

Christmas 2002

Dear Friends and Family, Greetings. Since we last sent a major correspondence a great deal has happened in our family.

¶ Jon continues to work at Microsoft in their research division (MSR). He really enjoys his job and the people he works with. We have had several people over for meals and the like. It has been good to get to know them out of the office setting. Jon has also worked on several projects around the house. In addition to regular stuff, Jon has built a firewood stack, a shed, a mantle, and built a dresser to name just a few things. He continues to bike to work pretty regularly. He rode the Seattle to Portland Bicycle Ride again this year. He also completed his ride to Yakima from Seattle. He went to Boston and New Hampshire as well. He also went to some Mariners games with his mom. The main new thing has been being a dad. He has adjusted well and enjoys Eliot more every day.

¶ Christina is keeping busy with many different things. She is attending a weekly Bible Study on the book of John. She also cooks dinner for the Young Life crew on Mondays. She is tutoring a little also. She continues to enjoy cooking. Christina also helps with worship at church sometimes. Courage to Teach was also a large part of the last year. It is a five part workshop for teachers to better understand why they teach and better tap into the true spirit of teaching. It was a wonderful experience. She enjoys doing things with several of her friends as well. She has made several outings to the zoo, aquarium, Seattle Art Museum, and Starbucks, as well as local retail establishments. Many of these outings increased during the second half of the year, because Christina is on a leave of absence from Shorecrest High School. Christina is staying home to be a mom. She is really enjoying it. Eliot is a joy for her.

¶ Samson has had a year of transition. Not only does he have more people around him, he has been getting more walks and trips to the park. That has been a definite plus, but the house has definitely changed. Eliot makes things different, but Sam loves him.

¶ Cirrus agrees with Sam's assessment, but his great joy is that Sam now gets picked on occasionally.

¶ Eliot joined the family on May 5th. He is a wonderful little boy. Everyone says that, but it is true. He likes the outings he goes on with Christina. More often than not they involve other girls. So he is gaining an understanding of the female psyche at an early age. He can't quite crawl yet, but it won't be long. He is a happy, content baby who likes to play. He loves Samson and his parents. He had his first plane ride, to see Susie and Mike's wedding, and he has been on bike rides with his parents. It is quite likely he will have a larger role in subsequent letters.

¶ Our family wishes you and yours a very blessed Christmas. May the true meaning of the season bring you joy. Have a very Merry and Happy New Year as well. We hope to hear from or see you soon.

-- Jon, Christina, Eliot, Samson, and Cirrus Howell