

**Merry Christmas 2016**



In the photo

Christopher Aizec Karin Ross Patrick Avery Xavier  
Laura Annika Clara Esther Helen

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Dear Family and Friends

December 2016

Executive summary: Karin and Ross are as well and active as their age and condition allows. All their grandchildren are wonderful. Scroll to the bottom for the conclusion or plow through for the details.

**Ross** teaches 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> grade Junior Church and still leads all day hikes – with lots of helpers – twice a year. He teaches a science class for the home school kids at MOPS, chairs the board of Outpost Ministries and serves on the board of Twin Cities Creation Science Association and runs their website. He chairs the Outreach Commission at First Free and does a “Grandpa Day” once a week for 6 of the homeschooled grandchildren, visiting museums and other points of interest. He had an unexpected diagnosis of prostate cancer in February, but on follow-up biopsies to prepare for further surgery, it was gone! Praise the Lord! Also, two skin cancers on the scalp were completely removed. Aging, bah!!! We had two great weeks at a beautifully refurbished rented cabin on Elk Lake and then a long trip to Hartford Connecticut in our new Caravan, visiting friends and family along the way including a number of Chinese friends we had hosted when they first came to the USA.

**Karin** finished 33 years in leadership with Bible Study Fellowship and 17 years of bringing grandchildren. Words are not adequate to describe what intense study of the Bible and learning leadership skills has meant in her life. She had her 50 year high school reunion. She continued to be an advocate, interviewing clients at the Community Emergency Services food shelf. She is a Mentor Mom for Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) and continues to teach Kindergarten Sunday School and loves that age. She and Ross have begun hosting our neighbors at Gramercy for coffee, treats and conversation. She can greet all 200 people who live in our building by name. She ran out of excuses and joined an exercise class in the building. Her main activity has been to energize and lead the “Sunshine Committee” and “Card Recycling” group. To be accurate, she has personally designed and made or delegated hundreds of greeting cards which sell in our lobby for the bargain price of \$1.00 each. They are often new designs inspired by a calendar picture or a magazine ad. She had a 3<sup>rd</sup> surgery for replacement of the battery in her implanted gastric stimulator (needed because diabetes has paralyzed her stomach). We hosted two new Chinese students this fall and have continued contact with others. We hosted 34 people for thanksgiving in the ‘Gramercy Room’ (party room) where we live.

**Jeff** continues to work at Thomson Reuters, now as a software development manager for the TR ID (Thomson Reuters Identity) team, building a customer identity and authentication system. At First Free Church he serves on the church council, volunteers on Wednesday nights with the Stockade boys club, and helps oversee the church technology systems. He got a new road bike this year and hopes to put on a lot of miles in the coming years. And being a dad to four wonderful daughters continues to be a real source of joy!

**Rachel** home schools the 4 girls, transports them to all their activities, hosts a small group, buys natural food, cooks gluten-free for the two family members who need it. Grows vegetables, vine and tree fruits, milkweed and flowers in an expanded garden that already covers the whole front yard. They celebrated 19 years of marriage. The 4 girls really love the Lord, thanks to both Jeff and Rachel.

**Laura 13** reads voraciously and tests above high school level, participates in drama (was Mrs. Beaver in “The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe,”) sings with “Let the Children Sing.” She “Facetimes” with cousin Annika, plays piano, sometimes going with her grandfather Matejcek to perform at senior residences. She babysits and does childcare at church. She can tell you at which age a young child ceases to be “adorable.”

**Helen 11** loves making new friends, swims and is learning karate, loves Girls Rock club at church, performed in “The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe,”) as an elf. She can explain for you the difference between elves and dwarves. She is a good participant in Junior Church discussions, taught by Grandpa. She wants everyone to know Jesus.

**Esther 8** is in competitive swimming, plays the piano and dances with Ballet Royale and will be in their “Nutcracker.” She also is in Girls rock. She loves organizing things and was a Centaur in “The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.” She can prance like a horse. She can read and speak with great expression.

**Clara 6** swims, was a statue in “The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe.” Loves Girls Rock club at church, is finding her own identity and has developed a great sense of humor. Maybe she can improve her grandpa’s jokes? When she finished Bible Study Fellowship children’s program – the last grandchild to do so (as yet) she got a trip to Chicago with Grandma and Grandpa – a tradition she had been eagerly anticipating.

