

# Cahill Family Newsletter 2020

*The LORD bless you, and keep you:  
The LORD make his face shine  
upon you, and be gracious unto you:  
The LORD lift up his countenance  
upon you, and give you peace.  
Numbers 6:24-26*

For the world at large, this last year has been one of turmoil, fear, anger, sickness, argument and conflict.

When life is chaotic, you can choose to focus on the things that didn't go as you expected or you can look for blessings from God that are still there even in troubled times. So grab your favorite drink, sit back, and enjoy as we share the blessings God has sent this year.

**Life** - When Covid hit the United States, our scheduled activities abruptly stopped. This gave extra time to rest and enjoy life as a family before adding another member. Brian and Amy had weekly in-home dates on the front porch while the kids practiced managing themselves for dinner and a movie. Amy started a house painting project and her mother and sisters jumped in to help. Brian switched to working from home and enjoyed the company of our youngest son, Ryder, who would spend multiple hours each day in his office either sitting in his lap or playing with toys behind his desk.



**New addition**

Using Brian's dad as our doctor for the pregnancy was a total blessing. We had the benefit of personally knowing our provider and when things shut down we continued appointments at home counting heartbeats and emailing stats. Amy's parents managed our crew while we enjoyed a picnic lunch and disc golf en route to the Hospital. The smaller town of Henderson had yet to have any COVID cases and Brian was allowed to attend the birth. After being discharged, we enjoyed a quiet day with Brian's parents before returning to show the new baby to his excited siblings.

**Brian** - In June of 2018, God had impressed upon Brian to pray for healing for Amy and a wife for his brother Kevin. Praying, and efforts to help the two requests along, started and kind of faded off after a while. But this summer, Brian had the opportunity to connect Kevin with a potential option which has blossomed into an engagement. Then shortly after that, while Brian was listening to a dramatized version of the Mosaic blessing, God reminded him of those prayers and how the Lord had truly blessed both us and those around us. Not only was his brother getting married, but Amy was back to her old self again! At the end of the year Brian gave her the gift of some time away



**February couples trip to Fredericksburg**



**New dump trailer gave opportunity for many loads of horse manure!**

by herself, wrangling the baby and all the kids by himself. He in turn got to enjoy a night away with his wife shortly thereafter.

**Amy** - At last year's writing, I was at a wall - spiritually, emotionally, and physically - and all my efforts to get around it yielded nothing. I read a blog post that suggested sometimes when you hit a wall, you need to just sit there and wait. So I did. With help from a mentor, I explored some new spiritual exercises, learning to just enjoy the process. Brian and I went through a time of discernment on whether we should join a spiritual training group. This provided a neat time of growth together. As summer crept on, I noticed a difference in my quiet times. I connected with God again in the ways I used to, I was excited again, thirsty for time with Him and His word. I cannot explain this total change in my heart except as the grace of God. And it is good, so good.

The Lord has also granted relief mentally, first with the help of a supplement that lightened my struggle with depression. The relief allowed me to cope with the physical strain of pregnancy and motherhood. Even though I eventually stopped the supplement, things continued to improve. Now I am back to the person I remembered being - optimistic, full of life and creativity, and happy, so happy! Again, I cannot explain what brought about the release from this struggle of five years other than the grace of God. And it is good, so good.



**Animal habitat 'zoo' project from our zoology study**

**Family hiking trip in Colorado**



**New habits rewarded with family fun nights**

**Home VBS provided by local church**



**Jamestown replica: we schooled during the hot summer, working through American history**

**Lance** (12) started his first year of beekeeping with help from mentoring neighbors and a youth Bee School. The hives thrived, and he was excited to harvest 16 lbs. of honey! Lance enjoys strategy games and has been grateful for visits from Grandpa, uncles and a neighbor that play with him. He is eagerly memorizing verses to earn Awana Bucks and enjoys making things to sell. He celebrated his 12th birthday at home with a Spy theme escape room and "bomb" defusing.



**Fractured wrist winning tug-of-war**



Loves new puppy, Nia



Marshmallow constellations for astronomy!

