

2024 Christmas Letter

December, 2024

Merry Christmas.

2024 seemed to be dominated by the national election, as if people were expecting us to get a savior out of it. But elections do not produce saviors. Politicians and governments may make some difference, but it was a little over 2000 years ago that a true Savior was born, in the little village of Bethlehem.

How great the Father's love for all mankind! He sent His Son to us. He is the One Who makes a real difference for us, now and forever. It is His birth we celebrate at Christmas.

Nita and I continue to enjoy living at The Vantage retirement community, where the staff speak to you by name, even if you are not wearing a name tag. There has been significant improvement in the early morning noise levels here, so we are even happier than last year. They offer a wide variety of gatherings, many which include live music and refreshments. This year we enjoyed the Solar Eclipse Watching party with protective eyewear provided; also their annual Oktoberfest was fun. (Nita likes it when they set up a Petting Zoo.)

At the weekly Bible Study, Steve has led a reading and discussion of the Gospels in chronological order. It is interesting to put the activities and the teachings of Jesus in context. We are using the Narrated Bible (www.thriftbooks.com/w/holy-bible-the-narrated-bible-niv_anonymous/294359) as the source for the text in time sequence. We highly recommend this version for reading through the Bible.

Steve and Nita continue to administer the Sunday Night Movies shown at The Vantage. These are Christian and inspirational films and the showings are generally well attended. Steve also continues to be on the Food Committee and was elected to be President of the Resident Council.

We often take walks around the Vantage "trail," as well walking indoors for exercise. Speaking of exercise, when Steve brings home the groceries (ordered online -- Nita no longer drives) there are stairs which we can use to bring the supplies right to our apartment door. Nita calls this "shopping aerobics." But her 2025 resolution is to join one of the weekly exercise programs here, to improve muscle tone.

At church, Steve continues to serve as an elder. We continue to be active in our home Bible study. What a great group! Steve volunteers at Fort Worth Pregnancy Center as part of a program to advise the fathers of the babies on the options and the support available. We have more than doubled the number of fathers seen compared to 2023, but we are still looking for ways to increase traffic, so there would be more opportunities to help babies survive and to present the Gospel.



Western Day at The Vantage

A social highlight of the year was the celebration of our birthdays at the end of May. Big "Thank You" to the over 80 people (about half from The Vantage) who made that event a very special time for us.

In 2024, we also found time to do things like genealogy club and book club (here at the Vantage), and history lectures at our local branch Library. We had a really good time at the annual Troop 50 Chili Supper, where Steve saw several fellow scouts from many years ago.

December 15 was our 34th Wedding Anniversary! Per our custom, we watched the wedding video -- and we realized that we are blessed to have three wonderful friends (who live nearby) who served as attendants in our wedding back in 1990! (That ceremony & reception was held in snowy Pennsylvania.) Then we viewed the video of our *second reception*, held in Texas, a few weeks later in January 1991 -- just days after the Gulf War began. Today there is still war in the Middle East, and we still need the Prince of Peace.

Healthwise, 2024 has been a year of ups and downs. We completed our cataract surgeries. Steve had a couple of extended periods of less pain than has been normal since coming down with fibromyalgia. Those periods were great blessings. We would love to figure out how to make them last longer. In July, we managed to share COVID with each other again. That was not fun, but we were never hospitalized. We had another sinus infection in the Fall. Most of the time, it just seems to take way too long to accomplish anything.

And one more BIG Praise Report: Arlington Heights Health and Rehab continues to provide good, compassionate care for Steve's first wife, Peggy. No trips to the hospital this year. Toward the end of 2024, Peggy became a little more active, and seems to be in a happy mood more often! We often find her in the dining/activity room or out in the hall when we arrive. Though she is still nonverbal (speech aphasia) she is nowadays a little more animated in communicating what she wants.

Please, dear friends, keep in touch.
Happy and Blessed 2025!! Jesus is coming back soon!!

God bless you,
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One of our favorite restaurants, Rockfish, opened a Fort Worth location

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