

Christmas Greetings from the Andersons

December, 2005

We rejoice that God has given us another year of life and joy in His love. Actually, it has been a bit more than a year since most of you have heard from us. There is usually so much going on at our "full house" that it is hard to find time to write about it.

Our biggest news of the year is that we have been living in Indianapolis since the end of May, and we will be here through July, 2006. I am taking a sabbatical from Rose-Hulman, working for a small and rapidly-growing software company <http://www.angellearning.com>. I have been stretched a lot, this being my first programming experience in databases, server-based web applications, JavaScript, C#, and .NET). In addition to designing and writing code, I am the "customer representative on the company's product design team (Rose-Hulman is a satisfied customer). In some ways I miss teaching at Rose-Hulman, but it is good to spend a year doing something different, and I know I'll be a better-prepared teacher when I return next Fall.

We are renting a small log home in the woods in the northwest corner of Indianapolis. The location has been perfect for us; only four miles from where I work, and very convenient for most of the places we go (except for church). Trinity Baptist Church is the best thing about our life in Indianapolis. It is almost 20 miles from our house to its location in the inner city, but well worth the drive. Very different culturally than what we have experienced in the past. The people have a fervent love for God and for His word, a love for each other that goes far beyond mere words, and a desire to make a difference in Indianapolis. They have reached out to us, included us, and made us feel very much at home in our new town. The Sunday "morning" service is more than two hours long, but it never seems long because the music, testimonies, and especially Pastor Dodson's practical biblical teaching are food for our souls. The Wednesday night Bible study is my favorite hour of the week.

Rachel stayed in Terre Haute, where she is a year from completing her nursing degree at Indiana State University. She continues to be active in the leadership of the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship group there. She has been getting to know a fine young man named Craig who is an aviation student at ISU. As I am writing this letter, Sharon and Matt are on their way from San Antonio to spend almost a week with us. In addition to working full-time, Matt is taking three classes per semester toward a Master's degree in accounting. Sharon has become a Mary Kay consultant.

Will (15) did some work as a software tester for ANGEL Learning this summer; he enjoys carving and woodworking these days. Joel (13) loves fixing things, and gets better at it all of the time (his "un-handly" father is especially grateful for this). Melody (12) enjoys sewing, needlework, and making polymer clay dolls. Esther (11) is a great cook and she is always volunteering to help wherever she is needed. All four "middle children" have just completed the membership class at church. All of them were on a swim team with the Indianapolis Parks, last summer, and all still enjoy their musical instruments, although we are taking a vacation from formal lessons during my sabbatical. They are great kids who are open to God's leading their lives; we are blessed to have them as our children.

Abby (7) and Bekah (5) are learning to read well, and they love playing with John (4). Like most Down Syndrome kids, John is both delightful and an escape artist. We purposely chose a house that is way back from the street with a fenced back yard, but still he has managed to get out to the street multiple times. We work hard to protect him, but we realize that we have to trust God for the rest.

Always organized, Diane has needed to carry that to extremes this year, when our home school has seven children ranging in age from fifteen to four. She very much enjoys her role as wife, mother, and teacher. This year has been a good one for us together. After 28 years

of marriage, I am still amazed at how God gave me a wife who is so "right" for me. I am so thankful for His excellent gift to me. From July, 2004 through May 2005, we had the privilege of leading a group of five couples who met weekly for Bible study and encouraging each other in our marriage relationships. We have enjoyed many morning times of Bible reading, prayer, and singing together. That has not been as regular lately, and I need to make sure that it becomes regular again.

In our busy routine of life in Terre Haute, it is too easy to let things that really matter get pushed aside. A change of scenery is no guarantee that this will change. But in this case, it has been a time for me to focus much more on God's gift of His son (that's what Christmas is all about) and his desire that I lead holy life that is pleasing to Him. This is not to earn God's favor (that's already accomplished by Jesus on the cross), but out of gratitude for what God has done for me.

If you wish to contact us, we will be at 8224 W. 82nd St., Indianapolis IN 46278 (317-347-0957) until July 31, 2006 and then back to 421 Bluebird Lane, Terre Haute, IN 47803 (812-877-7898). Email: anderson@rose-hulman.edu and andersdl@cs.rose-hulman.edu.



I expect that by Jan 2 or so I will have additional family pictures (and words) at <http://www.rose-hulman.edu/~anderson/2005>

Love,
Claude, Diane, and family