

Concert Presentations: Family Missions



Winter 2023: Issue 1

“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Pratt Family Update:

It is towards the end of December. The first snowstorm of the season has come and gone, leaving two days of clean-up for the Pratts. The cars must be uncovered, the driveway snowblowed (thank heavens for technology!!), the barn doors all shoveled out, the decks de-snowed so that they do not become over-burdened from this heavy, waterlogged snow. This storm was atypical, as such a heavy, frozen precipitation generally comes in the spring, rather than in the beginning of the winter.

Then, of course, normal chores are still waiting! Marietta must somehow take all of the barn birds and bunnies their water, feed and let them outside into the frosty wonderland. The fire must be stoked and warmed. Our dogs, including the ancient Molshky (who, like the Energizer Bunny, continues to beat the odds and just keeps on running) and Pony, the overly enthusiastic 2 year-old, must be let out. Molshky must be ordered out. Pony must be restrained, or she will boisterously send the “old man” flying off the stairs down which he had been stubbornly attempting to navigate his tired, aching body. They both pass by Moose, the outdoor cat, who meows impetuously as they leave the warmth of our house, while he has just emerged from his cushy cathouse, lined with old, down coats.

The roosters crow, the ducks noisily honk. Meanwhile, the trees laden with snow overlook our little homestead, still in their watch. A gray winter sky cracks into little pools of sunlight, reflecting down on the earth below. And life abounds.

The Homestead News:

The Big News: A New Arrival!! And this time, we're not talking about pet or barn animal. No, this time, we're talking about a *baby*.

Yes, in previous newsletters, I had hinted that change was coming, and indeed, in late November, it, or rather *she* came. One Sabbath morning, as the sun was just peeking in through the hospital window, we welcomed little Dorothy Hope Pratt at 20 inches, 6 pounds 12 ounces. Unlike Elijah or Marietta, she was born with a head covered with fine wisps of *dark* hair, not blonde. Like they, she has long eyelashes and distinct eyebrows, and, for now, deep dark-blue eyes.

God's timing is truly divine, as her birth was at the beginning of the only month the Pratts take off from touring. Further, Jessie had asked God long ago if she could have her children while still in her 20's, as 30's seemed so very old (Ha!). God, in His truly lovely sense of humor, answered Jessie's prayers (which had changed in her latter 30's), and sent the little one to the family as Jessie reached year 40. Amazing!!

Dorothy Hope is doing well, and has already gained a pound. She is much loved, and is truly a gift of God!!

Well, I don't think much can top the above news, however, just to share....

The ducks are now laying, much to my delight!! Ravioli, whom you met in the previous issue, lays dinosaur-sized eggs, while the others are a bit more reasonable. The chickens, also, continue to provide, though not quite as much as we expected. We even have started receiving the green eggs from our Americana hen, Snowflake!

The bunnies are covered in their nice, soft Angora fur, and we will not harvest their hair again until it becomes nice and warm in the spring. They are all just about full-sized now; but almost as cute as when they were still babies!!

In non-animal news, the backhoe/front-end loader emerged from it's shelter to clear more snow from the storm, as well as to hoist Bruce into the air to chainsaw fallen trees and branches which were blocking the road. Jessie is thankful she did not know of this until it was already done.

Bruce (*Theophilus*): Bruce has been practicing, practicing, and, well, practicing!!



He is a bit stunned, at age 45, to find himself a daddy of a newborn, but he is rallying with all his might to the piano! Bruce has already given Dorothy Hope her first piano lesson....although she promptly fell asleep. He is greatly looking forward to the new directions to which we are thinking of taking *Concert Presentations*.

Elijah: is amazing. Violinist and business man by day, Minecrafting Youtuber by night. Elijah has so many interests! He is, of course, grateful for the downstairs apartment, in which he spends the majority of his time, insulated from the wails of a newborn. He remains the world's best big brother, spending time with Marietta, sword fighting or gaming. He also will sometimes snuggle with Dorothy Hope, letting her pull as hard as she wants to on his lengthening beard.



I do often have to reiterate to Elijah, as he enthusiastically attempts to entertain Dorothy Hope, that although at this point she is hard of seeing, she is *not* hard of hearing....

Marietta: Is incredible!! Day after day, she practices her piano, attempts the schoolwork that lies before her, and does her daily chores. She is up at 6 am, warming the woodstove, making coffee, and readying for a full day. Of course, she always finds time for cuddle time with Dorothy Hope and Wordle with Mom. :)



Dorothy Hope: Well, she's just a little baby! However, we do have daily conversations about which instrument she will play, and why piano is the one to start with. In addition, she has a very rigorous schedule of eat, sleep, and diaperings. Interspersed are refreshing moments of tummy time. In general, she is a very happy girl!!!! She is just starting to make smiles and cooing sounds, which might just be the nicest sounds in the entire universe!



Jessie: Finally, there is Jessie. Jessie's world, at age 40, has been turned upside-down! Life consists now of nighttime feedings every two hours, and going to bed a half-hour later. She has a baby on her shoulder, and tries to finish newsletters! Yes, life does not stop when you have a baby. Thank God for

extra hands helping to run things and be supportive!! Both Bruce's mother and Jessie's mother stayed with us for a while, on different weeks. Now, Dorothy Hope just has to grow accustomed to not-being-held-all-the-time again!!!



The next issue of Concert Presentations: Family Missions will arrive in Spring 2023! If you would like your name added to our mailing list, please contact us and we will gladly do so! We also love hearing about the lives, experiences, and wisdom of those whom we meet in the community. We look forward to hearing from you!

The Pratts
9 Post Office Lane #487 Rumney, NH 03266
(603) 786-2782 ConcertPresentations@yahoo.com
www.ConcertPresentations.com

Pratt Fun Facts: What do you do to relax?

-Bruce: I look at current events. My favorite thing to do is to have intense conversations about morality and reality. Sounds like fun, right?

-Jessie: I enjoy a good, silly movie with the entire family, or going for a drive!! Maybe something active, like rock climbing...

-Elijah: Sleep. I like to sleep. If I'm not sleeping, to relax, I like to play bedwars minecraft.

-Marietta: I just want to always spend time with people. I love family activities, like movies, but I also really want to spend time with my mom, dad, or my brother one-on-one!!

-Dorothy Hope: I like to snuggle!!! Tummy-time is okay....but I'd rather snuggle and look out the window.

Performance News

(A New Section)

2023 concerts have begun!! We are thrilled, no, *beyond thrilled* to be bringing music and light to our favorite residents again! (Those favorites would be *everyone!!!*)

We are already hard at work on the program for 2024. Unfortunately, I simply can't share any of the ideas just yet, as they are top secret. However, it goes without saying that Dorothy Hope will have to be included!! Somehow.....

A Moral Consideration

What a world we live in. Such dichotomy: mountains covered with snow / the vandalism of priceless works of art; the deep, depthless blue of our new baby's eyes / more school shootings; the timeless notes of Mozart and Bach enriching our senses / talk of nuclear war and new sicknesses.

There seems to be little sense in all of this. Should one even have children these days?

This question, 'whether children should be brought into the world at this time,' was one which I had posed to a *Focus on the Family* representative a few years ago. This particular individual's response made an impression. He referenced the Exodus, from the Bible. He replied that while the Jews were fleeing, and wandering around in the desert for 40 years, they still strove to have faith in the Lord, to trust His plan...and they did indeed still bring babies into the world.

So is it even right to bring a child into a world as mixed up as this one?" I think of the Israelites, journeying a wasteland, not knowing where their next source of water would be, but called to have faith that God their almighty Father would care for them. He had a plan for each one of them.

I think of babies who were desired and prayed for. Babies who were unplanned and a complete surprise. Babies viewed as miracles. Each of them was made in the image of our Maker (Genesis 1:27). Certainly, a baby is a great gift *and* responsibility, perhaps the greatest...

And in the end, the call to bear children is between God and the potential parents. However, parents who find themselves with this "surprise," perhaps not exactly looked

for, might want to remember people in different shoes...or barefoot...with burning sand...and be encouraged.

While Dorothy Hope was indeed a surprise, she was greatly desired, and seen as a blessing, a gift; She was met with great joy. There are many other babies who would bring great joy to families, even if not their biological families, if given the chance, and the leap of faith. Such leaps of faith could surely transform this crazy world around us....

Scripture Says:

Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.
(Psalm 127:3-5)

All your children shall be taught by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.
(Isaiah 54:13)

"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me."
(Mark 9:37)

When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.
(John 16:21)

See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven.
(Matthew 18:10)

A baby is a divine creation, a new beginning, a "new morning." While it may seem daunting, even impossible, to comprehend the addition of a baby to an individual's or couple's life, remember: "Even in the womb, I knew you." Great things are waiting, for this newly formed being and for the world. God has everyone in the palm of His hand. He is faithful. We need to put our trust in Him, to put our best foot forward, and to allow Him to use us as He sees fit. He will care for all of His children, parents and babies alike