

## Christmas 2024

What an eventful year 2024 has been! We've met a 5-year-old (Cubbie) who knows everything. We met a 4-year-old budding make-up artist who did her eye makeup with a permanent marker – one eye purple and the other orange. We met leaders at a club who had a passion for the wild and rowdy community kids. They fed them, loved them, and wanted to know how they could do more for them. They even had a young gentleman who was too old for Awana but kept coming and hanging out. The love at that church was palpable. Out of 28 years as Missionaries, we've only had one car accident – 2023. So, we've had another accident-free year. Our son, Jonathan, and his family moved from Arizona to Oklahoma to be closer to Amanda's family. Many have prayed for her for several years. We are thankful that Amanda is doing better than expected. Please pray for Emily, as her mom passed away unexpectedly this past March. This is the first holiday season without her mom. Rick and Bethany, Jonathan and Amanda, Ron and Emily, and Jim are otherwise doing well.

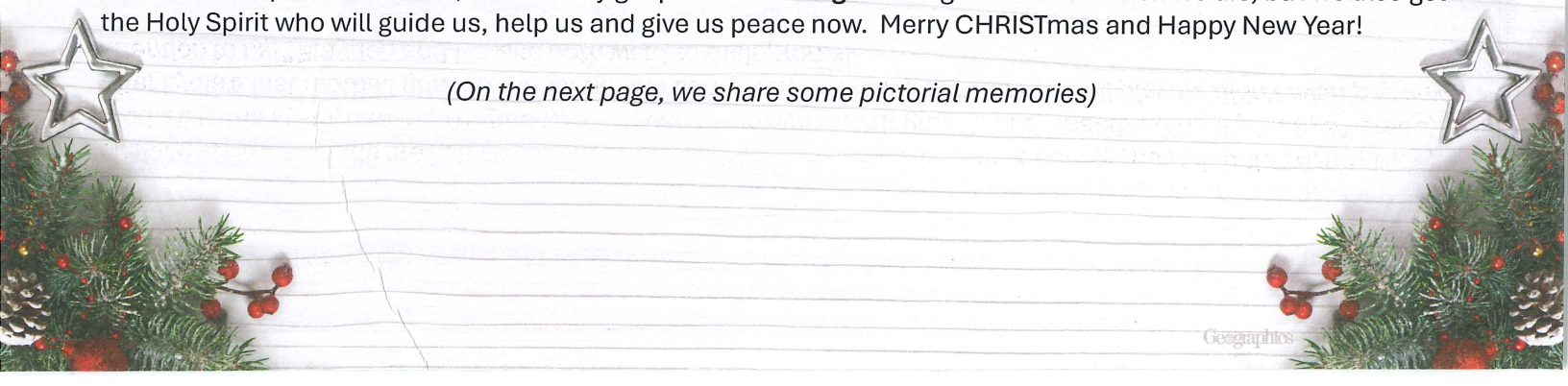
Ministry is always extra busy in the Fall with training leaders, conferences, and club visits. This year was even busier as two grandkids are in high school (*how did that happen?!?*). Lots of soccer games (Natalie 14, 9<sup>th</sup> grade), football games (Brayden 15, 9<sup>th</sup> grade), volleyball (Brooklyn 13, 7<sup>th</sup> grade), and cheerleading (Lydia 9, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade). After Lydia's first football game to cheer at, she came home disgusted. *"The football players didn't even pay any attention to us!"* Brayden and Natalie both went to their proms!

Many have also been praying for Rick's Aunt Shirley (not his sister), who was found to have very advanced breast cancer 2 years ago. She had a scare with a new lump (which turned out to be benign). So many have been praying for her these past two years. Aunt Shirley is now cancer-free! Aunt has commented that she is very happy and content at the nursing home where she resides.

Currently, there are about 140 churches involved in Child Discipleship using Awana. Many others are using Brite\*, Awana's weekend curriculum. With inflation, our support is lagging and draining our reserves. We are in the process of raising more support. We have recently gotten news of increased support from a friend and added another church to our financial support team. There are so many prayer supporters as well, for which we are very grateful. We couldn't do what we do without all our supporters. We count it a privilege to serve God in this capacity.

We will finish the year with Mary having major neck surgery on December 2. They will be doing a laminoplasty of cervical vertebrae #3-7. She will end up with 20 screws. Prayers for a quick recovery are appreciated.

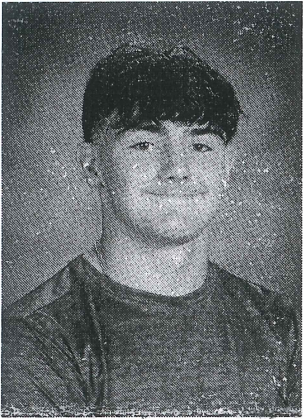
As we celebrate Christ's birth so that He can become the sacrifice for our sins, let's be thankful. When we trust Him to be our personal Savior, we not only get peace **knowing** we will go to heaven when we die, but we also get the Holy Spirit who will guide us, help us and give us peace now. Merry CHRISTmas and Happy New Year!



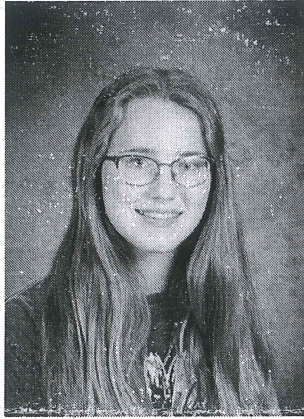
(On the next page, we share some pictorial memories)



Our Grandchildren, Left to Right in birth order:



*Brayden*



*Natalie*

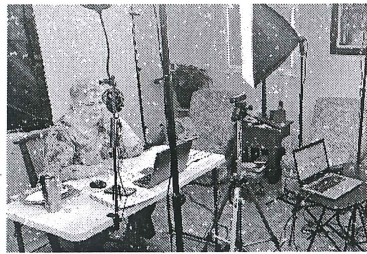
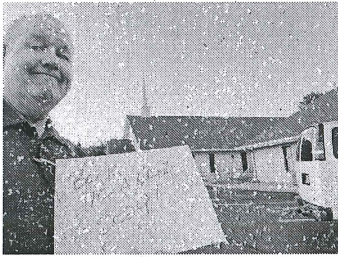


*Brooklyn*



*Lydia*

Ministry In Action:



For Resilient Child Discipleship That Builds Lasting Faith,

*Click Mary*

