

4/3/13

Hi Heather!

I don't want to stop connecting with you even though you are out of the Phoenix. I hope you are settling in to your cozy "hole in the wall" well!:)

Liz Brown and her brother and a few others are starting a Katy performing arts center. They are raising money to build the center and have already put on the musical Joseph and the Technicolor Dream Coat. Now they are doing a chorus performance of some of the best Broadway songs. Emily and I decided to participate in this one. We went to our first rehearsal last night. They have had several before this, but they said we could come. It was fun! We are doing a Fiddler on the roof medley, Defying Gravity, One More Day from Les Mis., Be Our Guest, and a couple more. It was fun.

I'm at piano right now. Emily is going first.

For a quote today I thought I'd send you a copy of a talk Melissa Santos gave in church on Sunday. She was feeling prompted that she was supposed to talk on Easter, and Dad ended up feeling inspired to call and ask her. She said, "It's about time!" Dad thought she was joking, but at church she told him how she had known she was going to talk. Anyway, it was good and I asked her for a copy and sent it to Spencer. I think you'll enjoy it also. I'm on my phone and its limited, so I will forward her email to you and hopefully the attachment will be there!

I love you!!!! Have a wonderful day sweetheart!!!

Love, Mom

4/2/13

Hi Melissa!

I just want to tell you again how much I loved your talk and especially the spirit in which you conveyed it! It felt personal and beautiful, like you know the Lord and understand what he's done for you and what he continually keeps doing for you on a daily basis through His love, friendship and atonement.

I thought Spencer would enjoy reading it. I told him you spoke and I might see if I could get a copy of your talk and send it to him. He replied, "I would love to hear Sister Santos's talk, send it over! :)"

So I was wondering if you have a copy of it that I could have, either electronically or if you just have a paper version, a copy of it?

Thank you so much! I sent him a devotional thing that Elder Holland had in a book about the Psalms and he said he used it in a talk he gave in sacrament meeting the next Sunday. And he wants more stuff to have on hand to share with people. I think your talk would have a lot in it that he could share with people!

Love you girl! Thanks again for being you and for inspiring me and giving me hope and for all you have done for me and my family! You are awesome! Truly!

Tiffany

4/8/13

Hello my son! (Spencer)

This week I've tried to move forward on our kitchen. I met with the painter for the cabinets. I need to pick out a color, which won't be too hard. But he will be the last thing that's done. He gave me a referral of a guy that installs and does floors and countertops and stands by his work and workers. So I called him up and he came over on Thursday. He had other options that he thought were better than what I had found at Home Depot, so it's slowed me down a bit. It's probably good though, so I will take my time in finding the best material. Emily and I are going to go look at model homes and see what their doing in kitchens now and get some more ideas. Then the guy suggested going to a place called Floor Decore and More or something like that. They have a huge inventory of flooring and backsplashes, etc. So I will try to get to that this week. Sad would like to move out of the house when Emily leaves for college, but time will tell. I don't know.

We sold the Missouri City house this past week. Now that's off our hands! Yea! We didn't get as much for it because we didn't fix it up and we sold it to a Lifestyles member as an investment property. But it went faster.

Me and my Mia Maid advisor are worried about our Mia Maids. There are some that we know are struggling in their lives and in their homes. And there doesn't seem to be any bonding in the class. So we had a class party on Saturday night and over at her apartment and 5 out of the nine girls came. We made pizza and played games and it was a good time. I don't know if it accomplished much but we'll keep trying. I care so much about these girls and don't really know how I can help them. I feel so helpless!

Conference was so good this weekend! I really was uplifted and strengthened by the messages! We went out to lunch as is tradition on Saturday and upgraded the long ago Fazolis to Hasta la Pasta.:) It was nice. Yesterday after Conference, we did Passover with Brandon, Mindy and Daenon and Kylee and Ryan. Emily did a lot of the preparation. She had told me she wanted to do it to learn so she could do it with her family. So I totally took her up on it! I was a little burned out from doing such a big one a week and a half ago, so it really helped. Plus having Mindy do some and Kylee too, it was a lighter load. But I had fun setting the table all nice.:) That buffet table in the dining room where I store my china is really handy for having all the food on it so we can serve ourselves there instead of going in and out of the kitchen. It's a little squishy, but we managed.

When Heather got out of the Recovery Center she had a setback, but I know the Lord was watching over her and she has been doing so much better! I am really seeing the blessings from your serving in her behalf this week! I am praying daily that your service blesses her and am so grateful I can rely on that, I can't even tell you the strength and faith it gives me! She is calling me and leaning on me for support, which she's never done before! We are having great conversations and are feeling a lot closer to each other. Damon has been so wonderful! He went up to her apartment on Saturday to watch the afternoon session with her. Then

they bought some food and made dinner together. He went to the priesthood session and I talked to her. (I was at the Mia Maid party, so I stepped outside on the landing and we talked for an hour.) Then he drove her down to Provo and she stayed at grandma's for the night. He came over and watched the Sunday morning session with her and Grandma and Grandpa. Grandma has been so great too! And Alissa too! She spent the day with Alissa last Thursday or Friday, helping her clean her house and watching her children while she napped. I prayed that her roommates would be angels. I don't know if she has one or more roommates right now, but her one roommate IS an angel! She invited Heather to watch the first session of Conference with her and her friends and she made a huge breakfast for everyone. Heather said there was a big fruit salad, muffins, scones and breakfast burritos. She said her roommate also gave her a month bus pass. She will probably use it today to get to an AA meeting and get down to Orem where Alissa can get her and she'll spend the afternoon and possibly the night with her. She's even trying to quit smoking and is weaning herself down and is making good progress. I'm so thankful! She told me last night that she was going to write to you after we got off the phone, so this is probably all repeated.

