

Greetings from the Linscotts of Marshall, Minnesota!

In the collection known as *Olney Hymns*, John Newton wrote:

*Bless, O LORD, the op'ning year
To each soul assembled here;
Clothe thy word with pow'r divine,
Make us willing to be thine.*

*Let the minds of all our youth
Feel the force of sacred truth;
While the gospel—call they hear
May they learn to love and fear!*



The Linscott House at 501 North Minnesota Street



Dad & Reggie celebrated Banner 17

With 2009 approaching, we trust that you will experience the blessing of God as you better understand and apply what it means to love and fear Him in the coming year.

This past year has been a time of great transition for our family. After serving for nearly 4 years at Faith Baptist in Skowhegan, Maine, God used declining financial circumstances to make it clear that ministry opportunity was drawing to a close. In August 2007, we left extended family and dear friends we had grown to love in the Pine Tree State and ventured west to Grand Rapids, Michigan, as we sought what God had in store for the next phase of our lives. Around the same time we were settling into Jennifer's parents' home, First Baptist Church in Marshall, Minnesota was beginning their search for a new pastor. Greg was initially contacted by one of the deacons in late August or early September. In November, he traveled to Marshall and interviewed with the deacons. An invitation to preach as a candidate was extended in December, and on Sunday, January 13, 2008, a unanimous vote was given to call Greg as the new pastor at First Baptist. The call was accepted, and the following day was spent with a realtor looking at houses in Marshall. By Tuesday, we had settled on a home (which had just gone on the market the previous

Friday!), made an offer, and started to travel back to Michigan to tie up our commitments there and pack our things. The hand of Divine Providence was certainly evident to us in the course of events, and we are humbled and grateful for this new door that has opened.

Marshall, Minnesota is a town of just under 13,000 people, located in SW Minnesota. We are about 50 miles north of I-90, 90 minutes from Sioux Falls, SD, and 3 hours from the Twin Cities. Marshall is home to the Schwan Corporation, which is best known for the familiar golden trucks that deliver frozen foods to homes around the world. Schwan also owns well-known frozen food grocery brands such as Red Baron and Freschetta's Pizza. South-west Minnesota State University, Turkey Valley Farms, US Bank, and Archer-Daniels-Midland are other major employers here.

First Baptist Church of Marshall has existed well over 40 years now, and has an attendance of about 60-80 people on a typical Sunday morning. Our active membership is slightly smaller (around 35). The church building, located on the outskirts of town, is about 5 years old and completely paid for. The congregation has people represented from most every age demographic, with the highest concentration in "empty nesters" in their mid to late 50s. The town offers promising opportunities for ministry, with the university campus (about 3500 students), and a varied employment base that is about as stable as possible (given the current economic climate, anyway) providing a steady stream of new faces.

Our family has found Marshall to be a pleasant community to put roots down in. The home we are making payments on has 4 bedrooms and a finished basement, with another room we are able to dedicate to school. The town is big enough to have a reasonable number of amenities (including a Super Wal-Mart for Jennifer!), but small enough where we can walk or ride our bikes in good weather to about any location in the town limits. We have found most residents to be pleasant and accommodating.

Greg has adjusted well to the responsibilities of the new ministry here. He has been preaching through Mark's gospel for the majority of the time here in the AM services, and looks to finish that by the first of 2009. He is enjoying (for the most part)



Dori's car did well at the Awana Grand Prix!



*Celebrating the first day of school 2008-09
(NOTE: this was definitely a pose)*



Before

the responsibilities of being a homeowner. Since arriving in Marshall, he has been able to try some new things with the men in the church, including roofing, golf, and deer hunting, which have aided greatly in expanding his horizons! Probably the thing most will remember, however, was his motor scooter accident in early August. We are grateful that his injuries were not more severe, and that he basically only missed the month of August in his recovery process. He has a few scars still, but the doctors say they should diminish significantly over time. On the positive side, though, he has shed 30 pounds since beginning to diet in late June.

Jennifer, in addition to maintaining her regular responsibilities in keeping the house and caring for and educating the children, recently took on a part-time position as a job coach to mentally challenged people. The ones she works with currently are mostly contracted with Merry Maids. Earlier in the year, she learned some nursing skills as she cared not only for Greg after his accident, but for all three girls as they had their tonsils and adenoids removed! Jennifer has also lost 30 pounds so far. At the church, she has enjoyed leading some ladies meetings, teaching in the Kids 4 Truth Clubs, and expanding her horizons by accompanying on the piano for some services.



After

Abby is now 10 years old and in the 5th grade. She entered one of her paintings in the Lyon County Fair this year and won the Grand Champion ribbon for her age and art category. She and Kati have also taken on a daily paper route (while Mom & Dad share yet another one). She has been able to take some short-term classes in art here and there, while also maintaining piano and taking up the clarinet in the local Middle School band. Abby was able to save her own money to buy an American Girl doll this year, too.



Picnicking at Camden State Park

Kati is 9 and in the 4th grade. She maintains her violin skills, and has played a few times now in various church and ministry settings (such as the nursing home). She still plays the piano, and took up the flute in the middle school band this year, as well as playing her violin in the Middle School orchestra. Kati was able to go to camp for the first time this summer along with Abby and another girl from our church. Like Abby, Kati also saved her own money to get an American Girl doll.



Reggie wishes Mom a Happy Birthday!

Dori is 5 1/2 and in kindergarten. She is learning the piano and violin, and enjoys playing with her sisters and brother, as well as the neighbor children surrounding our home. She has continued to be very sociable with new people we are meeting here, and has enjoyed going over to the Stoneberg's house (a couple in our church) with her sisters to ride Miss Joanne's horses.

Reggie has grown by leaps and bounds. He is saying several words (including "Celtics- yay!" :-)), and enjoys shaking hands with people. He likes riding on Dad's shoulders, and has been an active participant in many of our visitation efforts. Much to our disappointment, however, he has not yet taken up a musical instrument- but we're working on him! As you can see in the picture below, he has enjoyed Callie, a golden retriever who is the latest addition to the Linscott clan, a great deal.



Reggie welcomes our new dog, Callie

Our family wishes you and yours all the joy and happiness of this season of Advent and Nativity. The birth of Christ provides us with cause for rejoicing that is unmerited by any of us, yet is available to all who repent of their sins and call upon Him Who came as a child, but grew to become our atoning sacrifice. As William Dix wrote:

*Good Christians, fear, for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading,
Nails, spear shall pierce Him through,
The cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail the Word made flesh,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.*



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