**Tami** supervises home schooling for the 3 kids still in school, tutors other students in math, transports her kids to activities (40 miles to church Sundays and Wednesdays!). They are all active in church and put God first in their plans. That duty is now shared with new driver, Patrick. Tami occasionally cares for Raphael, youngest son of Chinese friends YiZong and LiJuan’s. Tami helps teach Girls Rock club at church and feeds her hungry family.

**Chris** drives over the road for FedEx, mostly overnight routes to Milwaukee, which means having to sleep days in a house that never completely sleeps! He repairs the many family cars and motorcycles. He is a good step-dad to four busy kids, one already financially independent and all flapping their wings in one way or the other.



**Christopher 20** works from home for TheCubicle.us based in NY as videographer and editor. They sell Rubik's cubes and innovate in the cubing community. Christopher flies to the NY office for videos that cannot be done remotely and to national competitions where he is an elder statesman as former world record holder. He organizes local competitions and occasionally is interviewed by the media. Fame has not spoiled him. He also does freelance video work and makes money from his own YouTube channel.

**Patrick 17** drives, has his own car, sets up for youth group, helps with children's church, sees things that need to be done and does them, drives his sister to Grandpa Day and is a good cousin to the Bloomington girls. He got his first job at Family Pathways near home, started by taking donations but soon was shelving, pricing, cashiering and coming in extra when they were short-handed. He has taken up bowling and ping pong (has his own paddles).

**Aizec 15** took up baseball at 13 and became the star pitcher for Forest Lake Rangers. His fastball is about up to the speed of a major league changeup. He may try out for travelling team or high school team next year. Took up bowling (has his own ball and shoes) and ping pong (has his own paddles). He has a grateful heart and for the second year at the Thanksgiving service said he was thankful for his mom.

**Annika 10 (almost 11!)** dances with Chinese American Association of Minnesota (CAAM) Chinese Dance Theater. She is learning to speak Chinese from LiJuan in exchange for helping care for Raphael. Annika enjoys helping with childcare in the church nursery. She is developing secret codes for communicating with cousin, Laura

**Susan Anderson** cleans houses for various family members, helps hosting gatherings for family and friends, regularly on Memorial Day and Labor Day and is open to add more. She participates in a small group at their church in Somerset. Susan and Eric celebrated 19 years of marriage in August.

**Eric Anderson** senior manufacturing engineer for MetroSpec which makes LED lighting. He is progressively -- as budget allows -- renovating the large house they bought in Somerset Wisconsin where they enjoy hosting day guests, especially when the weather allows use of their big, beautiful pool.

**KaWan Powers** equips and mentors Special Ed students moving from high school into suitable schools or jobs with Transition Plus. She co-leads a Bible study with her sister-in-law Bridget, that includes friends from Dominican Republic. Kawan also helps support artists/musicians through her photo arts and completed her fifth Album cover this year. She serves on worship team with her husband at Revive Church in Brooklyn Park, The joy of pursuing God-given passions and cherishing blended family life has been a powerful journey this year as they celebrated 5 years of marriage.

**Brian "Snowman" Powers** continues to record and produce major label artists such as Sony/RCA recording artist Darnell Davis and the Remnant. Four clients charted in the top ten on billboard and top 20 on iTunes this past year. He plays around the region and is launching a new band on December 18th featuring styles from his state of origin Louisiana. His first love is worshiping God. He and KaWan serve at Revive Church and he does programming and audio work for Living Word Christian Center. Add to that some teaching of recording and production at both Minneapolis Media Institute and McNally Smith College of Music and it's a very full but meaningful plate.

**Avery 17** excels at academics and basketball. Having made the JV/Varsity team this year will add to her very full schedule of AP classes, National Honor Society, new driver's license, new job working at a clothing store, and a summer trip to Germany which is a language she loves. In the midst of all this she is also researching colleges and finding new ways to keep her brother and step siblings in line. Her daily devotions always brings her closer to God.

**Xavier 13** has certainly grown much taller since last year. He excels at football where he plays both offensive line and defensive back (strong and fast!). Math is still his favorite subject and this year he plays both alto and tenor sax in band. Loves spending time with family and has a very tender heart. He is also studying German and has developed a closer relationship with God. His command of Monopoly is still hard to beat.

We are grateful for all that the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us, made possible by His appearance as a baby on that first Christmas, followed by His perfect life, suffering, crucifixion and rising again, making possible our forgiveness and ultimate victory over death! Our hearts still grieve for our one missing family member, as God grieves for MANY. If you, the reader, have not turned to Him in repentance and faith, please do so and receive the love He wants to shower on you.

## Christmas Joy To You

