA Today! Amber and David still continue to do some writing on marriage and family issues, and have been focusing the last few months on finishing a book. More on that next year!





The big change in **Matt and Molly's** life was the birth of **Levi James** on April 23rd. The day that we held my Dad's graveside service, Levi was born. What a clear picture of the circle of life! Matt and Molly have adapted well to parenthood and it is evident how much they love Levi. Levi brings much JOY. He is a content, happy little guy that likes to laugh. Matt still works for Great American Insurance Company in downtown Cincinnati and Molly continues to thrive as a kindergarten teacher.

April and Michael just celebrated their 1 year

anniversary. Lots of change in their lives, including a move into South Union (still in Houston), a poor community struggling with the effects of poverty. This month, Michael began serving as associate minister at RCC (Restoration Community Church), a church that is using the gospel to bring restoration to this broken community. April began a new job this month as well, after suffering with health issues that caused her to resign from teaching. God provided April with a part-time job working as an after school counselor at Agape Development (a Christian Community development organization in South Union). So together, they are ministering in this poor area – a calling that they have had on their hearts since they met on a



Cru inner city project in LA.

Jim and I begin another year with Athletes in Action – it is year #38! We desire that God will continue to use us as we hope to see a day when there are Christ-followers on every team, in every sport, in every nation. We love being grandparents to five boys – and are so blessed that they all live close by!



Our prayer as we enter 2019 – *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.* Romans 15:13
Deb & Jim

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