



## 2007 Weber Christmas Letter

To our Family and Friends,

This year I've decided to head up the Christmas newsletter, unlike other years when it is generally Brooksyne's project! However she will edit the letter and, like she does each morning, she'll fix my goofs (most of them anyway) and make it more colorful!

In June Ester walked through the graduation line with her Donegal High School class this Spring. She now attends "School to Work" which is teaching her basic job skills with the goal of becoming a reliable worker and living independently.

2007 has proven to be a good health year for Ester though she's had the usual maladies common to heart patients. She's only missed one day of school this fall season due to heart related illness. That's a record!! With the doctor's blessings, Brooksyne signed Ester up at Curves, a women's health fitness center, and she had her first work-out yesterday. Brooksyne reported that during her own work-out, while looking on as Ester was being trained on the equipment, she kept wiping away tears as she considered how far Ester has progressed physically over the past 18 years. She was reflecting on earlier scenes in her mind where Ester laid in the hospital for months at a time recovering from surgeries. In her early years she perplexed her cardiologists while they tried to deal with her complex heart problems but God has graciously helped Ester to overcome and we're enjoying the fruit of His goodness.

We continue to attend Mount Pleasant Brethren in Christ Church (the same church we've attended since moving to Lancaster County in 2001 with the exception of our interim roles in two other churches.) We've made many life-long friends in this loving congregation. Brooksyne continues to be active musically, Ester with the youth, and I fill in from time to time in the pulpit. We enjoy the illustrative and substance filled sermons Pastor Bob prepares weekly.

We often feature photos of our two colorful pets, Roxie and Dottie, over the internet. They do have different petalities; Roxie enjoys getting out and her "ministry" as a pet therapist. Dottie really doesn't like to get out at all (she's a real homebody) and the periodic trips for her shots is a big deal to her. This year Roxie had two notable adventures: she was sprayed by a skunk twice and got her paw caught in a fox trap. She (and we) have recovered from all three unwelcomed incidents.

The Weber family hosted the Steincross family reunion in Branson, Missouri in August. The Steincross family has held this reunion annually since the mid-seventies. We had a great time and were able to enjoy a number of family oriented shows in the Branson area. After riding on the duck boat I've decided I'd like to be a duck boat captain when I retire so I can actually get paid for being silly.

Brooksyne's sister Marge, at 57 years, passed away in January and she went to Oklahoma for the service. It was a sad occasion for the siblings to gather but we're realizing this is going to happen more and more as we continue to grow older. Elaine, Brooksyne's older sister who lives in Texas, came to visit us this summer for the first time since we moved to Mount Joy in 2001. We enjoyed driving her and daughter, Courtney, through Amish country and introducing them to Lancaster County. They commented that this county was the prettiest area they'd seen in all their travels over the summer as they toured the states in their RV.

Our main ministry focus continues to be the Daily Encouragement ministry over the internet, which celebrated its 11th anniversary this October. Each weekday morning we collaborate in writing these messages and distribute them using a variety of means such as email, website, various blogs and podcast. Generally it takes us all morning. Most of you are familiar with this ministry and actually many know us only through this. However if you are reading this and aren't sure what we are talking about please visit our [site](#), which is updated each weekday! We both find great fulfillment in the many folks we meet via the internet who are devoted in their faith, who are looking for spiritual answers or who may share a need with us seeking prayer, counsel or words of comfort. We hear from people all over the world, including many in closed countries, which makes us realize the awesome privilege we have of using this as a means of world-wide ministry.

I've also started three new blogs this year:

A humor blog that also may be satirical called "[A Little Foolishness](#)"

A blog that merely contains each day's prayer from daily encouragement called "[A Daily Prayer](#)"

My newest has little content thus far but some big plans. It's called "[Clear Minded](#)" and will deal with more serious topics.

We both serve as corporate chaplains at several local companies. This work involves regular visits to the workplace as well as offsite visits such as hospital calls, funerals and counselling. We started at a new company in May of this year and now serve a total of 5. We continue to seek additional opportunities in this field and have a couple opportunities pending as we prepare this annual newsletter.

We both find this a very fulfilling form of ministry and, along with our writing ministry, this keeps us quite busy.

I am active in CBMC, an association of Christian businessmen seeking to live out our faith at work and I serve on the leadership team for Lancaster County. I also completed a 6 month term as an interim pastor in the Harrisburg area in February. We enjoy this but a similar door has not opened since. I also spoke in churches as a guest speaker, as well as retreats and conferences.

Brooksyne regularly leads hymn sings at three area nursing homes/assisted living centers. This is a very rewarding ministry as these lonely folks are always so receptive and grateful. She directed this year's Christmas musical and even asked me to narrate. It's always a joy to celebrate the Lord's birth musically but since I don't have a singing voice (one that people want to hear, anyway) I'm not usually a part of the musical - but this was my year to contribute through narration.

In addition to our reunion in Missouri in August we travelled to Virginia, North Carolina, the New Jersey shore and into New York City. We also continued our journeys throughout beautiful Pennsylvania and there's always a lot happening nearby. Although we were both raised in the midwest we have now lived longer in Pennsylvania than anywhere else. (I'm from Missouri and Brooksyne from Oklahoma.)

I suppose at this point in life our main physical activity is walking. We often walk several miles a day in the summer months and have a variety of scenic country trails that we hike. There's wildlife teeming in the cornrows, the nearby creeks, and in the overhead trees. We always see something that reminds us of God's amazing creation in human, animal, or plant life. Roxie was always afraid of getting in water but this year she finally came to appreciate the water ventures and she now jumps in without prompting during our hikes.

In addition to her various ministry roles Brooksyne continues to enjoy flower and vegetable gardening. She canned lots of apples, jalapenos and a great variety of jellies in late summer and fall. We had many tomatoes and are still eating some since she wrapped the green ones individually in newspaper and they ripened slowly. I have the fun job of keeping the lawn mowed and the shrubbery trimmed. Brooksyne doesn't always approve of how I trim shrubbery so she often gets in on this maintenance job as well.

Well, now we come back to the reason for the season. God is with us! Emmanuel, just as His Name indicates, is with us in the joyous occasions, the challenging moments, the times of uncertainty and in times of momentous loss. It is our family's prayer that you personally experience God's presence in your lives - in the good times and in the stuff that life gives you from day to day.

Merry Christmas and a blessed 2008,

Stephen, Brooksyne & Ester Weber

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