

The Daleys - 2010

This year has been full. Full of activity and also full of blessing. A lot of the time has been the family time all together and that makes the time blessed instead of busy.

In January, we started off the year by continuing our recent tradition of taking a long vacation in New Hampshire with Jon's family. We played a lot in the snow (the last couple years in NH have been good for snow - for a number of years we hadn't seen much snow, but now it is like Jon remembers it growing up).

In February, we had a ton of snow in Pittsburgh (we've never seen much snow in Pittsburgh, but apparently, there was a big storm in '93 or '94) and that was fun, though Pittsburgh had reduced its snow plowing budget recently, and so the city was shut down for a week or two. We drove down to Pittsburgh to shovel out our old house/rental property, since though it hadn't been discussed, it seemed like a lot of snow for our parking space renters to have to shovel when they showed up to work at 5:30AM. It turns out that they planned for shoveling and arrived early to do so, so were pleasantly surprised that the driveway was already shoveled. The street wasn't though, and so was blocked for everything except for SUVs and trucks for a couple weeks when the sun finally melted it. We missed our usual Canadian Thanksgiving last year due to some people being sick, so we went to celebrate "Family Day", which is a relatively new Canadian holiday, and it was fun to be there in the snow. A quote from Jonathan while munching on dried cranberries, "I would have a happy life with air, cranberries, a Bible, and chips."

In March, Jon went to the Dominican Republic with some college students on a mission trip. He enjoyed the trip quite a bit, and though he only knew Sesame Street Spanish prior to a couple weeks before the trip, the crash audiobook course he took worked out pretty well, and the rest of the family enjoyed learning some Spanish as well. He doesn't know if he'll go again, though occasionally entertains thoughts of moving down there. When he got back from the DR, he learned how to replace the brake lines on the car, and it turns out that with the new copper/nickel alloy, doing the brake lines aren't that bad - how people do it with steel pipe is unknown...

In April, we started to get outdoors, and went on a hike with the Linds in Harrison Hills County Park. We did our first geocaching outing, courtesy of Jon's new phone that includes a GPS. It turns out that there are items hidden all over the place, including one right near church. We did that one first, since it was hidden 30 feet from the path. And we enjoyed that so much that we went to a longer one, which was a couple mile trail, and then bushwhacking off of the trail to get to the hidden object, which was buried down in an old hollow tree. Fortunately that box contained bandaids, which we gratefully used after getting scratched up by the thorns.

In May, we found out that Heather was pregnant, but two days after we decided to tell our kids and our parents, Heather had a miscarriage. Heather was surprised at how much like post-labor it was, physically, instead of being "just" emotional pain. Jon and Jonathan biked to Ohiopyle with some guys from church. We had purchased a TrailGator last year, but only used it a little bit. It was harder towing Jonathan than Jon expected, and ended up trading bikes with a friend so we could make it the whole way. Jonathan also biked ten miles on his own, which helped immensely in giving us a break from towing him. It rained a lot that weekend, so it wasn't the best camping trip I've ever had, and many of the guys went home early, but we had some significant conversations about the direction of our lives and of our church. Jon told Jonathan that I wasn't going to tow him home, but he could bike by himself to Connellsville (17 miles). He was disappointed that he couldn't go further, but everyone else wanted to go at a much faster pace, so needed to have Jonathan go in the car.

Since we had so much fun biking together, Jon started looking around on the internet in June, reading about families biking on long trips together, including some families doing multi-year trips across the country. He discovered that there are tandem bikes that have up to six seats, though with a huge price tag. He found a used three-seater bike in New Jersey, so we made a vacation out of it, and picked up the bike. We've since biked quite a bit (Jon biked 500 miles this year, which he hasn't done for a number of years). We celebrated Noah's fourth birthday and our ninth anniversary. We also found out that Heather is pregnant again! This baby is due at the beginning of March, 2011. The big news at church was that our pastor resigned because of significant theological differences. Though necessary, it was a tough announcement and our church has struggled with the implications and consequences.

In July, Jon and all the kids joined some church people for a bike trip along the Great Allegheny Passage. This trip was full of adventures including several flat tires for the triple, sleeping in the car because we forgot tent poles, and leaving one of the party behind at the end point. Later in the month, we took our annual vacation to the Maggie P where everyone enjoyed sailing, sand, water, good seafood, and good company. Jonathan spent two nights camping with Grammy and Papa in Massachusetts. We then switched boys and Noah spent two nights with them also: his first time sleeping away from home. Heather was concerned that two nights might be too much, but he came back stating, "I wish I could stay with them all the time!"

August was our big family biking trip to Washington, DC. We started at the highest point on the Great Allegheny Passage and then met up with the C&O Canal Towpath which we followed all the way to DC. Jon, Jonathan, and Noah biked on the triple. Faith rode behind them in the trailer the first half of the first day, and then rode in the support van with Heather the rest of the trip. It was a great experience and a lot of fun, with only a few mishaps and no flat tires. In DC, we spent a few extra days with some friends, hanging out with them and visiting the monuments and museums. At the end of the month, we joined the extended Daley family for a long weekend on a houseboat on the Mississippi River.

Faith turned two in September. Grandma came for a visit and she was able to participate with us in our normal household schedule, watching how we do chores (and helping the grateful grandchildren) and school as a family.

October held another bike trip with church friends, with Jon, Jonathan, Noah, and Faith riding and Heather staying at home for a day to herself. We made it to Hamilton for Canadian Thanksgiving this year. We went on the traditional apple-picking trip and introduced Jon's cousins to geocaching and went to a farm show. Faith stopped wearing diapers during the day. Heather turned 31.

In November, Jonathan lost his two front teeth, but wondered why anyone would want only them for Christmas and not something cool like a Star Wars Lego set. Grandma and Dad-o arrived just in time for Jonathan's seventh birthday which was a blast. We had a few days visiting with them before we all headed to the Philadelphia area for Thanksgiving. Full of family, food, and fun as usual, we had a great time with everyone.

December started with a first snow that stuck and the weather has kept up the good wintry/Christmasy feel. The time has been good, with Advent discussions and preparations, and not too much busyness. We'll be heading to New Hampshire after Christmas to be with Jon's family and we'll see how much snow they have this year!