



Christmas Greetings from the McGee Clan!

As we approach the year 2001, we would like to take a moment to reflect on God's blessings on our lives through the year 2000.

It has been ten years since Don and I met and began this incredible journey together. He is one of my greatest blessings and an incredible man of God. He has such a commitment to the Lord and to our family. He is such a caring and sensitive father and husband and our family is truly blessed to have him leading it under God's direction. He is still working with ADP as Director of software development. They are currently working on a big project called "Jupiter" that is due for testing in June. He's taken several business trips to Portland, Oregon this year and says it is very beautiful there. We always miss him when he's gone and look forward to his return. Everyone that he works with that I talk to describe him as a man of high integrity and a strong work ethic. It blesses me to know that he conducts himself outside of our home in a way that is pleasing to the Lord. He enjoys his work, but family is his number one priority. He helps with the kids in the evening and plans time in his day to take part in every aspect of their lives. He received golf lessons for his birthday and was told by his instructor that he has a very "natural swing". He's looking forward to practicing more once his schedule at work slows down.

I'm having a great time being a full time mommy to my four sweet angels. Every day with them is an adventure. It's great to have the opportunity to see the world through a child's eyes. We enjoy story time, coloring, and crafty projects. Most days they "assist" me with housework and errands and then we have play time which usually ends with us rolling around on the floor in a tickle battle, laughing until our sides hurt. Don and I also look forward to our date nights when we get to dress up and just be Don and Connie for awhile. I had an opportunity this year to travel to Tyler, Cancun, California and Las Vegas. I was also able to attend Extravagant Grace women's conference and go to the Clay Crosse/Nicole Nordeman concert, see Sondra Pierce and Dennis Swanberg. This summer I was asked to do Publicity for MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) at our church and this has been a challenge and such a blessing to me. I

love being able to minister to the needs of other moms and see the difference that the Lord is making in their lives. I've recently purchased the Tae Bo tapes for exercising since I was having a hard time getting to the gym with all the wee ones and we have a blast working out together.

Nicole has had a very busy year and her social calendar is always full. She is thirteen in eighth grade this year at Fort Bend Baptist Academy and we are thankful that she has the opportunity to attend private school. She took a two day field trip to Austin/San Antonio for history in February and a few weeks later broke her toe. She took part in a youth project at church called New Life Weekend again this year and had a great time. She enjoys her Wednesday night youth group called "The Point" where she is able to listen to some great music, fellowship with her friends and hear some awesome speakers challenge her to a deeper walk with the Lord. She made the cheerleading team again this year but after some soul searching, decided that she wanted to pursue other interests for the spring semester. She has a beautiful voice and really wants to pursue that now, so she will be starting voice lessons at the beginning of the year. She is also taking Choir in school this year. In June she went to Cancun with me for her birthday and experienced her first airplane trip. It is so beautiful there and the water was unreal. This summer she found out she had to have braces and was not too thrilled. She's only had them for five months and her teeth look great. She is hoping to have them removed early instead of having to wear them for eighteen months. She participated in a Frontliners Crusade at church this summer and the group was able to go door to door and leave information or witness to at least 10,000 homes. She is currently planning to travel to Buenos Aires, Argentina during her Spring Break as part of a mission trip planned through our church. She is excited about the opportunity to share her faith and minister to those in Argentina. I know this will be a life changing experience for her. Their group is also planning for summer camp in Destin, Florida this year and I know she will have a blast.

Adam is five now in Pre-K at Fort Bend Baptist Academy. He loves his teacher, Mrs. Montgomery, and is doing very well. He loves bowling and decided to have a bowling party for his birthday. Grandma and Grandpa McGee took him on an outing to Kemah this summer and he had a grand time playing in the sprinklers and riding the Ferris wheel. For his last summer outing, they took him on a trip to Galveston where he was able to play on the beach, ride the ferry and feed the sea gulls. In September, he had a special treat when Daddy took him to his first real baseball game to see the Astros vs. Marlins at Enron Field. Dad also accompanied him on a school field trip to Carol's Country Place where he was able to milk a cow, see some farm animals and pick out a pumpkin to take home. In October, he celebrated Grandparent's Day at school and was proud to have Grandma McGee accompany him. He is a member of AWANA at church, which is a Christian based program designed to help them memorize scripture and learn more about Jesus Christ. We are amazed at how well he is doing with scripture memorization and he can't even read yet. He and Don even made a pine derby car and competed in a derby car race in November. He came home with a blue ribbon and some wonderful memories. He also attends Children's Choir at church and loves to sing. He often entertains us with his favorite "I Am A Promise". His interests are bowling, drawing, Dora the Explorer, Clifford the big red dog, and anything related to a sprinkler or water. Last week, when it was about 35 degrees outside, he asked me if I could fill up the pool for him so he could swim! This boy loves the water. He is growing so fast and I continually get comments on how tall he is. He's still off the growth chart for his age. He's fascinated with learning and is very anxious to learn to read. He is beginning to recognize some sight words and can sound out a few simple words on his own. He's still working on some self-control issues, but we can see monumental progress since this time last year. He loves having Nicole, Aaron and Abbey for playmates and likes getting together with friends from school from time to time.