I know your sacrifice and service is making a huge difference! I truly feel strengthened like I said above and am so very grateful! You are a wonderful son and I love you so much! You are making a difference in Virginia I KNOW and I know you are making a difference back home too!!! The Lord is blessing us incredibly! He is so good to us! My faith has grown stronger and stronger! I hope you have a wonderful week!

Love, Mom

4/15/13

Hi! (Spencer)

This past week was pretty good. Emily was sick the first part of the week, throwing up all day Monday. By Wednesday she was doing a lot better and was able to go to piano. That night I was in charge of the girls camp certification for fires and cooking.

There are four levels that have certification requirements. So I got the older girls to certify the younger girls in certain requirements and help with the cooking. The first years used the fire that the 2nd years built and roasted li'l smokeys wrapped in crescent roll dough over it and also took the dough and put butter, cinnamon and sugar on it and roasted that. The second years made foil dinners with hamburger, potatoes, carrots and onions, then made a dessert of bananas spit open on the top, stuffed with marshmallows and chocolate chips and wrapped in foil and cooked on coals. The third years used a cardboard box covered in foil, turned upside down and a pan set on empty peach cans inside with coals underneath to cook english muffin pizzas. And they also made a dutch oven peach cobbler. That was the best!!! And the pizzas were the worst because they tasted like charcoal. Yuck! The fourth years boiled water in a #10 can set inside a charcoal chimney and cooked penne pasta, and on a camp stove made spaghetti sauce and added meatballs. When all the food was cooked, we sang a camp song, had a prayer and everyone ate the feast. It was a success and I couldn't have done it without the older girls, the other leaders and my previous advisor, Jill Sampson who came with her roommate, Hannah Clark and they helped get the charcoals all ready.

On Friday, Brandon and Mindy brought me, Emily and Taylor with them up to the temple and while Taylor and Emily stayed out in the car, Brandon and Mindy and I went in and did a session. Afterwards, Dad, Taylor, Emily and I drove to Galveston and spent the night. then we had fun at Moody Gardens. We watched two really cool I Max movies about sharks and the ocean, took a little cruise on a paddlewheel boat,

watched a 4-D movie with special effects and enjoyed the aquarium and rainforest pyramids. We just had a really fun time together!

Dad just told me that you emailed him a 1/2 hour ago and I missed getting a letter to you in time!!! Ugghhh! I am soooooo sorry! I will mail this to you and hopefully you'll get it in a couple of days. I will try to email you on Sundays from now on. Sooo sorry!

So when you suggested that I get the missionaries involved with helping the mia maids, I ended up asking the Elders to teach for me this past Sunday. It was a combined Young Women class. Each Fast Sunday one of the YW presidency teaches all the Young Women and it was my turn this month. I wasn't sure how to present the lesson and it was on the Apostasy and the Restoration and why we needed a restoration. I found a 15 minute video that was suggested resources for the lesson and I showed it to the missionaries and they liked it and used it. They did a wonderful job. I just thought, this is what they teach all the time and they would do a better job than me, and the girls will probably pay more attention to them anyway.:) I told them most of the girls are planning on serving missions so this lesson would be good mission prep. Or else the other 1/2 of the girls are more like investigators and don't have a testimony. But those girls didn't come. Oh well. I will keep trying and keep thinking of ways the missionaries can help. It was a wonderful suggestion!!! Thank you so much!!!

I love you so much Spencer!!! You are doing a great work and I hope you had a wonderful baptism yesterday! I hope you have an awesome week! I will send this email just in case you get it. Let me know if you do, otherwise I'll send it in the mail!

Love, Mom

4/22/13

Hello my wonderful son!!! Dad said he really enjoyed talking with you last Tuesday. He shared your experiences with your investigators and you sound great!

This week was the shopping week for Taylor. We went shopping almost every day and got him all set. So much to do and buy! He will be leaving today. Grandma is here and she leaves today, about an hour before him, so she will wait at the airport in Salt Lake to take him down to Provo. I think they are going to stop and see Heather for a few minutes on their way down.

Grandma came on Friday and on Saturday Taylor went to the temple. Daron and Heather came down and were there too. Mindy had a piano recital, so they didn't go, but Brandon met Daron and Heather at the temple and took the kids back down to Ryan and Kylee's. We went there after the temple and had dinner there. Grandpa Janis came that evening.

Sunday Taylor spoke in church and gave a wonderful message about ministering to people. Jeff and Shelby came as well as everyone else. We had a nice time visiting. At 7 Taylor was set apart and everyone left except Grandma. It was busy and loud, but nice to see everyone.

When Taylor contacted Heather last night about stopping by she texted him she was so glad. She said she had an appointment with the missionaries, but she could have them come earlier. Was that a suggestion from you? I'm grateful for that news.

