



*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord."*

*- Luke 2.10-11*

## 2008 | The Year of Baby Flynn 2: The Return of the Stork

Greetings of the season to you - our family and friends. We love receiving your Christmas cards and especially your newsletters. Here is our annual labor of love; our year in review...

Our greatest blessing of the year has been our beautiful baby girl, Mia Joy Flynn, born on July 11. We had our big ultrasound in February that revealed we were having a girl! We were given a baby shower in May at our church, Crestview Church of Christ, and Carl's stepmom Debbie and our sister-in-law Cathie came from Havasu to attend. Chantal had fun putting away all of the sherbet-colored baby gifts. Chantal's July 4 due date came and went and, since Baby Flynn decided not to come voluntarily, Chantal was induced a week later. After another fast and furious labor without any pain medication (about 2 hours from the start of contractions to delivery) our girl was here! Mia is living up to her name—she's an absolute joy, with a sweet personality, smiling eyes, a goofy smile and chunky Michelin tire thighs. We think she's quite simply adorable. She's a good breastfeeder and a good sleeper. She loves her big brother Logan and lights up whenever he comes near. She loves to be held, is discovering that her feet are fun to play with and is rolling over. She enjoys playing with her toys, being in her activity gym, watching running water from faucets and sitting up at the kitchen table with us. We laugh at the funny noises she makes, and Chantal thinks that her Native American name would be Barking Seal. She dressed up as a water lily for her first Halloween and graciously tolerated her flower petal headpiece. We are in love with our little girl and are so thankful she has joined our little family.

Logan turned three in June and celebrated with a "Cars"-themed birthday party. He looked forward to the birth of "our baby" and liked to say that "when she is all done growing, then we will see her face-to-face." He loves Mia, is very protective and affectionate and looks forward to when she can play with him. However, now that he's three and Mia is here, his behavior has taken a turn for the worse. He doesn't always listen or follow directions and is often just plain disobedient. We've taken a "Love and Logic" parenting class and are working with him on a moment-by-moment basis. We also try to be very intentional about each of us spending one-on-one time with him. Logan attended a Pre-School Music Camp at church this summer and currently attends Mother's Day Out twice a week. He saw his first movie in a theater when Papa Chuck and Grandma Joan took him to see "WALL-E" this summer, and has enjoyed attending a couple of Baylor football games with Daddy. Logan loved playing at the splash park at Sea World in April, meeting Snoopy at Knott's Berry Farm and getting his first taste of amusement park rides in September, dressing up as a frog for Halloween, and putting the ornaments on our Christmas tree. Hobbies and special interests include playing outside, golfing in the backyard, racing vehicles on various surfaces, fixing things with his tools, swimming in his inflatable backyard swimming pool, building with Legos and wood scraps, books, trains, "Cars" vehicles, Play-Doh, Mr. Potato Head, Candyland, stickers, dinosaurs, various Disney and Pixar movies, watching Animal Planet, "Mister Rogers' Neighborhood", "The Muppet Show" and "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer". Logan's "quote of the year" was when he first observed Mia breastfeeding and exclaimed, "Hey, don't eat Mommy's chest!"

Carl accepted a new position at Baylor this summer as Director of Marketing and Communications for Information Technology and University Libraries. In his new role, he manages internal and external communication for the Information Technology Services department and all of the libraries at Baylor University. Carl has worked on the publicity for Baylor's new sustainability (recycling, etc.) efforts, designed and produced a book for the Armstrong Browning Library, promoted the libraries' annual fundraising lecture, and much, much more. He enjoys the challenges of developing this new office and believes he is applying his strengths. Professional conferences have taken him to Austin, Texas and Raleigh, North Carolina. Work keeps him busy, but his primary love remains his family. He loves being Daddy to Logan and Mia, and enjoys stealing moments with Chantal to watch our favorite shows ("LOST" and "The Office") or just catch up with one another. Carl had knee surgery in February to cut away a torn meniscus (knee cartilage). He's playing basketball again and is supposed to

be taking things a little easier. He co-leads the adult education ministry at Crestview, which feeds his ongoing desire to be involved in theological education. In his “spare” time he works on home improvement projects that include building and installing book shelves, unpacking boxes of books, clearing the clutter out of the house and the garage, maintaining the house and keeping the yard presentable.

Chantal’s pregnancy was night and day different this time around. She experienced many of the “typical” pregnancy symptoms (nauseous, hungry, tired, various aches and pains) that she managed to avoid with Logan and was generally sick (including losing her voice twice) throughout most of it. But it was all oh-so worth it. She loves her little family and feels incredibly blessed by them. However, she routinely feels overwhelmed in her role as full-time caretaker of an active toddler and a baby, as well as her duties of taking care of the house, running errands, etc. She is often discouraged by Logan’s disobedience, and feels like she is constantly in survival mode. She longs for a female confidante with whom she can regularly get together and share stories (and wisdom) about life and motherhood. She also finds herself grieving the loss of Mama more in recent months than she has previously. Her love for Mama was complicated; evidently the grieving process is too. She attended Crestview’s Ladies Retreat in April, and has relished going through boxes and storage bins as part of an on-going effort to clear out the clutter and get organized.

There were also a number of other noteworthy events throughout the year. Carl’s mom and stepdad Chuck visited us in April, and later that month we travelled to Lake Havasu to meet our new niece, Maya (born to our brother Sean and sister-in-law Chevonne), and to see most of Carl’s family. The following weekend we traveled to San Antonio to take Logan to Sea World for one last trip before our little family of three became a little family of four. We finally sold Mama’s house in June (praise the Lord!). In July we welcomed a handful of visitors who came to meet Mia (Mom & Chuck, Dad & Deb, Chantal’s beloved friend Jenni & her daughter Tessa). This fall we spanned the U.S., going first to Knott’s Berry Farm in California (Mia’s first plane ride) to celebrate our niece Carlene’s birthday and to have most of the aunts, uncles and cousins meet Mia, then to New Castle, Pennsylvania, to have Chantal’s grandma moved from where she’d been buried in Palm Springs to finally rest beside Chantal’s grandpa [Mama wasn’t able to take care of it before she died, so the responsibility passed to Chantal. Once we got the money from the sale of Mama’s house, moving Gram was first on the list of things to do]. While in New Castle (the hometown of Mama’s side of the family) we stayed with Chantal’s cousins Yo and Henry, and Chantal fell in love with them all over again. We visited with many of Chantal’s relatives who still live in the area (and shared some great family stories), visited relatives’ graves at three cemeteries and toured the downtown area. Chantal also officiated at Gram’s informal graveside interment, which was attended by about 15 relatives. It was an amazing trip for Chantal. She loved being among “her people” (some of whom she hadn’t seen in 20 years) and has a renewed love and appreciation for her extended family.

We celebrated our 16<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on December 12 and rejoice that on this special day our dear friend Justin Schneider asked Angela Boyd to be his bride (she said, “Yes”). We are very much looking forward to Mia’s first Christmas. As Logan likes to say, “It is going to be the best Christmas ever!” We’ll welcome in the New Year in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, when Dad & Deb treat about 20 of us to a week there.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! We wish you love, peace and blessings in 2009.

Love,

Carl, Chantal, Logan and Mia

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*The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you, and give you peace.*

- Numbers 6.24-26

