

## Hi There!

October 8, 2009 I had a horrible day on Tuesday. And I had a big night planned - an author event where I was expected to speak and hopefully maintain some semblance of alert-ness. After being up most of the night with a coughing child, the morning didn't go well. One hundred and one things went wrong and that was all before noon. I didn't even get my shower or my teeth brushed until about then. My kids were behaving badly, I lost my temper and yelled (sometimes it's the only way they hear!) and I couldn't find my business cards for a meeting I had to attend. When the grandparents finally picked the kids up to take them off to violin, one was crying and I was standing out in the rain, getting my newly dried and curled hair soaked, trying to console him. When I finally went inside I said "Lord! How on earth can I do a ministry for you in the shape I am in? I'm look a mess, my book is about staying sweet, which I have failed to do today, and I don't even have a speech prepared!" But I pulled myself together and went. And you know what? God met me there. The Holy Spirit intervened and gave me the strength that I didn't have on my own. The event was a success. I had a great time. And I remembered something important: it's not about me at all. My strength, my ministry comes from and is for God. And where He wants me, He will help me to be. Praise the Lord!

September 16, 2009 We found a dragonfly caught in a spider's web today. We cleaned it's wings off, and as soon as the sticky stuff was gone, it flew away. It was a special "feel-good" moment for me and the kids. (Probably not so much for the spider!)

August 18, 2009 I haven't been very good at keepig up with the blog or sending out columns. It has been a very busy year! I would love to hear from you! I love to get yor e-mails! I went to a estate sale on Sunday. I don't know the name of the person who passed away, but I found out he was in his 70s. He spoke 25 different languages and his home was filled with books, music, and instruments. I think he must have been a musician. I would love to have met him. What I didn't see was a single trace of religion - no cross, nothing Jewish or Muslim. I wonder if he had a spiritual side to him? He was so well-rounded and so obviously gifted, I just wonder if he took the time to get to know his creator. It saddens me a little bit that this man lived in my same home town and I never had the opportunity to meet him.

February 14, 2009 Happy Valentine's Day!!

September 28, 2008 After my 8 year old son talked to his friend on the phone, my three year old thought he should do the same. "Mommy, I've got to call my friend Lucy," he said to me in a serious, "don't mess with me" voice. Lucy is his two-year old friend. So after trying unsuccessfully to dissuade him, I dialed my friend's cell phone number.

She was camping and in the middle of a walk in the woods. "Lucy, do you remember Logan.." she started, and Lucy gave her a look that said "of course I remember Logan. Now give me the phone." The two littles ones had a cute conversation for a few minutes, which involved asking each other what they were doing, then Logan hung up. He was satisfied and went back to playing. It was just such a "grown up" moment for them!

May 27, 2008 Yesterday I celebrated my 18 year wedding anniversary with Duane. We had a romantic date on Saturday, when we could get a sitter, so we kissed each other good morning yesterday and then set about doing yard work. Now, I mentioned that my life is somewhat stressful. Yesterday, for example, I left the boys in the yard working while I came in to fix some lunch. Soon I heard the buzzing of a chain saw, a loud CRASH, followed by a loud AUGGGHHH!!! then the sound of my son crying. Thinking the worst, I ran outside. Apparently, without consulting me, Duane decided to cut down a tree. Not only a tree, but the boys' FAVORITE tree and the only one in our yard that they could climb. As the tree fell, Duane fell with it. He was unhurt (more or less) but Zachary was hysterical. After all, his tree was gone. After much crying, he ran to the garage, got nails and hammer, and decided to "fix" his tree. Duane, sore and limping, helped him nail the branches back to the stump. It was a tender moment, and probably why I married the man 18 years ago, but one has to wonder if he hadn't cut the tree down in the FIRST place.....

