

# Daley Christmas 2013

Hello! This year's Christmas letter will have to do for two years. After much thought over many years, suddenly someone offered to buy the house we were living in, and we moved to Jon's hometown of Hillsboro, New Hampshire.

The move happened in June 2012. That very month we found out that Heather was pregnant! The first six months, we lived in Jon's parents' house while we fixed up our new/old Victorian "mansion". One highlight from that work was the discovery of a 100 year old Mother's Day card inside the wall! We did a lot of the work ourselves, but this was the first house that we paid a variety of contractors to do a lot of the work, with the associated positives and negatives to go along with that. Work on the house continues slowly.

We moved into our house just before Christmas 2012, giving us just under two months to prepare for the early arrival of Jeremiah Patrick Daley on February 13, 2013. Jon was in Seattle on the 13<sup>th</sup>, planning to come home on the 14<sup>th</sup>, but changed plans when hearing from Heather in the morning that today was likely the day. He arrived home just in time to turn around and drive to the birth center in Concord.

We've gotten used to living here by now, having begun new friendships and routines. We enjoy being able to walk places again (we hadn't realized how much we would miss that when we moved to the suburbs of Pittsburgh). Noah and Faith started taking piano lessons from Grammy when we first came, and this year Jonathan joined them. It is so fun to hear the piano being played by the whole family. Heather and Jon play handbells in the handbell choir at Smith Church with Jon's parents. Jon plays trombone most weeks at the Valley Bible Chapel, and relationships have started to grow in that fellowship.

The three older kids started something new for us also this year - karate lessons! Jonathan had been asking for karate lessons since before we moved, and his desire never waned. The location is perfect, just around the corner a couple of blocks from our house. Everyone is enjoying it and have decided that they should teach Dad at home.

Homeschooling continues with Jonathan in fourth grade, Noah in second grade, Faith in kindergarten, and Joy and Jeremiah eagerly tagging along and eating math manipulatives, respectively. Some days go really great, and some days go really horribly, and somehow they keep on learning.

Jon joined the fire department here and goes on calls any chance he gets. He's gotten to spray some water on a few small fires, get soaking wet putting booms across a small river when a tractor-trailer turned over into it, and mostly being the new guy "probie", though he looks forward to getting rid of the "pink" helmet (it's really orange, but sometimes pejoratively referred to as pink). He will be working on

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his EMT next year as Hillsboro could use more medical staff. In the meantime, he's being trained to drive the ambulance and has gone on some medical calls to watch, learn, and hopefully be helpful.

Lime Daley is still going strong. Web hosting has been pretty consistent, with an occasional new customer from time to time. Jon currently has two big software jobs going on, but is looking forward to a slower pace next year. We are thankful for the opportunity he has to be self-employed and be home and really active in our family's life. A hearty thank you to those of you who are also our customers!

Heather continues her role as Mommy, wife, teacher, cook, cleaner, bookkeeper, nurse, mediator, confidant, etc. She is hosting a women's Bible study in our house once a week. Taking care of and homeschooling a family of seven in a big old house is a lot of work. But the fruit is sweet. Whenever she starts wondering if it's worth it or if it's just too much, something happens or someone says something that reminds her why she does what she does. For example, as she was wrestling with the thought that maybe five kids is enough, Jonathan said to her, "Mom, I hope our next baby is a sister." The kids love having a big family! As much as we struggle with each other, we love each other so much and enjoy being a team. And as much as you might say she's crazy (she says it of herself!) she doesn't want to miss out on the blessing of helping another person grow and discover the wonders of life. God made people beautiful and the childlike joy of discovering the world brings sunshine into the home.

There's nothing like the sound of baby giggles, and watching Jeremiah learn to walk is as amazing as it was to watch the others. Joy is blooming in speech and has some fun insights into life. Faith is a sweet, caring girl who also takes karate very seriously. Noah is Daddy's helper, helping him with most projects and even earning money working with him on Lime Daley business trips. Jonathan, just beginning his second decade, continues to be a voracious reader, and is never lukewarm but always either super hot on an idea or super cold against it.

At any given time, at least some of us are home, and are happy to have people drop by for a cup of tea, or for staying over for longer than that (this house comes with an attached apartment!)

We wish you joy and peace for Christmas and the coming year!