



MERRY CHRISTMAS 2014 FROM THE JACOBSONS

A wondrous and Blessed Christmas to all our dear family and friends!

Linda and I are writing this Christmastide from Minnesota. It is a blessing to gather with our children and our extended family this Christmas, especially as it is our first Christmas without my mother, Jean who died in April. We are missing Mom and yet we are thrilled to be together as a family and so grateful that all of our family could make it to Minnesota for this precious family time.

Christmas letters have become a tradition to greet and catch up a bit with folks far and near, especially to update those of you who we rarely meet in person just now, but whom we think of often and remember fondly.



Mark's and Linda's work in health care ministries continues to be so very blessed. More and more we are focusing on training and education. This year we started both a School of Nursing and a Surgical Residency to expand our ongoing training of Assistant Medical Officers, interns, and medical students.

The care of children needing rehabilitative surgery is growing rapidly. Our care of children with orthopedic deformities, or with burns or cleft lips needing plastic surgery, and those large number needing spina bifida surgery performed over 500 surgical operations! How heartwarming it is to see our motto "I have turned your mourning into dancing" go from mere words to changed lives of so many children.



Linda is busy coordinating visitors – medical students, residents, faculty and volunteers. Her leadership and mentoring in spiritual growth is much appreciated in the Arusha Community Church and in the International Women's Bible Study. The Widow's Might project continues to change the lives of women and has had new life injected into it through more professional marketing in a shared community of women's projects.



Mark and Linda have great opportunities to be involved with other travel and health projects as well. Mark was part of a reconciliation seminar among warring tribes in northeastern Kenya. In September we had a fantastic opportunity to visit and share in the opening of a great project of the American Refugee

Committee in Bukavu, Eastern Congo. It was really enjoyable to visit an innovative and exciting project attempting to bring entrepreneurship into development. Mark is also involved now with trying to establish cancer care for northern Tanzania. The need is great and the opportunities for care are only available in Dar es Salaam which is so very far away.



We had a unique time in the fall when we went back to Harvard for Mark's 40th Class Reunion. While he hasn't been attending reunions in the past, this one was both fun and meaningful especially as three of us four roommates were able to attend. We all agreed that none of us had changed a bit.

Our wonderful kids are doing well. Laura and husband James are in New York where Laura works for the City Public Health Department in an innovative project monitoring health trends through electronic medical records. This year she gave a paper in New Orleans at the American Public Health Association meetings. James is consulting with Deloitte and much to his pleasure, is based in the city.



Sarah and Katherine are sharing a house together in Boston. Sarah continues in a dual Master program in Social Work and Public Health. Her counseling placement is currently at the Boston Medical Center serving refugee and asylee survivors of torture. She is singing in the Metropolitan Choral Ensemble giving her the opportunity to sing with the Boston Pops in their recent Christmas tour.

Katherine finished a challenging year with AmeriCorps tutoring in an inner city primary school. She moved from Providence to Cambridge in the fall and after a lot of hard work, got a great job. She's working with the Jewish Vocational Service where she works with refugees to mentor, prepare, and help them obtain employment. Living together seems to be great for Sarah and Katherine and all the kids are near enough to one another to have regular mini-reunions in New York or Boston. Linda and daughters did a southern trip to Mississippi last summer and were able to reconnect with many special relatives and her southern roots.

We do pause again this Holiday Season to give thanks and to reflect on the blessings of this past year. We are most grateful for each of you our friends, colleagues, and coworkers in serving in the name of Christ.

Merry Christmas,

The Jacobson Family



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