May 22, 2008 My doctor says I'm stressed. And there's good reason. Let me tell you about my day. I woke up this morning and left the house by 7:30 a.m. to lead a meeting, taking my son's violin along. After the meeting I tried to tune said violin, because my son was supposed to play it in front of the class. The G-string peg stuck and wouldn't tune. Not a good thing. After the performance (which was a little flat on a few notes, but otherwise perfectly wonderful!) I rushed home to brush my teeth and take off to a new dentist. After an hour long wait (they were running behind) the hygenist took my medical history and put bright red stickers on my chart noting my life-threatening Latex allergy. Five minutes into the cleaning, she said "Oh My Gosh! I'm using Latex gloves!" While I didn't feel any reaction (God was apparently looking out for me) she kept asking me questions like "Do you have your Epi Pen with you?" I was running out fo time and needed to leave to pick my son up from school. Quickly they finished, told me I had two filling that needed to be replaced and that my insurance wouldn't cover much of them. I rushed to the school, was the last car in car-pool line (kids hate that) and got home to clean the house before the appraiser came. Appraiser showed up early, I ran Lin Lin to work and got home in five minutes while he was still doing the outside of the home, finished with him, then went upstairs to do some work deadlines. In the middle of a phone call, my two sons came upstairs to cause trouble (or love on their mom). While still on the phone, I walked downstairs to see where their dad was and why he wasn't watching them. I found him holding the side of his head, saying "I'm so dizzy" and slurring his words. Apparently they were roughhousing and he took a knee to the temple. I got him ice, made him count fingers, and asked him his name. He seems to be okay now. And that was before the day was nearly over. Just a typical day in the life of Pam! I need a vacation.....

March 25, 2008 Somewhere, under all the snow, I have flowers blooming! My snowdrops, the earliest bulbs I have, peeked their little heads through the ground and bloomed forth into an array of white ground cover last week. The purple and yellow crocus did the same. As the snow was melting yesterday, they were still there, thriving. Thank God for small wonders!

March 5, 2008 Today was a sad day for our family. The mother of one of my son's classmates died suddenly and unexpectedly yesterday morning. She has two little girls, grades 2 and 3, and a husband who is now a single parent. It's a small school, with only 160 kids in grades K-8, so we are a close community. There were a lot of tears, but also a lot of support. Our school principal gathered the kids together this morning - the 2nd and 3rd grade classes and their parents - and spent a half hour talking to them about it, answering questions, and praying.. He told a story about water bugs and dragonflies to help the kids understand death. The waterbugs eventually leave the water,

climb up a stalk of grass and disappear. They cannot return to the water, but they go on to a wonderful and different life. The water bugs still in the pond miss those who have gone on, and wonder. But eventually, all of the water bugs become dragonflies. He ended the story by giving each child a dragonfly charm to carry around with them today. I thought it was a fitting memorial, and one that the kids were really able to grasp. Before I left, I hugged my son. Life is short. I hope he goes forward into his day, filled with joy. But I also hope that he realizes how precious a gift life is, and that we need to truly enjoy each moment that we're given. Dec. 23

We made family memories today. I made up a batch of cookie dough and we cut out sugar cookies and decorated them. Lin Lin had no idea what rolling dough was all about. Logan pressed his cookie cutter into the dough like I showed him, than while he waited for me to meticulously lift the cookie out of the dough and onto the cookie sheet, he grabbed handfuls of dough and plopped them on the sheet himself. HIS cookies, like Zachary was doing. Zach, of course had perfected the cookie cutter method and moved on to creating shapes of his own, namely fish.

Then we wrapped presents. Well, Duane wrapped, Lin Lin dozed on the couch, I finished up a craft project, and Zachary and Logan&hellip;;they helped. All of us.

After dinner (with candlelight for Advent) we got our pajamas on, grabbed our favorite stuffed animals (Zachary grabbed Dino and his new Webkinz, Logan grabbed a froggie and Meow Meow, Lin Lin her bear) and we climbed into the car to go look at lights. Duane popped popcorn for us all, and we were all snug and well fed as we drove into Plymouth and Northville and admired the Christmas decorations at some of the larger subdivisions. Logan kept asking what we were doing - "Are we going to Whole Foods? Are we going home? Why not?" We drove past Aunt Barb's subdivision "Auntie Barbs? Can I play the pig game?" and stopped to buy crickets at a pet store that was unfortunately closed. "But why? What will we feed froggie? Why can't we get in the door? Are we going to go back?" Soon, Logan finished up his popcorn and drifted off to sleep to the lullaby of soft Christmas music playing on the car radio. Zachary was old enough to stay awake and loved the lights. Lin Lin was quiet, snuggled down and very happy in the back seat. Duane and I were content.

It was a fun day - a memorable day. A Christmas memory made.

