



# Cahill Family



## Christmas Newsletter 2011

*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Hebrews 11:1*



Dear friends, greetings in the name of Christ! We serve an invisible God who calls us to live out our faith in order to make Him visible to the world. The book of Hebrews talks of Abraham, who journeyed, not knowing where he would end up;

how he and others “died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them far off.” As we struggled with various decisions and circumstances this year we have learned how to trust God's plan in the yet unfinished business of our lives.



**Pirate Camp**

Our prominent struggle has been in the housing department. Despite a buyer's market, our house hunt has proved harder than we thought. We would like a larger than normal yard while keeping Brian's commute to a minimum so he can spend that time with the family. Several places have almost fit the bill, but for one reason or another we have turned them down.

While desiring to feel settled, we have gained a knowledge of how to live in one place and yearn for another, just as God calls us to be strangers on the earth, longing for our heavenly home. Despite the lack of our own house, we have fully utilized our apartment by hosting overnight guests, having friends and family over for meals, and watching other kids in order to give their parents a break.

One benefit to not having the responsibility of a house has been the freedom to travel. We visited family every month, spending long weekends and even an entire week over Thanksgiving and Christmas! We attended the wedding of Amy's sister and were cast as “extras” in her movie. Amy traveled to visit friends when Brian had business trips. Brian and Amy enjoyed a three day trip to Caddo lake while Brian's mom watched the kids. Navigating with a topo map and compass, they spent 9 hours canoeing through the beautiful and mysterious cypress swamp, soaking in the adventure and hoping to see an alligator.



**Ivy Loves to Squeeze**



**Birthday Dresses**

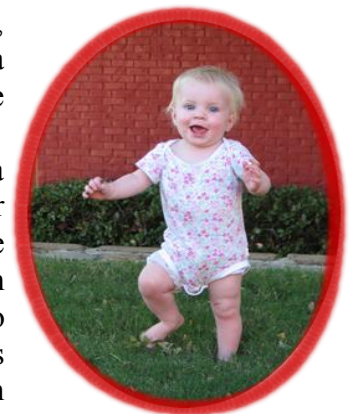
Another challenge came in the form of searching for a church home. Visiting different denominations caused us to examine and solidify our beliefs. Amy has continued Bible Study Fellowship, enjoying a study on the Acts of the Apostles. On long car trips we started listening to the Financial Freedom course, gaining insight and ideas for discussion. Additionally we are reading through a parenting book and discussing it with another couple. Our marriage has benefited as we grow closer through seeking God about life situations.

Brian lost his Networking Engineer early in the year. While this meant extra work, he gained proficiency in those skills as he filled in for his missing employee. He has been more than blessed in the addition of two new employees who fill out his team with competence and a good work ethic. He has continued to enjoy the challenge and variety of his job and feels encouraged with his accomplishments this year. In addition to working at Nexstar, Brian enjoys leading Bible studies and playing games with the kids.

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**Two Dedicated Hikers**



**Flora Walking**

Amy continues her career as a full time mom and will be adding yet another 'employee' to the ranks around April 1<sup>st</sup>. She is pursuing a knowledge of herbs to offset some of the effects of pregnancy and build a healthy baby. Amy struggled with depression during the early months of the year. Battling negative thoughts about the drawbacks of apartment life, seeming lack of success in potty training, and the ups and downs of house-hunting, drained her emotionally. After sharing her feelings, Brian took initiative to set up a weekly date night and helped re-arrange the apartment to better suit the growing family. In March, God arranged multiple circumstances to provide us with a mini van that exactly suits our needs. This has allowed Amy to get out of the house, visit people and minister to others. Another big help was picking up a book called "One Thousand Gifts" by Ann Voskamp. This has taught Amy how to turn every situation into a gift of thankfulness to God.



Ivy Learns To Swim



Easter Dress

At her mom's suggestion, Amy started doing activities with the kids to practice the idea of homeschooling. A book was read every day for a week, accompanied with projects on that theme. The fun included making laundry basket bird nests, climbing trees like Zaccheus, washing mittens with the three little kittens and watching whales spout on YouTube. Teaching a weekly music class gave Amy a chance to involve other kids. Attending a week long "Camp Grammy," the kids learned about bugs with their cousins.

Lance (3) makes up for his small size with a big imagination, a bigger smile and a contagious laugh. He carries around two stuffed dogs (both named Tank), builds houses out of couch pillows and reenacts stories with random toys. He is finally potty trained, can dress himself (usually everything on backwards), and loves to match clothes with mommy. He's a fantastic helper and generally neat.



Pet Turtle 'Tank'



Homemade Bunk Beds

Ivy (2) is cheerful, uninhibited, full of life and curiosity. She can't run without skipping, loves to "cheese" for the camera, enjoys the games Lance makes up and can open the front door by herself. She's potty trained except at night, has outgrown her brother and tries to take her shoes off everywhere we go. A true middle child, she plays well with Lance yet also reaches out and loves on baby Flora.

Flora (1) is not one to be left behind! A petite, non-verbal baby with huge blue eyes and wispy blonde hair, she amazes everyone as she toddles around after her siblings. She charms her Daddy with an enthusiastic greeting when he comes home from work.

Flora also enjoys the little comforts of life – sucking her fingers, holding a blankie, and lying on any pillow she finds. She has been a fantastic baby and very much a blessing.

We give thanks for the wonder of raising children, the blessedness of marriage, and encouragement from family and friends. We also give thanks for the hard times through which God is working in our lives to teach us character and bring us closer to Him. We invite you to open your hands and receive the gifts that Christ can give.

## Merry Christmas!

Brian, Amy, Lance, Ivy, Flora and Baby 'E'



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First Camping Trip