

the Famlet monthly

April 29, 2012

Volume 15, Number 4

Dear Family,

This has been a month marked by significant events that I don't necessarily feel comfortable writing about (at least not on the internet). So I've deferred to the central characters in these events, asking them to write whatever they feel comfortable having me publish. I probably should do this more often.

The month's first milestone event was Hannah's patriarchal blessing. She received it from her grandfather on the morning of April 1st—the Sunday of general conference, but that doesn't start until noon. We don't live in Grandpa's stake, but the Handbook allows an exception for the patriarch's lineal descendants. Here's how Hannah describes the experience:

The thing with writing about my patriarchal blessing is that I'm not supposed to disclose what's in it and it's an experience that's hard to describe even without self censoring. Before the blessing I was asked if I could describe what the Spirit feels like, and much like that, there is so much and yet nothing to say. Either you know it or you don't, but it's such a testimony-affirming experience, much like the first time I entered the temple. It dwarfs any other feeling, emphasizing what is important to you in that moment and yet bringing in a bigger picture.

Back to the patriarchal blessing, it was maybe the greatest blessing I've ever received. I could tell every word I heard was true and though everything did not paint a pretty picture, it was still beautifully comforting.

I look forward to all the gifts and trials foretold and am so grateful to have a Heavenly Father that loves and trusts me as much as I know he does.

Eight days after Hannah's blessing, Crystal underwent surgery on her, um, lady parts. That's about all I feel comfortable writing because even the medical terms are so yucky sounding. According to Crystal, the operation:

Is best described for the faint of heart as "something that a urogynecologist does." I'm all for talking about and demystifying this sort of thing (at least among other women) but feel like with this surgery I run serious risk of TMI. So, with that warning, my procedures included a sacral colpopexy, cystocele repair, rectocele repair and a sling. If you know what those words mean, then you probably don't mind me sharing them with you. Look them up at your own risk...I've just become aware of some things that can be found on YouTube, presumably put there for the edification of med school students or other crazies. Most of you will prefer to stick to text. And don't say I didn't warn you.

Crystal's doctor called to schedule a pre-op appointment while we were out having dinner with our good friends Bill Warner (a urogynecologist himself) and his wife Whitney.

That call turned the conversation in a direction that pretty much wrecked the rest of the meal for me, but Bill (and Whitney) have nevertheless been really good confidants and allies for both of us through all this.

The procedure lasted about five hours. The doctor had told me beforehand that I could play a round of golf during it if I wanted. Surprisingly, I didn't take him up on that that, but I did go home, threw in a load of laundry, ran 10 kilometers, showered, folded the laundry, picked up lunch at Wendy's and got back to the surgical waiting room at Montgomery General an hour and a half before anybody came out looking for me.

After just one night in the hospital, her recovery has gone very well, aided in no small measure by overlapping efforts from family, community and church support structures (not to mention work, where they stopped copying me on fire-drill emails for several days so I wouldn't worry about things there). We didn't tell very many people about it, but the meals that rolled in over the next week were almost more than we could handle.

One of the difficult aspects of Crystal's recovery has been that she often feels good enough to do more than she really ought to. Then she overdoes it and experiences great pain as a result. I guess that's probably a good sign. It's a good thing she's feeling better because today she has to go off ibuprofen in preparation for this coming Friday's excisional biopsy of an intraductal papilloma (believed to be benign) in one of her breasts—I can never remember which one. We hope she'll then be done going under the knife for a while. (This is all making me feel very old.)

Speaking of getting old, Sophie turned 10 this month. I feel like I'm on to something here, so I'll let her describe it:

My birthday was April 5th. I was ecstatic about it. What I did on my birthday I loved. I went on a bike ride with Mom and Grace. We went to Four Corners, had Subway, went to the bakery, then rode back. The day before, I had gotten a new bike. It was, I felt, the happiest day of my life. I also really liked my other presents the next day. Mom and Dad got me clothes. I really like them. Lucy got me pigney puffs (pink balls of fuzzy thread). Grandma gave me a skirt and a shirt and a game called Quiddler. My Primary teacher gave me Articles of Faith flashcards and a pocket Farkle game. I loved all of these things and I had a great birthday!

I've tacked to my wall at work Sophie's school essay on what she would do if she were elected president of the United States. It's priceless and I'd share it with you, but it's at work.

In other medical news, Lucy sprained her ankle during a three-legged race at the ward picnic. After a trip to the orthopaedist she now has an air cast and occasionally uses crutches. There's a longer version of this story, but we're pretty sure she's going to live.

Our love,
Tim et al





Hannah and the patriarch.



Sophie contemplates her wish before blowing out the candles on her birthday pie on her 10th birthday.



Grace, Sophie and Lucy take in the tulips at Brookside Gardens.