I hope you get this! I am so sorry! I got distracted and had to take Emily to voice lessons and Taylor to the doctor and I didn't send this. Ahhhhhh!!!!

I love you so much!!!! Have a beautiful week my wonderful son!!!!
Love, Mom

4/25/13

Hi my precious son! (Taylor)

Just a quick note to let you know I ordered all the stuff on Target.com. The blanket wasn't available in ivory, but was in grey, so you get a grey blanket. Also, the mattress pad may not arrive till the day you get there, or a day or two later. The mission won't forward it on, so you may have to wait a while to get it. I'm sorry. It's weird. Everything else should get there in plenty of time. They may be totally off, though, and watch, it will arrive first!:))

Just a reminder to take lots of pics at the MTC. You only have a few days there, so be sure to take advantage of your camera!

Also, I was reading the Family Information Sheet you were sent by your mission pres and it says that when you leave for Arizona, "pack whatever you will need for your first night in a small overnight bag or your backpack. (Your luggage will be locked in a trailer and you will not have access to it until noon the next day after transfer meeting.) This includes your toiletries, pjs and a change of clothes for the next day. This will save time and frustration that first evening as you leave the mission home to spend the night with a member family." Sounds like your black bag you got from G&A will be perfect!:) I didn't know if you saw that or remembered, so I thought I'd give you a heads up.

I love you so much!!!!
Mom

4/29/13

Hello my wonderful son! (Spencer)

Thank you for your letter! I was so happy you got mine and I wasn't too late! It was so good to hear from you!!! I'm so excited about the girl from Cinco Ranch High School!!! That is so awesome! Not a coincidence! What's her name? Did you get her roommate to set a date?

Taylor saw Heather and they had a great talk. He said she is going to institute too. I asked how she was getting there and he said her roommates, because they go, and if they can't I guess the missionaries are working with a guy who's reactivated that could take her. She told him she wants to get the family's trust back and get married in the temple. She also was making an appointment with her bishop. I haven't heard anything else since last Tuesday. I've been praying for her, her bishop, her roommates and the missionaries that are seeing her.

I got a quick email from Taylor today (Sunday). This is what it said:

"Hey mom!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I sent a letter on thursday so I hope you get it soon but i'm emailing you to tell you I dont get p-day until next Saturday!

gtg I love you all so much and I'm doing well! I'm District Leader!"

So he may not have had time to write you. I will send him your mailing address in case he can send off a quick letter to you. But I know he's anxious to be communicating with you!

(Now it's Monday.) Last week was slow and quiet with just Dad, Emily and I home. We're adjusting. We are eating much simpler now, juicing and eating sprouted grain toast, with fish for lunch.

Oh, I saw John Ramero at Target a week ago. He talked to me for about 10 minutes or so. He looked good and was really friendly and talkative.

Mike Johnson got married on Friday. He married a girl that he baptized after his mission. She hasn't been a member for a year, so they got married at the church and in August will get sealed in the temple. I was asked to play the violin at the wedding and I asked another lady who is much better than me to play with me. We played duets and it went well. I'm so glad I asked her!

Last night we had a fireside and Dad and I led it. It was the Young Women's Standards Night, where we talk about standards. (surprise! haha) Dad asked a get to know you question and asked what would make them feel like their life had been a success when their life is over. They all gave really insightful answers and I know they took it seriously. They talked about having good family relationships, about making a difference for good in people's lives, about having no regrets, about teaching their children their values. It was good!

Then I talked about the theme for the year: "Stand ye in holy places and be not moved..." from D&C 87:8. I focused on the word stand. I wrote it really big on the chalkboard. And then I had them think of phrases that had the word STAND in it. They just came up with a ton. They got pretty animated. Phrases like stand up, stand off, stand down, stand alone, stand still, stand for something, stand tall, stand by, stand around, etc. Someone said STANDards. I had thought of that when I was pondering what to say and it was cool! The idea of standing with standards. Then I read some scriptures that "stood" (haha) out to me with the word stand in it. These are what I read to them:

D&C 87:8

Wherefore, [stand](#) ye in holy places, and be not moved, until the day of the Lord come; for behold, it cometh quickly, saith the Lord. Amen.

D&C 107:100

He that is slothful shall not be counted worthy to [stand](#), and he that learns not his duty and shows himself not approved shall not be counted worthy to [stand](#). Even so. Amen.

Revelation 6:15-17

15 and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondsman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb:

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to [stand](#)?

1 Corinthians 16:13

Watch ye, [stand](#) fast in the faith, quit you like men (behave like men), be strong.

Ephesians 6:13-14

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to [stand](#).

14 [Stand](#) therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.

Galatians 5:1

[Stand](#) fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Joshua 23:9

For the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong: but as for you, no man hath been able to [stand](#) before you unto this day.

3 Nephi 26:4

And even unto the great and last day, when all people, and all kindreds, and all nations and tongues shall [stand](#) before God, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—

Alma 1:25

Now this was a great trial to those that did [stand](#) fast in the faith; nevertheless, they were steadfast and immovable in keeping the commandments of God, and they bore with patience the persecution which was heaped upon them.

Alma 46:27

And now who knoweth but what the remnant of the seed of Joseph, which shall perish as his garment, are those who have dissented from us? Yea, and even it shall be ourselves if we do not [stand](#) fast in the faith of Christ.

The Young Women Personal Progress Book:

The Young Women motto is "[stand](#) for truth and righteousness." The Young Women logo is a torch surrounded by the Young Women motto. The torch represents the light of Christ, inviting all to "come unto

Christ" (Moroni 10:32). It invites all young women to make a commitment to hold up their light by being an example and remaining worthy to make and keep sacred covenants and receive the ordinances of the temple.

I just found this topical search to be so interesting. Slightly different meanings, yet all pointing to action and attention and preparation, rather than sitting or falling which is more passive or defeating.

Dad then took the discussion and read a few Aesop's fables that illustrated if you don't have your own values that you hold to, or you don't have very good values, you'll end up with a dead donkey. haha No, you'll end up unsuccessful, or without any friends. Then he had them talk about what they valued. Dad told about Del (without saying his name) and how he values drinking and immoral behavior, and how one time the company was having an event and he was drunk and he was inappropriate with a woman employee, who then sued him and he had to pay \$450,000. He also told them the story of when he turned eight and was baptized, he started swearing out of the blue. And it got so bad that in Primary one day, he swore at his teacher and she burst into tears. (The youth thought that was pretty funny!) And then at that moment, he asked himself, "what are you doing?" And he realized swearing is not what he wanted to stand for and he stopped swearing. I think they all liked all the stories.

It turned out pretty good I think.

Sorry this is so long! I hope you had time to read it! Sometimes I get on a roll! :)

I love you so much! I hope your second transfer of training is going well! That's cool that you get to be trained by an AP! Not the common, everyday thing. Damon told me that his mission president told him he had a name for him. He asked what. His president said, "Hyrum." Damon really liked that. He feels you and Taylor are more of the spotlight leaders, and he is the quiet, supportive, older, strong brother in the background. Interesting, huh? I hope you have an amazing week! I'm so grateful you are my son!

Love you!
Mom

5/4/13

Hello Elder Taylor Scott Janis!!!

I love you!:) I hope everything is going great! I'm sure it is!!! I hope you are taking pictures of everyone and getting in pictures yourself! Have you gotten much mail or packages? I can't wait to hear about this week! I posted your letter on the blog that you wrote. (minus the booger part:)) I hope that's ok. If you want something else posted, send a separate family and friends letter, or if you don't mind me posting you letters to us, but don't want certain parts posted you can mark it or something.

This week was good. It's soooooo quiet around here!!! So on Thursday for my birthday I decided to do something different. I remembered coming across this blog several months ago about a lady who has two kids and for her birthday she and her kids figure out random acts of kindness that they can do that day totaling how old she is. Well, I didn't plan enough in advance, but I thought I'd try to get as many done as we could. Emily was excited and Dad stressed out.:) So Emily and I went to Kroger and bought some stuff and they had paper bags with a meal for a homeless person in them and I bought one of those and donated it. Then we went home and put stuff together and made some chocolate chip cookies.

It was almost dinnertime, so I ordered two medium pepperoni pizzas to be delivered to a single mom with three kids in our ward. She's just been reactivated this past year and is recently divorced and is going back to school and working. So Dominoes called and said the delivery guy knocked and the kids said they didn't order pizza, and so he didn't deliver it. So I told him it was an anonymous surprise and to have the guy go back and tell them. I hope it was a day maker for them! Dad and Emily made a nice dinner for me and we ate it. Then Dad, Emily and I got in the car and started our adventure!!!

The first place we went was a park on Wertheimer Parkway and me and Emily walked around the playground and dropped or placed 46 dimes around for kids to find. Then we got back in the car and headed down Wertheimer towards downtown and looked for homeless people. We had bought SOCKS!!! and also \$10 McDonald gift cards. We rolled up the socks and put a card on it and put a rubberband around it to hold it in place. We found THREE men!! It was a cold day! We are having record lows right now! The weather is going all over the place! The day before it was in the high eighties, but it dropped to the low fifties, and there's been a cold wind on top of it. So these guys were so thankful. The first guy just kept exclaiming and it was so sweet that Emily said, "I'm going to cry!" And she may have!:) That was really cool.

Then we went to St. Cristus Hospital on Fry and Kingsland and Emily and I went into the Emergency Room and to the desk and gave the receptionist a plate of cookies and some coloring activity sticker books for kids and crayons. She was thankful and said she would take them back to the nurses.

We went home and ate part of a lemon meringue pie for dessert. Then we put the rest of it in a bag along with more baked cookies, and other goodies and took the bag over to the missionaries. Elder Williams is in a three-some now. His companion, Elder Harm (the big guy that went in the MTC when Spencer did) went home. I think I heard his knee was having problems, but when he gets it worked out he will be back. So Elder Williams is with the Elders that cover Katy 4th and Katy Mills wards, so now they are covering those plus our ward and Nottingham! They were so excited to get the goodie bag!

Anyway, it was a great day but I don't think we got one picture to document the whole thing!!!! Ugh !!!! But we had so much fun! Well, me and Emily did! Dad was reserved and grit his teeth through it and it probably wasn't as bad as he thought it would be. haha!

On Monday Spencer wrote this to me: (the first part is the inactive girl they met that went to Cinco Ranch High School. I asked her name.)

"Her name is Sierra Snow, she's really quiet but we got her records transferred over to our branch so she's officially reactive! And her friend Ashley is probably going to be baptized on the 11th :)

You and Dad should go do EFY's hahah that sounds like you had a lot of fun teaching together!

I'm out of time today, but Heather emailed me and she's trying to find God through this gospel so that's really exciting to me. Even though my response is short I read the whole email and loved it, thanks for it!!"

And remember how he had sent that scripture for his plaque that was from the Old Testament about a king stabbing someone in the stomach and the stomach sucking around his hand, or something like that? Maybe you were already gone when he sent that. :) Anyway, he was thinking about it and sent a different one this Monday that is Alma 53:20 "And they were all young men, and they were exceedingly valiant for courage, and also for strength and activity; but behold, this was not all—they were men who were true at all times in whatsoever thing they were entrusted." I think we will be able to finally get his plaque up on the wall.:)

I am so grateful for you Taylor and your love for the gospel! The gospel means everything to me and it is truth, hope, and the way. I'm so grateful you are so excited to teach this to people and be the Savior's anointed representative. I love Him and so grateful for His loving, merciful, infinite atonement. You will do so well!!!

Let us know when you will be able to call us, if you can and want to from the airport!!! And don't forget to pack your duffle bag with a day's worth of clothes and toiletries! I have heard from Target that everything has been delivered! Yea! And I also sent a pair of flat front grey slacks that are size 34 34. They didn't have 32 34, so see how they work. If they do I can send some black ones too. Just to save on your nice suit pants on wear and tear biking.

Love you so much!!!!!!!
Love, Mom

5/6/13

(Spencer)

Thank you for your letter! I asked Ann Shipp, who was YW president if she remembered Sierra and she did. She had dropped by a couple of times with birthday gifts and stuff, but she told me that Sue Brown would be happy to hear because she was her mom's visiting teacher. So I told Sue and she was so happy to hear and was worried about them when they moved and she said she was so happy she felt like crying!:))

Well, Taylor leaves for Tempe tomorrow! I'm sure he's very excited!

So the highlight of this week was my birthday on Thursday, but on Wed for our class activity we were doing some missionary oriented stuff and invited the missionaries to come and share their thoughts and feelings about missions with us. They are in a threesome right now because one of our elders went home for health stuff and so they are now covering katy 2nd, katy 4th, Nottingham and Katy Mills wards. But they were so nice and came in and we learned a lot of good stuff!

Anyway, so on Thursday for my birthday I decided to do something different. I remembered coming across this blog several months ago about a lady who has two kids and for her birthday she and her kids figure out random acts of kindness that they can do that day totaling how old she is. Well, I didn't plan enough in advance, but I thought I'd try to get as many done as we could. Emily was excited and Dad stressed out.:) So Emily and I went to Kroger and bought some stuff and they had paper bags with a meal for a homeless person in them and I bought one of those and donated it. Then we went home and put stuff together and made some chocolate chip cookies.

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McDonald gift cards. We rolled up the socks and put a card on it and put a rubberband around it to hold it in place. We found THREE men!! It was a cold day! We are having record lows right now! The weather is going all over the place! The day before it was in the high eighties, but it dropped to the low fifties, and there's been a cold wind on top of it. So these guys were so thankful. The first guy just kept exclaiming and it was so sweet that Emily said, "I'm going to cry!" And she may have!:) That was really cool.

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Here's a pic of the pans and the rack he installed. (Yes, he, Dad, installed it! And he actually had fun doing it!:))



And here is the little table and chairs set I got to eat out on the patio that we are really enjoying right now!



It's wet from the sprinklers, but they dry by lunch and dinner!

Well, have a great week, I love you!

Love,
Mom

5/12/13

My Precious Son! (Damon Jr)

I want you to know for the millionth time how grateful I am for you, especially today! You have given me such joy as a mother as I've watched you grow up and now as I watch you be on your own! This past year has challenged you and pushed you to even newer limits you may not have believed you were capable of, and yet you accomplished the nearly impossible: BYU Accounting Junior Core! (I'm sorry if seeing those words were still too fresh to turn your stomach!:) I am so incredibly impressed!!!! It shows so much: intelligence, determination, dedication, unrelenting perseverance, and a massive WORK ethic!

You have also been the best brother ever to all your siblings! Helping your brothers prepare for their missions and giving them such an example to look to! Encouraging them all along the way. I appreciate that more than you may know! You have been a wonderful friend to Emily this year and a very positive strength to her as well. But I don't know how I can adequately express my deep gratitude for all you have done to

help and bless and strengthen and love Heather this past year. You've gone beyond and were truly amazing!

In all the stress and pressure of school, you have found time to minister and be a good friend to so many individuals (including long talks with me!) that I'm sure I don't even know a small fraction of, and that shows the depth of your kind and compassionate character! And you've served in the temple and in your callings and that touches me so deeply. I know this year has been full of personal challenges, and yet you've chosen to look outside of yourself and help and bless others. You've chosen to put your faith and trust in God and I know He will bless you, as He already has!!

And WOW!!! You ran a 1/2 marathon!!!!!!! WooHoo!!!

