

Jehovah Shalom – God is my peace! How do we experience God's peace in a world filled with strife and anxiety and in the midst of change? All of us long for a state of inner peace separate from our circumstances. In Philippians 4:6-8, Paul tells us to not be anxious and instead to pray specifically with thanksgiving. As a result, we can experience the peace of God which exceeds our understanding. Isaiah 26:3 God will keep in perfect peace those whose trust in Him and whose thoughts are fixed on Him. By faith we need to focus on God, His Truth, and His promises instead of focusing on our circumstances. May God help us to walk in thankfulness; knowing in our hearts that God is good all the time.

This year has been a year of change for our family. Our prayer is that through all these changes our faith in God has been and will continue to grow and become stronger.

Visiting the PA State Farm Show was a first for the girls. It was an adventure complete with snow flurries, deep fried veggies, delicious milkshakes, maple syrup demos, and animals.

Proverbs 16:9 We can make plans but the Lord determines our steps. I (Karen) took the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders to Harrisburg to visit the Whitaker Center while the 4<sup>th</sup> graders toured the Capitol and the State museum. Thankfully the snow waited till after the field trip. There



was euphoria in the air as 30 inches of snow arrived that weekend! It was a blast to sled with friends! David had a challenge

finding parking on a field trip to the North Museum and Sturgis Pretzels with the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade since there were piles of snow. Blowing and drifting snow made for a tricky field trip to Hands on House and Roadside America with the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade.

Job 12:10 In His (God's) hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind. After another stroke 12/4/15, David's dad moved into a nursing home, and mom joined him 2 months later. They had 12 days together before Dad moved into eternity 2/28/16. Three months later, Mom moved 2.5 hours west to her daughter, Rose & Richard's house. It is a change for us after living next to each other for 12 years. Rose is doing a stellar job accommodating mom.



Their 12 year old, Ryan, also keeps life interesting for Grandma with his stories and energy! While hosting Ray and Mickey in August, we went west to visit mom, and later explored Raystown Lake.

At the winter retreat with OnFire Youth we were challenged to allow God to mold us and shape us through circumstances in life. Each youth also knotted a blanket to take home with them – thanks Shirley! OnFire no longer meets Sunday mornings, another change for us.

We explored Washington DC on bikes with Nevin & Mary and family over Easter vacation. Our excursion included the Lincoln Memorial, a Potomac River Boat tour, the White House, the Air & Space Museum, and a delicious Thai dinner with David's cousin's son Eric and Ari.



During a day trip to New York City in April, we had a Cambodian lunch, visited Manhattan's Intrepid Sea, Air, & Space Museum, and ended the day with a Japanese dinner at Ganso in Brooklyn, courtesy of Har-

ris.

Springtime brought more field trips. The DaVinci Science Center, Crayola Crayons, Gettysburg, and Washington DC were the destinations. A field trip for the ages was a 1 day trip to Williamsburg VA with the high school students!

In the summer, Mariah and Paige each hosted a friend for a few days. Memories were made as we had hobo lunches, went creek stomping, and decorated notebooks. Swimming and time spent with Grandma Zook also made the summer special! Another first for the girls was driving 4-wheeler and going to Ag Progress Days! Thanks to Grandpa and Grandma Zook!



In the Lebanon county fair, we entered caramel popcorn, cinnamon rolls, chocolate chip cookies, onions, cherry tomatoes, and a duct tape wallet. Some of our entrees were the only in their categories; we all got a few ribbons and cash. Mariah got first place for her chocolate chip cookies in competition against a dozen others.

Another major change was switching schools. A Beka was a great start for the girls, and at Ephrata



Mennonite School we continue to prepare the girls to be world changers. David and I studied and obtained our school bus drivers license to

serve EMS, me fulltime. Thankfully bus driving was not a new thing although learning all the lights and signals was new. 1 Timothy 1:12 It is God who strengthens us and appoints us to service.



A 2 week trip to Cambodia was a dream



come true. It was a blessing to spend time with Rachele Zook, who also served as our personal tour guide!

God's hand was in our trip- from blessing believers in Vietnam to safety while traveling on moto in crazy traffic. In Vietnam, we explored the tunnels of Củ Chi. (During the war in Vietnam, thousands of



Vietnamese people lived in an elaborate network of underground tunnels used to fight their enemy.) Back in the Khmer kingdom at Seim Reap, we toured the



famous Angkor Wat temple, ate tarantula, and had our feet treated at a fish spa. Traveling by boat (a 5 hour ride) from Seim Reap back to Phnom Pen allowed us to see many people

groups living in houseboats on the river.

Christmas again featured Florida with Ray & Mickey: we are thankful that they bless us with great food and relaxation including games of fishing and scum. God again blessed us with some gorgeous weather – boogie boarding, jet-skiing, boating, and jumping waves in the ocean was stimulating! Seeing the manatees in Homosassa Springs again point to a marvelous Creator who provides and cares for the animals by instincts He put in them. New Year's Eve in South Carolina with Susan &



Sokhon featured games, talking, and fireworks. Before heading north, we enjoyed New Year's Day lunch with David & Colette.

Mariah is 12 and adjusting well to 7<sup>th</sup> grade at EMS. She was thrilled to be a part of the Venture Out Program at Kenbrook Bible Camp in the summer. Day trips included spelunking, canoeing, rock climbing and hiking. The theme was IDENTITY and what it means to

be a follower of Christ. Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Singing the Psalms in the Lebanon County Choral Society Children's Chorus was a great opportunity for Mariah and Paige. They now take piano lessons at school. Mariah was finally old enough to go

whitewater rafting on the lower Youghiogheny, along with Tabitha! The dad's and oldest daughters



had lots of wild adventure especially when their raft flipped at Dimple and they swam some rapids! The rest of us did the middle Yough which is a mild float – thanks to God for allowing us to see a deer! Thanks to Ed & Darlene for a memorable weekend!

Paige is 10 and in 4<sup>th</sup> grade at EMS. She is excited to be learning Spanish. The ortho-K contacts she wears at night grant her perfect ability to see all the details she loves so much. She is very pleased to have the name Paige and that God made her a melancholy.

I (Karen) am so thankful for how God works. In Ladies Bible study we have been doing the book *Calm my Anxious Heart* by Linda Dillow. It talks a lot about having peace as we focus on Christ – a reiteration of our family theme this year. My schedule is very different being a full-time bus driver for EMS – and yes, the girls are on my bus! When I am able to attend, I have been blessed by the Moms in Prayer group at EMS.

David spent time managing his parents care. Pure-Test moved across the street, and continues to expand.

He is working at his light sport pilot license. He still exercises at the YMCA twice a



week, as well as treadmill at home.

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with His joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*David, Karen, Mariah, and Paige Brubacker*