Nov. 30, 2007Okay, I realize I haven't been good at updating my blog lately, but life has been BUSY!! It has been exciting, too. My book came out and I'm working on publicity with my publisher, and there's school with the kids and all of their holiday activities. That alone, would be enough, but I went and broke my hand and hurt my foot, so suffice it to say my left side is a bit handicapped right now. I'm enjoying life with the kids, though and Thanksgiving was especially fun. We spent it at my parents house, with family and friends present. We painted ornaments and played a wild and competitive (and LONG) game of monopoly. Wow. I didn't know my family could be so feisty! I hope all of you had a blessed and peaceful time with family and friends. I will try to be better at keeping up the blog. I love to hear from you! Thank you to those who send comments and conversation my way! And as a side note - my computer no longer does spell-check, so if you see lots of typos&hellip;;well, I'm trying to spell-check on my own! - Pam Oct. 5, 2007Last night I was listening to my son say his prayers before bedtime. He comes up with quite a list of people to pray for, and also quite a list of things that he thanks God for. Lately, he has been ending his prayers with this: "Thank you, God, for taking care of the world and everything in it because I am too little to do that and you are just the right size."Then he lays his head down on his pillow and goes to sleep. Wow. If only we could all so easily put things into God's hands for the night! Sept. 27, 2007We've acquired a pet toad. I always told myself that I would never, ever have a pet that I had to feed live creatures too. But we got this baby toad and the kids love him. They named him Spots. So I went out and bought crickets. "Put them in a container, and give them a little bit of water and a slice of potato" said the pet store sales clerk. "They have to eat too." The first day we made the mistake of setting their container in our kitchen window. The crickets happily jumped on their potato and started munching. "Hey Mom, we have two tps of pets now!" said my older son. "One toad and crickets!" We watched them eat and hop for a few hours before I moved them into the garage, where we couldn't see them. There, they will stay, before we start naming them. I have to say, I've toughened up. We routinely feed the little critters to our toad. But the other night we had one cricket who sang and sang all night at the top of his little cricket lungs. Maybe he was terrified, but he sounded happy to me. "Anybody that happy doesn't deserve to die," I said the next morning. The cricket was let go in our flowerbed. Okay&hellip;;so I've got a ways to go&hellip;;Maybe our next pet should be a vegetarian. Sept. 18, 2007I saw a journal prompt this morning that said "What can you find at home that you can find no where else?" and I thought what a wonderful thought to ponder every day! I'm no saint but when I find myself getting dragged down by dirty dishes, laundry, bills and just&hellip;;life&hellip;;I've made it a habit to start praying for what I am thankful for in my life. I start by thanking God that I am able to stand at the sink and wash the dishes with my own two hands (or whatever I'm doing at the moment) and then I just go down the list of whatever comes to mind. My house. My sons. My husband. My dishwasher. After a few minutes, I feel better. Or at least, thankful! J I painted the saying "carpe diem!" across the top of my front door, so that I see it every day before I leave. The words are latin for "seize the day!" and that is what I try to do. Who knows if tomorrow will ever come? "This is the day the Lord hath made. Let us be glad and rejoice in it!" Sept. 9, 2007A few days ago my favorite author passed away. Madeleine L'Engle died at the age of 88, after publishing 60 books and winning numerous awards. I always wanted to meet her and tried to go to several of her writing seminars, but they filled up so quickly I could never get in. I did write her a letter once, which she responded to personally, but didn't sign. She wrote her books from the heart, sharing personal insights into her life, her marriage, her children. Her writing was so real that I felt like I knew her personally. So her death seems like a personal loss. I will miss her, but more, I will miss the anticipation each year of watching for her latest book to come out. Farewell Madeleine.

August 28, 2007

This is the last week before school starts and I find myself missing my son already. He'll be a big second-grader this year! I know a group of mothers who gets together for a celebratory breakfast on the first day of school. I know someone

else who is counting down the days until school starts and she can get "something done"!

Yes, there is lots of noise, messes, constant demands on my attention and very little time to write, but am I the only mother who actually dreads the end of summer and the day when she has to send her little one off for an entire day, five days a week, for someone else to play with? I don't think so.

We've had so much fun this summer and his baby-hood is getting farther behind me. It seems like only yesterday that he was so small and soft and cuddly. At seven, his hands are nearly as big as mine now, and he doesn't need me to hold them as often. Good Night Moon has been replaced by chapter books that he reads on his own. He can make his own lunch and barely misses me when I drop him off at a friend's house to play.

This is all good. It is my goal. But last night he sat on my lap and together we read a book and I could smell his clean soft hair right under my chin, and feel his little hand grasping mine. These times may become fewer, but I will certainly cherish each and every moment because as we all know, time marches on.