

Christmas 1967
716 Wenonah
Oak Park, Illinois
60302



Our Greetings to Family and Friends:

A senator has called it "The Year of Rebellion." A professor called it "The Year of the Hawks." A clergyman calls it "The Year of the Locusts. It might be also termed "The Year of Paradoxes:"

We saw signs of a "dying" Church - and of the Church's re-birth.

We saw mounting death in Vietnam - and mounting protest at home.

There were Detroit riots and Rap Brown - but also Cleveland and Carl Stokes.

There were LSD trips - but many more sought Peace Corps trips.

The revolution sweeping through our nation and world uncovered a "sick society," but it also unveiled an exciting new generation and a new spirit which believes that peace and justice need not wait for another century of debate, a spirit which calls men to hear the rythmn beat of a new day, to get involved, to enlarge the boundaries of mind and spirit, to care, to love, to hope. It is our hope as we greet you this season, that, whatever your age or situation, you will feel the sparks of this spirit within and around you.

Our living in God's imperfect Kingdom went on in its usual frantic, frenetic pace. We continue to be grateful that we can share in the mainstream of metropolitan Chicago's life. Don began his fifth year as director of the Business/Industrial Ministry, where he and a cadre of others deal with the issues of alienation, brokenness and injustice in the economic world. Of particular interest recently has been his involvement in "Operation Breadbasket" an effort to raise the level of economic opportunity in the Negro community. The widespread and systematic exclusion of Negroes from any but lower income jobs is being successfully countered by this movement.

Joyce's major "cause" continues in the foster children area. She finds it especially disturbing that during this season, when we speak of one who found "no room in the inn" there are over 400 children under 17 packed in Chicago's shameful Audy Home. One social worker observed that "People are more interested in building a patio than in rebuilding a broken life."

Some family highlights of the past year: The February marriage of Linda Howard and John Latta in Iowa City, where Linda, now in her Junior year, and John, a Senior, consider a fellowship offered in the graduate school.... The May-June visits of four beloved grandparents....The June arrival of Katherine, a talented sensitive teenager whose ability to play Monopoly, read Dr. Seuss and stir up Swedish meatballs has endeared her to us all.....A July vacation-camping-study trip that took us through the Rockies to New Mexico's Presbyterian "Ghost Ranch" and to Arkansas for visits with former parishoners..... October 13th, our happiest day of the year when we all lined up before Judge McNamara and heard the beautiful words "Rebecca is now your legally adopted child, to love and to cherish..." and we marveled at this sparkling, affectionate two year old who is such a joy to us, and who has become, as Drew boasts, "Oak Park's only real American Indian."

And so we're back to Christmas week, with its mixture of confusion and cheer,...and a 9 year old says five minutes before leaving for school, "Hey Mom, I'm making your Christmas present today and I'm supposed to bring a piece of chicken wire, an empty paper tube, and an old toothbrush,"... and a 7 year old wonders if he can earn 10¢ sorting socks to buy Brecky's present.. and a 12 year old with saw and hatchet, leads a procession through a 50 acre Christmas tree farm...and a 5 year old oohs and ahs over the dolls in the Museum of Science and Industry's Christmas Around The World Exhibit...and a 2 year old can't resist eating the popcorn strung on the tree...and an 11 year old with a stubborn cowlick plays "Silent Night" on his violin at the church service.

We are deeply grateful for your friendship, and for the occasion to think of you again this Christmas. It is our hope that the New Year will bring joy to you, and that we all may find that "men will beat their swords into plowshares" and that "justice will come rolling down like the waters."

I never heard how the election went. (I hope successfully)

Grace and Peace,

Don & Joyce