Damon, you are a kind, patient, good, noble, smart, hilarious, good looking, wise, frugal, classy, spiritual, strong, brave, athletic, gentleman!!!!!! I am so proud to be your mother!!! JUST SAYIN'!!!!!!)

I LOVE YOU!!!!!!

Mom

5/13/13

Hi Spencer!

IT WAS SO GOOD TO TALK TO YOU AND SEE YOU!!!!!! You sound so good!! I really, really loved hearing all your stories and about all the people you are meeting and teaching! Taylor told us about an investigator couple they are teaching named Joe and Margaret. They're an old black couple who finally came to church yesterday. He's got the worship style like your branch it sounds like and they let him know that after the Primary children sang nobody would clap. And during the prayer, both Joe and his wife were nodding and rocking and saying, "Amen, Hallelujah, praise the Lord!" I told Taylor about your branch and he got a real kick out of hearing about it. It sounds like Joe and his wife would fit in! He said Joe wore a completely yellow suit to church.:)

Yesterday was one of the best Mother's Days ever! I got to see and talk with you and Taylor, and talk to Damon. I even got a text from Heather. I guess Dad texted it to you. I am so grateful you are serving and Taylor is serving and I draw on that service in prayer every day, petitioning the Lord for Heather, that she will be blessed through your service and what President Allen said, how she WOULD be blessed because of your service. It brings me such hope. Thank you.

Last week Sister Hansen called me and asked if I would head up the seminary teacher appreciation breakfast this year again. I said I would, but not the food part and suggested a senior mother to call, which she did and that's taken care of now. So I thought, "What should our theme be this year?" and immediately the answer came to my mind: superheroes! So I made these invitations



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SUPER HEROES!**

**SHAZAM!!! YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND A
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It was pretty time intensive, but "super" fun!:) I got the idea of the Tootsie Pop superhero from Pinterest and got design ideas from Pinterest and then did my own design. I'm very pleased how they came out! I get to come up with the decorations and teacher appreciation gifts now. I really like this kind of thing, unfortunately I like it more than cleaning the house.:) But on Saturday I really got in the cleaning mood and went up to the boy wing and deep cleaned. Since Taylor left I haven't had the muster to face the rooms, so I'm so glad I did! The bedding is all clean, the floors vacuumed, the stuff organized in the closets and the bathroom all sparkling again. I also dusted the kitchen blinds and washed them all clean. It was a good day for the house! And me! The difference in how the house looks really affects me. I think when the environment is clean, the Spirit can be present, at least in more abundance and for me, maybe I can perceive it better.

I hope you have a fantastic week! I know you three will work non-stop and I am so impressed and proud of you! I love you so much my sweet boy! Know that I know this everlasting gospel is true and it's beautiful to me and precious to me. I love Jesus Christ and know he is our Savior and I am profoundly grateful for his Atonement. I am more grateful this year than ever before because I know that through it, my children can be made perfect and that is even more important to me than that I can be made perfect. He descended below all that he might raise us all back up. And that is the most beautiful truth in the whole universe! And because of his Atonement, I can live with all who are so dear to me forever!

I love you, love you, love you!!!

Mom

5/13/13

Hello my wonderful, amazing Taylor!!!!

IT WAS SO GOOD SEEING AND TALKING WITH YOU!!!!!!!!!! And hearing all your stories and seeing you laugh and it just felt like you were in the room with us! Skype is the way to go!!! You sound so good!!!!!! I know it's a lot to take in and your life has dramatically changed which can be traumatizing, but you are doing great and will acclamate so fast because you are prepared and willing and excited! I love what your companion said about you! You truly are hitting the ground running and I'm so proud of you! Yesterday was probably the best Mother's Days ever!!! I got to talk to all my boys and Emily was so sweet all day and I even got a text from Heather! I feel so greatly blessed! I love all of you children so much and it brings me supreme joy to see you excelling and working hard learning and making a difference in other peoples lives!

So here is the article in LDS Living Magazine highlighting Suzette:

LDS woman wins 'Top Teacher' in the nation

KELSEY BERTEAUX - MAY 09, 2013

For this LDS teacher of nine years, winning a trip to Tahiti, a new car, and \$25,000 for her school all pales in comparison to knowing that she's touched the life of one child.



Photo from Suzette's program, [Camp Journey](#).

The day was unlike any other in the life of hard-working Suzette Steward Coates, a special education teacher in Katy, Texas. Surrounded by news crews, family, coworkers and friends, [she and her students](#) awaited the [Live with Kelly & Michael](#) show's announcement of its Top Teacher winner. A nationwide search of public and private school from Pre-K through 12th grade, the Top Teacher program aims to honor teachers who make a difference in and out of the classroom.

The journey to get to this moment was long. Coates explains, "I've always wanted to be around kids with disabilities and adults with disabilities and to be able to help them become better members of our society. It's always been something that I love to do. I connect with these individuals, and they have a special place in my heart." After graduating from BYU-Idaho with a degree in recreation leadership and a minor in health science, Coates concluded that she could run her recreation programs in the summer and spend the rest of the year teaching the students she so loves.

Now a teacher of nine years, Coates spends weekends and summers working outside the classroom with her students. She runs camps that teach her students life skills, like how to go to the store or to the movies. She even takes kids for six to eight hours Saturdays to give the parents a much-needed break. And when does Coates herself take a break? Her answer is humbling: "That's what the Sabbath is for."