Aaron is two and a half and a bundle of joy. Everyone we pass has to be greeted with a great big smile and "Hi"! He makes friends everywhere we go. His biggest interests right now are Blues Clues, Clifford and Toy Story characters. He carries his handy dandy notebook with him everywhere just in case he spots a clue. He watches Clifford every morning and sings along with the theme song, including where Clifford barks! Woody, Buzz, Jesse and Bullseye are his buddies and he never wants to leave the house without every single one of them. Our biggest challenge is keeping track of Woody's hat. He is very traumatized if it is misplaced. Goodness knows Woody can't be going around without his hat! He enjoys story time and working on his flash cards. His speech has improved tremendously over the last few months. Like Adam, he is a very big boy. I feel like I'm growing my own McGee NBA team! He loves Adam and Abbey and can't wait for Abbey to start walking so she can play around with him more. He spends his time copying everything they do. Half the time he's crawling with Abbey and the other half

he's running and bouncing like Adam. It'll be fun to see his personality become more distinct as he gets older.

Abbey had a very full first year. She progressed from a wee baby sleeping, eating and pottying all the time to a one year old toddler girl full of personality. She had her ears pierced at five months of age and I think it was harder on the mommy than it was for her. She'll never remember it, but I'll never forget! She has four teeth now, two on top, two on bottom, which makes for a very cute smile. Within the year she learned to smile and coo, roll over, sit, crawl, pull up, stand alone and cruise around the furniture. She still hasn't started walking but she is very close, just not too interested in the whole process. She's drinking from her cup and we've switched her to milk from formula since her first birthday. She is a very easy baby and happy all the time. Even recently when she had ear infections and a fever of 103, the doctor walked in and she was smiling ear to ear. She enjoys the day, between naps, playing with her brothers and I think her sister has a very soft spot for her. Nicole can't cross the room without just giving her a hug and a kiss. She babbles a few words, waves bye-bye, claps and just recently learned to sign please. We are having so much fun with her.

This year, we were able to take a few trips together. In January, we went to a Christian family camp called Crier Creek. The McGees came up for a night while we were there and it was very relaxing. We were able to ride horses, bikes, roast marshmallows by campfire and just enjoy the beauty of God's creation together without the distractions of television, telephones, or radio. It is so fun just to have time together as a family and I am thankful that the Lord allowed us that time together. We also rented a beach house in Galveston in September for a small getaway and we were joined by the McGees, Stacey, Amanda and Nicole's friend Kinsey. It was a very relaxing time. Abbey was not at all impressed with the sand, water or the noise from the waves. Aaron was a little nervous from the wave noise at first, but as soon as he saw Adam jumping around having fun, he joined in. Nicole spent time catching some rays and building sand castles. Don was able to spend some time with the kids without a beeper and I actually got to read a book! We also visited with his brother Robbie and his family while we were there. Our beach house ended up being right across the street from their house!

Our plans for the new year are to make plans for our next baby (I know you guys think we're nuts!). Also, we were planning to purchase a home last year, but after careful prayer and consideration, we really felt the Lord telling us to wait. So now we plan to move this summer. I really feel like the Lord is going to bless us with the home of our dreams. We'll keep you updated. Other than that, we will probably take a small family vacation and look forward to visiting with friends and family.

Well, that about sums it up. Sorry for the length of the letter. Those of you who know me know that I can't bottom line anything. I just ramble on for hours, especially about my family. I just think they're great. Overall it has been an awesome year. So here's my bottom line: we've had some struggles this year, but God has been faithful to see us through them. In considering our misfortunes, they are far outnumbered by our blessings. We serve an awesome God and he is ever faithful. He gives us an abundant life and joy unspeakable. HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS!