



Adel-gram...too! 2001

A second generation's Christmas greeting

Dear Loved Ones,

Greetings! I'm afraid that once again I must start with an apology. Several years ago I missed an Adel-gram, and I unfortunately I did it again last year. I, however, am armed with a good excuse: "My computer ate my letter." I know all you teachers are wagging your finger, as I well might at that doosie, but it really is true--kind of! I had handwritten the letter towards the beginning of December, and the very week we were getting it together to print and send off, our computer caught a virus (a consolation prize for anyone who can tell me in 50 words or less what that REALLY means!) and crashed. Well, what that meant for us was no practical way to print the letter, plus all of our addresses were lost. Damon was way into February before our hard drive was rebuilt, and by then--well, I think you get the idea.

Our most obvious news you received before even opening your envelope, and that is a change in our return address. The SC Adalgrens, as we often refer to ourselves among Damon's family, are now the TN Adalgrens! I hope this is not a surprise for anyone, as we tried our best to get the word out. To tell you the truth, it all happened so fast, that I'm sometimes still pinching myself. The short version of this saga is HCA (the big hospital company that Damon works for) decided to close the billing office in Charleston that Damon was managing and offered him a position at their corporate offices in Brentwood, TN, near Nashville. The long version includes much prayer, "what ifs", prayer, tears, prayer, explanations, and did I mention prayer? Basically, God wants us here. Period. We received quite a strong confirmation when our house sold in two short weeks. We found out very quickly that God is the best realtor you can find! So now we are just waiting to find out the "whys" of all this, which we are quite confident that He will reveal in His perfect timing.

Tennessee is just lovely. The scenery and weather suit us must better than Charleston's flat landscape, swamps and humidity. We just love the crisp, cool air and rolling hills. Our house is a real blessing as well. We were able to find one in record time, and ladies, I know you'll wince when you read this, but I didn't actually see the house until we pulled up in the driveway after our move. The circumstances were not ideal, but again, God's hand was evident—even in home buying! I must admit, I am extremely proud of Damon. He picked a real winner. It is a new house (finished just in time, by the way), and bigger than our old one. It has two stories, which I'm still getting used to, but it really is the perfect home for our family.

Damon's job is going well. His tasks are often overwhelming, but we all know that Damon enjoys a good challenge. He still works for Physician Services but in a different department. Now as a Business Analyst, Damon works on a team that is developing software for physician practices. Besides work, which consumes a lot of time, Damon has been in the garage doing "man things" in his free time. The other day I asked him to please take the garbage out, which he did--never to return! About five minutes later, I heard the electric saw going. Well, at least he took the garbage with him.

Besides going through major baby-sitter withdrawal, I'm adjusting well. Actually, I miss my family and friends like crazy--and not JUST for childcare purposes. I have never been apart from my mom, grandma or sister, so let me just say I'm extremely thankful for Cingular Wireless and their free nights and weekends plan! I've already gotten involved in the local MOPS group, plus a few of our neighbors have small children, and we are getting acquainted with them. Our new church (another MAJOR blessing) has many young families with whom we are already bonding. So I really can't complain about a thing. Well, did I mention that the nearest Wal-Mart is 20 minutes away? Damon thinks this is a good thing in that less frequent trips will save us money. So far, it's just increased our gas bill for the van!!

Annaleigh is a thriving five-year old now. I sometimes just marvel at how she is growing and maturing right before my eyes. Over the last couple of years, she has dabbled in several different activities. She played a season of soccer, with Damon as head coach. What fun watching ten four and five-year olds chase one ball back and forth over a 20 yard field! She also played a season of t-ball, which was also an adventure. Her team, the Cardinals, came in first place, which I must add is almost entirely due to Annie's very strategic flower-picking and dirt-throwing in the outfield. Her most recent endeavor is kindergarten, which is taking place under the very watchful eyes of yours truly. Yes, we are homeschooling. Annaleigh was not eligible for K-5 in SC but was here in TN (a birthday thing), so what was I to do? We actually didn't get started until mid-November, so everything is still pretty new, but so far, it is going well, and we may just move right on into first grade at home as well. We're just going to take everything a year at a time, covered with lots of prayer. Probably the highlight of her year was a much-anticipated trip to Disney World where she met every character she ever dreamed of, including the icing on the cake: Cinderella! (I won't even go into the fact that we went on this trip FOUR days after we moved here. The details of how we pulled that off are scary!!)

I really don't even know where to begin with Harrison seeing as how he was still in the womb for the last Adel-gram. He is, at 18 months, a very happy, active baby. I use the word active very lightly because, well, do the words "Energizer Bunny" mean anything to you? He is definitely his father's son in that regard. For instance, I was telling my mother-in-law recently about some of his climbing exploits, and her calm response was that out of five children she had one climber. Guess who? Harrison's favorite thing in the world is a ball, with food being a close second. He very nearly hyperventilates in the produce section of the grocery store because we are surrounded by round food---to him, edible balls. Unfortunately, he will throw things which are not round as well, including toys, food, dishes, cherished knick-knacks--you name it. The one thing he has never thrown to my knowledge is a cookie, and that is because he just can't get enough of these. He starts asking for them first thing in the morning and just cries of a broken heart when I give him oatmeal instead. Oh, the woes of toddlerhood!

Our pets have fared well, considering they spent almost a month in kennels and came into a house that the only scent they could detect was fresh paint. Never fear! Bridget, our boxer, fixed that by squatting on the carpet the first moment she entered the house. Besides that initial incident and the fact that she has to deal with "guarding" the entire family on two floors now, she is settling in. Baxter, our 20 lb. cat, after surviving the drive here in the back of the van with 60 lb. Bridget sleeping on top of him, just wanted to know where I was going to keep his food dish, and then he went back to his routine of sleeping 23 hours a day.

I really can't stress enough God's provision for our family during this brief chaotic uprooting. If I mentioned everything He has done for us, you would still be reading this narrative long after carols have been sung, presents unwrapped and the turkey carved. He has been and is so good to us! I believe now more than ever we need to be reminded of that. Yes, we Adelgrens

have had a stressful year, but I would be out of line entirely to compare it to the events that are affecting our nation and ultimately our world. I say this to point out that if God has blessed this little ole' family like I've described, what does He want to do for His people as a whole? I think we only need be reminded of what he did 2000 years ago. I know that reminder is harder and harder to come by amidst the "ho-ho"s of Santa and the bumper-to-bumper traffic outside your local mall, but I encourage you to look beyond all of that and discover what God's plan is for you, and allow Him to bless you with His favor in the revealing of it.

Lovingly and daily reminded of His grace,

The Adelgren Family
Damon, Kellie, Annaleigh and Harrison
Baxter and Bridget



In the artist's own words: "Mary is bowing to Jesus. He's in the manger. He is the Lord. Joseph is telling the people to come in, yes, you may come in to see our Holy Child. He is our praises of our Lord."

Annaleigh Adelgren, 5 yrs old