



2020 Flynn Family Christmas Newsletter

The Lord bless you and keep you, make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace... Amen, amen, amen...May His favor be upon you and a thousand generations, your family and your children, and their children, and their children...May His presence go before you and behind you and beside you, all around you and within you, He is with you, He is with you...In the morning, in the evening, in your coming, and your going, in your weeping, and rejoicing, He is for you, He is for you...

· "The Blessing" by Chris Brown, Cody Carnes, Kari Jobe and Steven Furtick ·

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Somehow our 2019 newsletter didn't happen and here we are, at the end of the dumpster fire that has been 2020. When Chantal first heard "The Blessing" (condensed lyrics above) in the midst of the pandemic, she wept and wept. Since then, it has been an enormous encouragement to her through the struggles of 2020. We hope it can be an encouragement to you as well.

2020 began as "normal" as any other year. After a restful, fun, and playful Christmas Break and ringing in the New Year with friends, we went back to school and work. One of our last, best memories was Carl taking Mia on a Valentine's Day lunch date and Chantal taking Logan on a Valentine's Day lunch date, before Carl and Chantal enjoyed a Valentine's Day dinner together. Soon after, COVID hit during our Spring Break in mid-March...and everything changed. Logan & Mia transitioned to online classes (and ultimately finished the school year rather uneventfully), Carl began working from home, and Chantal bounced between home and her duties at Live Oak Classical School. Our church (Crestview Church of Christ) did a wonderful job of keeping us all connected, and Live Oak's administrators sent prayerful & encouraging emails – and Chantal says the combination "kept her sane." Our elders hired a new Youth Minister, Ethan Rowell, in May, and he (and his wife Brianna, who we've known and loved since she was a baby) has been a huge blessing. Thanks to COVID, a summer usually filled with a variety of Youth Group activities already on the calendar was instead rationed out week by week. Carl & Chantal both turned 50 in June, marked the milestone by getting their first routine colonoscopies, and celebrated simply with close friends. Chantal's "big gift" was having Carl help her arrange a come-and-go Zoom call (which ended up lasting four hours!) with some of the most significant people from her life. Chantal was diagnosed with COVID in July. Thankfully it was mild, and she recovered quickly, but her sense of taste still hasn't completely returned. Logan & Mia began the school year in person in August and the fall semester has gone well for the most part. We added an adorable baby guinea pig named Leo to our family in September and grieved the sudden and unexpected loss of our beloved adult guinea pig Wilbur in October. On December 12th we celebrated our 28th wedding anniversary, and we are excited about our niece Sierra's wedding next spring.

Logan (15 - Rhetoric 1/10th grade) built his own desk in Woodshop class last year and started playing on Live Oak's golf team in the spring, but the season ended before it really began (thanks, COVID). This fall he practiced golf and joined Live Oak's new Esports team playing Overwatch. He also learned how to produce gameplay videos and is currently building his own gaming computer. He is playing basketball and over the Christmas Break will finish preparing to get his drivers permit in January. His favorite class is modern history with Coach V.



Mia (12 going on 30 - Logic 1/7th grade) says that this year hasn't been the best year, but here are some highlights of her 2020. She "stepped up" to Crestview's Youth Group in April, participated in many community service projects, and bonded with many of the other Youth Group members. She has had a lot of fun being in the Logic/Rhetoric School (junior high/high school) and having a new and different experience. When school started in the fall, she played junior high volleyball and loved it. Now she's giving junior high soccer a try and they've had their first game. She has had fun so far and can't wait until they are at their best to play! Her favorite class is Woodshop and her current interests are engineering, photography, graphic design and interior design.

Carl continues to do all the things that Carls do. He husbands adequately, Dads pretty well, and is in a healthy place as 2020 grinds to a close. The year blessed him with plenty to manage at Baylor. The Libraries welcomed a new Dean, Jeffrey Archer, who is a wonderful person and just the leader they need — a Godsend, indeed. The IT side of Carl's world also named his longtime friend and colleague Jon Allen as CIO — another great, timely appointment. At Crestview, Carl continues to oversee the Adult Education Ministry with the help of a team of great teachers. This year Crestview journeyed through John's Apocalypse, an excellent study by John Mark Hicks on Baptism and the Lord's Supper through the lens of New Creation, and the theology and ethics of letters in the New Testament. When COVID hit, Carl and everyone else at Baylor poured themselves into helping the university make the quick transition to an online university. At the same time, Carlye Thornton, who worked with Carl as an intern and then as a full-time colleague for five years, transitioned to a new role at the university. This was a great career move that Carl supported, but his team lost a valuable member. As Baylor pivoted online, so did Crestview. Carl continues to produce (and sometimes teach) a weekly online Sunday Morning Bible Class for those who remain home to keep themselves and our community safe. The 2020 Deep in the Heart Film Festival (@deepintheheartff) also went virtual and Carl hosted a couple of Q&A sessions via Zoom from our living room. Finally, by the grace of God, Carl was able to coach his eighth season of high school volleyball at Live Oak Classical School. The team worked hard during an abbreviated season, grew, made the playoffs, and lost in the round of 16 to the eventual state champions. As usual, he and his head coach are all ready for summer and August to arrive! While the pandemic conditions and the cultural forces that fanned its flames made 2020 very difficult to endure at times, Carl learned a lot through it: working at home gave him some new perspectives on work and family life, the breakdown of the structures of our lives forced him to rethink everything, and he is hopeful that he doesn't let go of the things he has realized as "normal" tries to re-impose itself...maybe too quickly.

Chantal was reassigned to the newly created role of Operations Manager at Live Oak at the end of the 2018-2019 school year after 7 years as the Logic/Rhetoric (junior high/high school) Office Manager. She works behind-the-scenes with policies and procedures and is responsible for keeping the school calendars accurate (plus lots of "other duties as assigned"). This fall she was given the additional title of "COVID Czarina" by our Head of School: she is part of a small group of colleagues who document positive COVID cases and close contact/exposure among our staff and students, as well as being the COVID Point of Contact for Live Oak with our county health district. In Feb. 2019, she went on a fabulous jet setting adventure with her friend & fellow Live Oak mom Lorynn to see her favorite band from her adolescent years, Duran Duran, in concert in Las Vegas. The entire trip lasted less than 24 hours. Not bad for an old lady. Sheltering-at-home in the early weeks-turned-to-months of the pandemic this spring/summer was emotionally challenging for her, but she created a "little corner of paradise" on the back patio with the help of colorful potted plants, renewed her long-dormant love of old school Solitaire (with actual playing cards, thank you very much), and began walking regularly — especially with our beloved friend & neighbor Kaki and her beloved dog Spot. She used some of her birthday gift money to buy a cocktail shaker set and has learned to make a really delicious margarita. As of press time, she has lost 30 pounds (and counting) since mid-May (thanks MyFitnessPal app...wait, what do you mean there's such a thing as serving size?!).

We wish you a Merry Christmas and many blessings in 2021!



Carl, Chantal, Logan, and Mia

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