

Dear friends,

Merry Christmas! As you look forward to celebrating Christ's birth and look back on another year that has flown by, our prayer is that you see God's hand at work in your life and in the world.



If we were to pick a theme for the year 2012 for our family, perhaps it would be "togetherness". It is amazing to reflect on the changes that have taken place over the past couple years. Not long ago our closest family member was an 8 hour drive away from us, and our 3 daughters lived in three different countries. Now that Sara and Eric live 20 minutes from us and Jason, Laura, Mika and Luke live on the very same street, we have so many family get-togethers that a few months ago we decided to shop on Craigslist for a bigger dining room table to accommodate our growing family! We are very grateful for all the love and laughter that fill our home. Here is an update on our lives in 2012:

Andrea is the one member of our family who is still far away – she continues to live in Aguascalientes, Mexico. We all really miss her and look forward to her being here for Christmas. Andrea had a big transition this past summer – she finished up her second term of service with Evangelical Friends Mission and accepted a position as a professor of music at the "Centro Cultural Mexico Contemporaneo." She has loved teaching, and finds that she still has many opportunities to share Christ's love with students, co-workers and friends, so she continues to be involved in ministry on a more informal basis. Andrea is about to begin her last class toward completing her Master of Arts degree, so she is excited about graduating next spring.

Sara and Eric are feeling more settled this year – Sara is in her second year of teaching high school math and Eric is nearing the halfway point of law school. They both keep very busy during the school year, but were able to do some traveling and complete some projects on their home over the summer. They have also enjoyed doing some gardening. We love being treated to fresh okra from their garden, or the sweet potato casserole that they made for our Thanksgiving dinner from their most recent crop. Sara and Eric help lead a young adults' group at our church, and Eric plays bass guitar in the worship band.

Jason and Laura bought their first home in March, just three doors down from us! God's timing and provision were perfect – shortly after they moved, Laura joined the Family Medicine Residency Program at UTMB as a second year medical resident. With Laura's busy schedule, having grandparents just a few steps away has been helpful in terms of providing care for Mika and Luke. We are really glad that Laura is going to be able to finish her residency and use the gifts that God has given her to help others. Jason continues his work as North America director for the mission organization Servants to Asia's Urban Poor, along with taking on more responsibilities at home to help accommodate Laura's schedule.

David's work with the Coalition for Hispanic Ministries continues to inspire and challenge him with a variety of projects and tasks, from helping to nurture new church plants, providing leadership training for Hispanic pastors, helping to administrate conferences and learning opportunities, and speaking out on issues like immigration reform. Along with Joyce's work as the administrator at Friendswood Friends Church, she keeps busy with mission projects, helping people with taxes, and cooking lots of family dinners. We both take great delight in our time with Mika (almost 3) and Luke (16 months). It is such a gift to be a daily part of their lives, and we cherish that gift even more after having been through the experience of having our only grandchild on the opposite side of the world in Indonesia. Each day brings new adventures, new learning, new places in our house that need to be child-proofed.....



We pray for God's rich blessing on you and your loved ones in 2013. We'd love to hear from you!

In Christ,
Joyce and David Byrne



Rejoice!