**Ivy** (11) Early in the year, our dog started nipping kids and had to be moved on, which was especially sad for Ivy and Amy. Hormonal stirrings caused a separation anxiety to pop up, but having Mom and Dad around all the time was a blessing. Ivy memorized verses and prayed for God to calm her fear. She worked on being in a different room from parents, and discovered that Walkie Talkies can be a great way to stay connected around the property. Thankfully the fear has died down. Ivy is growing in many ways. She took a folk tale, rewrote it in script form, recruited the cousins as actors, designed a set, conducted rehearsals, re-arranged so younger kids could join, and pulled off a performance for neighbors - all on her own! This fall, Ivy and Amy celebrated the addition of a new puppy to the family.

**Flora** (10) has been paired with Ace as her buddy. She learns patience when feeding him, but is richly rewarded with his adorable grin. An abundance of cow milk has given her the opportunity to master the art of making ice cream, which has resulted in many compliments throughout the year. She was saddened when the pet rabbit died this spring, but a birthday present of a pair of rabbits has her hopeful for future baby bunnies!

**Eden** (8) For this child, a birthday in March could have proved lonely. However, with cousins next door and plenty of siblings, Eden was fully celebrated with a forest themed tea party! She gained a sibling

buddy (Ryder) and has shown incredible patience and responsibility. Her biggest blessing was spending two weeks in Colorado with Grammy and cousin Jenny, playing an extra in the movie production of "We Three Kings."

**Iris** (7) On the 1st of December, Amy missed her early morning prayer time and decided to include the kids, since they were underfoot. Lighting candles and talking about how the light of God dispels the darkness ended with Iris desiring to confess her sins and receive the forgiveness and salvation that Christ offers. The next weekend, we were able to celebrate with an outside baptism at our house (complete with a hose connected to the attic water heater). Iris has been promoted to 'Big Kid' status and is the "deputy" in the buddy system, taking over when one of the other big kids is out. She is adaptable and cheerfully helpful, even asking to learn diaper changing!



Enjoying STEM projects from the library



Trip to Ft. Worth Zoo with younger kids



Iris braves the cold to announce her desire to follow Jesus.



Eden on set at a train depot



**Skye** (5) Nothing in the outside world worries this little one. Between new babies, animals, swimming at Papa’s, learning letters and anticipating Christmas, Skye’s life is full! She loves working puzzles and enjoyed a special tea time put on by her buddy, Ivy. She graduated to unloading the dishwasher and quickly became a pro! Skye helps out with the animals by gathering eggs and loves to ‘walk’ the puppy. AWANA is the highlight of her week, and she flits in and out of the older kids’ school, depending on interest level.

**Garrison** (4) “I’m four and next year I’ll be five,” sums up this boy’s view on life. He is full of enthusiasm and loves his new baby brother, playing with him for hours each day. He and Ryder regularly join the younger cousins for activities planned by Aunt Katie and Grammy. It is good there are many watchful eyes around to keep tabs on those boys! Idle hands were often into mischief, so Garrison has been added to the family workforce with the beginning chore of clearing the table.

Fingerprinted at “spy” themed camp Grammy



Climbing rocks at Garden of the Gods, CO

**Ryder** (2) Having never really liked childcare, Ryder loved how “shelter in place” provided constant access to both Mom and Dad! Covid made time to potty train and Amy gained additional perspective through lots of new scenarios (driving her to read two new books). His biggest reward was riding the lawnmower with Daddy! He’s a serious-minded little fellow and really looks up to his big brother, Garrison.

**Ace** (8 mo.) On April 26th, Ace Joseph entered our family. The first initials of our children form an acronym. We started with the intent to

spell “Life is good” but changed when our first “O” became an “R” with Ryder. With a “GR” to go on, we finished the acronym with Ace’s name to make “Life is Grace.” Ace has been a wonderfully easy baby and the only time he is not happy is when all the kids leave and it gets too quiet.

Looking back on 2020, we have experienced “unprecedented” blessing. We have found ‘safety’ by trusting the heart of our God towards us. We love our neighbor by ‘slowing the spread’ of fear and loneliness; taking the ‘risk’ of loving largely.

*Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.*  
Isaiah 41:10



Loves cardboard ‘excavator’ made by mom



Everybody loves this little cutie!