

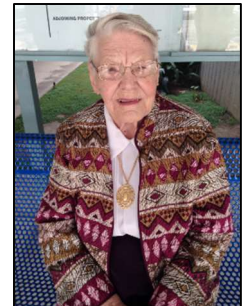
December 2021



As we enter the Hope of Christmas, we have much to be thankful for. The vaccine earlier this year allowed an end of the isolation and a return to activities with vaccinated family and friends, beginning with Easter. That was followed by trips to visit great-niece and great-nephew, who both celebrated their first birthdays this year. Now we have a second great-nephew that we need to visit soon! In November we went to Yosemite with Sharon's mother, followed by a wonderful family Thanksgiving at Carol's (Cassie's mom) house, the first time we have seen her since she moved here from Illinois in September 2020.



We were able to visit Dale's mom in the months before and also after she went into hospice just after her 101st birthday. She went to be with the Lord in August. Sharon planned a service at Mom's home church and led the graveside service a couple of days later. It was a difficult good-bye, but we are grateful to have had her in our lives for so many years.



Since churches began to return to in-person services in late spring, Sharon has preached in Burbank, Huntington Beach, Oceanside, and Santa Ana First UCC, where she is their preaching pastor for the Advent season. Meanwhile, our own church returned to live worship in August with Dale directing and engineering the livestream. He trained a replacement so he could sing with the choir when they returned in November.

In June Sharon started attending classes via zoom at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PTS) toward a Doctor of Ministry in Creative Writing and Public Theology. She likes the classes but not the east coast start time. She will start the second semester in January, planning (at this moment) to attend the required one-week class in person in Florida, at a university that is affiliated with PTS, followed by ten weeks of class via Zoom.

Many people have undertaken home improvement projects during this pandemic, and we are no exception. We have added a whole-house fan and replaced nearly all of our windows. Of course replacing our windows means that we couldn't keep all of the old

window coverings, so we are in the process of replacing some of those. We are planning additional improvements, including buying an actual desk for Sharon, since she is now a published writer, with several projects in process or in the planning stages.

Matt and Cassie still live in Burbank and we are grateful to have them nearby.

We are also grateful for all of our family and friends! May you all stay healthy and safe, and may you know how very much you are loved by us and by God!

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Dale and Sharon

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Here we are at a first birthday party last June! (all vaccinated)