A woman of devout faith and personal conviction, she explains her dedication to her students: "Having the gospel, I feel like we have a different understanding of why we're here on earth and what these individuals' purposes are here. I feel that the more I can help and the more I can be with these

children, the more I can be an example to others around me to show that acceptance and show that understanding of love and compassion and patience that we all need to have in our lives.”

Unaware of her nomination for the Top Teacher award until she was already a top-twelve contender, Coates describes her experience with the award process as “just one huge roller coaster.” After being selected as one of the top five finalists, she flew to New York on May 2nd to appear on the Live with Kelly & Michael show.

On May 7th, surrounded by loved ones in her hometown, Coates listened in shock as she was declared the grand prize winner. She describes the experience as “amazing.” She says, “It’s been such an honor. Any teacher is deserving of this, and it’s just been something that’s been overwhelming and at the same time exciting. I can’t feel any other way but just excitement.”

As part of the award, Coates won a trip for two to Tahiti, five eInstruction interactive instruction systems for her classroom, a 2014 Ford Escape, and \$25,000 for Cinco Ranch Junior High School. But her real measure of success, she says, comes from “the random smiles, the hugs that you get, or the child doing something new for the first time. It’s the behaviors changing.”

With contentment in her voice, she adds, “I say it every day—that they will teach me more than I could ever teach them in a long time.”

For more information on Coates’s summer camp or to donate, visit <http://www.camp-journey.com/>.

So there you go! It looks like this could be great publicity for her to take off in getting donations! Know that I know this everlasting gospel is true and it's beautiful to me and precious to me. I love Jesus Christ and know he is our Savior and I am profoundly grateful for his Atonement. I am more grateful this year than ever before because I know that through it, my children can be made perfect and that is even more important to me than that I can be made perfect. He descended below all that he might raise us all back up. And that is the most beautiful truth in the whole universe! And because of his Atonement, I can live with all who are so dear to me forever!

I love you so much Taylor!! I am so proud of you and know that every day you are going to try to touch someones life and you will! You have a magnetic personality and can infuse joy into others just by your being with them. You will be a great and powerful instrument in the Lord's hands. Expect miracles every day! Love you, love you, love you!!!

Mom

5/19/13

Hi Elder, my son, Taylor!!!

I love you so much!!! My heart is full of gratitude for you and the wonderful, good son and person you are!! I hope this week was great and you had some awesome experiences and feel a little more acclimated to the mission life!

This week has been pretty wild for us! On Sunday evening after skyping with you, Spencer called Dad back and let him know that there was a decision pending and we would find out on Tuesday or Wednesday if he was coming home or not. So we just prayed so hard that the 70 (one of the presidency of the 70) who made

the decision would know God's will and we prayed that His will would be done and to give us strength. It was a pretty rough week. Wednesday we found out he would be coming home on Thursday.

Damon was coming out that same day to interview with one of the big 4 accounting firms in Houston for an internship for this winter semester. Dad, Emily and I went and picked him up at his hotel that evening and we all went to the airport to pick Spencer up. It was actually really great to see him. He looked good. He is still Spencer, but he has changed already and I'm seeing our real Spencer starting to emerge. We drove back to the hotel Damon was put up in and he, Spencer and Emily stayed in his room for the night, and Dad and I stayed in another room. It ended up being such a tender mercy from the Lord! I have had such anxiety all over again, and yet this first night, we were able to be removed a little and stay in such a nice place. Kind of like a cocoon. I don't know, having Damon there too to talk with Spencer and give him encouragement and advice and everything was such a miracle!

I am very proud of Spencer and I know he has learned a lot and this is the right thing for him and Heavenly Father is guiding his life. He is making decisions that will ultimately lead to his full conversion and that is my hope and prayer. I keep having anxiety attacks, but on Friday, as I lay on my bed before a nap, feeling very stressed, I had a really calm feeling wash over me and I heard the words in my mind, "Everything is going to be ok." That feeling just stayed with me for a couple of minutes and I fell asleep. I kind of doubted a little whether it was from Heavenly Father, or if it was wishful thinking, but as I prepared a lesson last night for the Mia Maids on receiving personal revelation, I read a talk by Elder Richard G. Scott and in it he said, "Two indicators that a feeling or prompting comes from God are that it produces peace in your heart and a quiet, warm feeling. As you follow the principles I have discussed, you will be prepared to recognize revelation at critical times in your own life." I felt reassured it was from Him and I am feeling more peace and am trusting in Heavenly Father.

Emily says she thinks Heavenly Father doesn't want her to be an only child.:) We only had 3 weeks without you when Spencer came. Luckily I had just cleaned that whole wing of the house!:) Spencer's back has been giving him problems, so he will start going to Brother Short now.:) And President Allen said Spencer could work at G&A if he wants to. Right now he wants to do curbside numbers for people. He already went to Brandon and Mindy's and got Daenon's kit to do it. But maybe after a week he'll decide to work during the week at G&A and then do curbside stuff on Saturdays. Daenon got \$40 a pop, so he could make a bunch, which he needs! He wants to pay for his mission now. And he and Damon are going to study individually in the morning and then when Damon drives into work, they will have companionship study on the phone. Awesome, huh?!

