



So how the heck did it get to be December again? For the Lahn household, 2016 has just whizzed by and here we are again, scrambling to get our annual Christmas letter out again. In some ways, 2015 has been 'life as usual', but in a lot of other ways, it's been year of change.

February was our first big change. After losing our beloved dog, Jazz, in early 2015, Nancy and I decided that we were ready to open our hearts to another pup. Never before having raised a puppy, let alone an energetic larger breed, we dove in found a cute 9 week old Border Collie who we named "Chloe". She just turned 1 year old and has been a joy. Her energy level, and intelligence means that we could be playing ball with her all day long if we'd accept the challenge. She loves people, other dogs, the cats, and running in the forest!

Not to stop there, in October our daughter, Bethany, adopted an abandoned kitten that was found in her cousin's boyfriend's family barn. Now our two Himalayan cats, Misty and Mocha, are very docile and calm creatures – always have been – but "Eevee" is a sometimes cuddly, sometimes play-biting

kitten with boundless energy. As it turns out, she makes the perfect playmate for Chloe!

Every morning when Eevee is let out of Bethany's room, and Chloe is let out of her sleeping crate, Chloe gets so excited and insists on giving Eevee a morning bath which fortunately Eevee enjoys. Then the two will run around and play with each other– with Chloe pawing and licking, and Eevee jumping and attacking in return!

They are the best of friends... just as we'd hoped.

In the summer we had a good chance to relax at the cottage—if you can call replacing the kitchen counter, repairing the dock, painting and other jobs, relaxing. There may be lots of work up there after a long hard winter, but it's always a great place for us to change the pace and enjoy the beauty of the lake and visit with extended family and friends. Chloe took to this new experience like a duck to water. In fact she spent a great deal of the time *IN* the water retrieving balls and swimming!

The end of the summer brought some sadness as our good friend and worship pastor at our church announced his intention to move away for family reasons. We have missed his sensitivity in worship and all the coordination he was responsible for at the church, but he left behind a legacy of good people to carry on.

The fall also brought a change to Murray's schedule, as his contact was extended with the added benefit of being allowed to work from home almost all the time. This has lessened his commute time from 90 minutes each way to about 9 seconds from the bedroom to the office in the morning. It's certainly been a win-win for he and the company as he spends less on commuting (time



and money), gets more exercise during the day during breaks with the dog, and gets to be with Nancy during the days she's home, and the company gets longer, more flexible hours out of him. We're not sure how much longer that will last, but it's certainly made for an enjoyable fall!

Nancy has been very busy this year leading two group sessions of GriefCare at church, leading a women's Bible study (Life Group) on Tuesday mornings and leading another (with Murray) on Friday nights, continuing her home business and her work with the Pregnancy Care Centre in North York, singing on the worship teams, and participating on the Care Ministry and Prayer teams. Murray and Nancy also help out in the church's café (The Hub) on Sunday mornings and at other times when called on for special events, and with the church's Out of the Cold ministry to the homeless.

The kids are all continuing to branch out with their lives in various parts of the province.

Jordan and Rachel are still in Brantford where Jordan continues to pursue his career





in teaching. We were pleased that he's been able to secure LTO positions (Long Term Occasional) since school started and continuing on through January. This is a necessary



step in getting a full-time position so we continue to pray that the L T O ' s will continue.

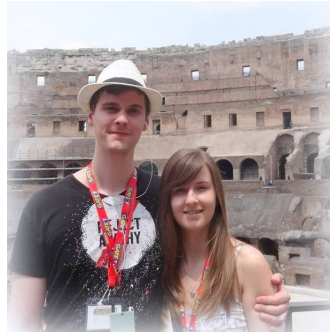
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was able to secure a job this past year in a dental office across the street from their apartment in Brantford! Over 200 applicants were narrowed down to 6 who then went through a most bizarre interview process in order to determine that Rachel would be perfect for the job (which we could have told them right off!). It's been a great place to work at and we have very thankful for that.

Tim finished his studies in May and must now be referred to as "Dr. Tim Lahn DC, RMT, BSc" although at home he's still "Hey you!". After a brief stint working at a weight loss clinic doing massage therapy he has accepted a position as a Chiropractor with Optimum Wellness Centre in Barrie.

In June, Tim and Rachel were able to take a proper honeymoon by travelling to Italy for 10 days – a trip Rachel had always wanted to take. When in Rome they did as the Romans do, which included a lot of pasta for Tim!!

After living with us over the garage since they were married in August 2015 and commuting from Cedar Valley to Barrie since September, Tim and Rachel were able to purchase a lovely little home in Barrie, not far from Tim's clinic. They moved in just days ago. While we are sad to see them go, we are excited to see them set out on their own as the wonderful couple they are.



In May, we rejoiced with Daniel as he graduated from Film Studies at Ryerson University. In this four years of study there he's had opportunities to apply his creative gifts and has sharpened his skills in writing, editing and filming. At the moment, he is working full time at Henry's Cameras, and seeking God's leading for the future. We are excited that God appears to be opening some new doors of possibility for him.

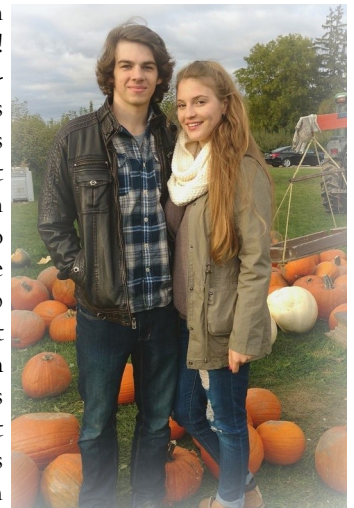
Jessa continues in her studies at York University and just recently changed part time jobs to a better position in a store much



closer to their apartment, so we are very grateful for that! Their plans right now are to move in with Jessa's parents in Brantford next Spring so we are praying that they'll be able to find jobs in that area as well.

Bethany is continuing her studies at York as well in Social Work. She's now half way through her third year and has just completed the crunch of assignments. Her schedule this fall allowed her to be home most Mondays and Fridays, but she had late classes the other three nights which meant that it was possible for us to go a couple days without even seeing her!

Unfortunately this schedule has meant that she's been unable to sing on the worship teams at church much this fall—a fact that has resulted in not a few



complaints from the congregation! She does however help to lead worship and a small group with the High School Youth at church.

When she's not studying, she's teaching piano to young kids and working as a part-time administrative assistant at the church. She also puts lots of miles on the car travelling back and forth to Brantford to see her boyfriend, Tyler.

When we read the account of the first Christmas, we see that for some, the arrival of the baby Jesus was seen as an inconvenience to be dealt with, not a miracle to be celebrated. We are told in Luke's gospel that this was Mary and Joseph's experience in the town of Bethlehem: "While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:6) Tradition speculates that it was an innkeeper who directed them to the stable to share the shelter of his animals, not the shelter of his home and business.

And are we so very different? In our fast-paced society, we may be tempted to view Christmas as just another activity to fit into an already busy schedule. Do we assign Jesus a place in the periphery of our lives, or do we welcome Him into the centre of our hearts? The joy of a transformed life—a life that is celebrated by heaven and people on earth—is only achieved by inviting Him to take His rightful place on the throne of our lives:

Let every heart prepare Him room and heaven and nature sing!

With much love at Christmas, The Lahns

PS. This year Canada Post decided our Postal Code should change, so our "new" address is...
7 Bow Street, Cedar Valley, ON L4A1Z3