I am so grateful for you and for your love and positive attitude and your testimony and faith. You are such a strength to me! I plead with the Lord that our family will be blessed through your service and I'm seeing it! And feeling it! Thank you for being so wonderful! This gospel is the most wonderful news in the world! It is true and you are a part of the winding up scenes and are part of a great work! The Lord will bless you and is blessing you and what a glorious work to be a part of!! Keep it up! I love you soooooo much!!!!

Love, Mom

ps. Sister Wells wants to know which wards you are working with. They are in Gilbert and she would love to have Wendel go out on splits with you before he leaves on his mission. Don't know if it's possible, but that might be cool! Spencer Riggs said today to Spencer that he's pretty terrified of his call. But he looked very happy and glowing. Yesterday he got his call, right after his brother, Neal got baptized. Caleb baptized him

and Spencer confirmed him. Spencer also led the music and he was just beaming and radiating light. I'm so happy for him!

5/27/13

Hi! I loved reading your letter last week!!! I love the food journal! And your story of teaching and getting interrupted by a dinner appointment was very funny!

This week was crazy! We had Damon come into town on Thursday and I was preparing for the seminary teacher appreciation breakfast for the next day. I decorated the gym in the morning with Sisters Hansen, Hubbard, and Smith. Here's 2 pictures:





The breakfast went well. We had the students come up and talk about why their teachers were superheroes. I made 18 Captain America shield cookies and the students gave them to their teachers after talking about them. I didn't get a picture of the cookies. Bummer! They took me forever! They tasted good, but didn't look that great. It was the idea, though, right?:)

We enjoyed having Damon visit! Lots of laughing and talking. This morning Brandon, Mindy and Daenon showed up at 7:15 and transformed our whole back area by the shed. They put down cardboard and mulched over it. I will send you pictures next week. The weeds had grown so bad and the blackberries were about to take over, but a week ago they sprayed roundup on all the grass and pulled all the weeds and dead plants from the garden bags and got the blackberries under control. It looks soooo much better and I think it will be much more manageable. Yea!

We just got back from Emily's voice recital. Sister Siebert did an informal recital at her home today (Memorial Day) and it was so nice. Emily didn't want to do it and kept saying she was going to back out, but finally went ahead and did it. She did awesome! How can we send it to you? Is there a way you would be allowed to watch it?

I'm sorry I still haven't sent the pants! I will try to remember today!:/

So I'm reading in Alma right now and Chapter 28 sums up after the missionary labors of Ammon and Aaron are done and the people of Ammon go to Jershon and everything. The last two verses are universally applicable to all missionary labors, so I want to share them with you!!! It says: And thus we see how great the inequality of man is because of sin and transgression, and the power of the devil, which comes by the cunning plans which he hath devised to ensnare the hearts of men. And thus we see the great call of diligence of men to labor in the vineyards of the Lord: and thus we see the great reason of sorrow, and also of rejoicing - sorrow because of death and destruction among men, and joy because of the light of Christ unto life.

It sums it all up I think really well! You are bringing the light of Christ unto life to those you are teaching and I'm so grateful and proud of you!!! I love you so much Taylor!!!! You are such a fantastic son and an awesome brother, missionary and person!!! Keep smiling, expect miracles, and serve the Lord and you will have great reason to rejoice like Ammon did!

Love, love, love, Mom

6/2/13

Hi My Wonderful Son! (Taylor)

I hope you are doing well! I just want you to know that I LOVE reading your letters! No pressure. Really! But I can hear your voice when I read them and it warms my heart.:) I am so happy that you had a baptism and are teaching so many wonderful people!

I can't remember this week too well. Nothing really eventful. On Wednesday I had Sister McClain come in to the Young Women and tell us about the Bishop. For Girl's Camp, one night all the bishops come up to camp and each ward sings a song to their bishop changing the words of a Primary song. So she gave us all kinds of information and we chose to use the song Nephi's Courage. We have the words to the verse and then the girls wanted to make a rap after that. So here is the song:

Our bishop likes Jane Austin
He reads her before bed,
He used to play the troooombone,
But sings tenor instead.
He takes us to the temple,
Once a month we go,
He likes golf and baseball
But board games are a NO!

~~~~~R A P~~~~~

His favorite color's green,  
He's a good list maker,  
He is a convert and a baseball playah  
GO CONVERT, GO CONVERT!

He doesn't like games,  
But he loves to play with rocks,  
His weakness is dark chocolate,

He rocks our socks off.

GO PUNKIN, GO PUNKIN! (that's what his oldest granddaughter calls him:))

He loves to make maps,

He hangs them on his wall,

He is really kind and he loves us all,

GO BISHOP, GO BISHOP! Go bishop, go bishop... (quieter as we sit down)

So they had fun making it up.

I was really touched this week by a scripture in Alma chapter 31. I think it's a missionary scripture, as well as a parent scripture, or leader scripture. Alma is going on another mission and is taking Ammon, Aaron, Omner, Amulek, Zeezrom and his two sons, and they are going to try preaching the word, (which is more powerful than the sword), to the Zoramites. After watching them on the Rameumptom, he prays to the Lord. This is what I want to share from it: Behold, O Lord, their souls are precious, and many of them are our brethren; therefore, give unto us, O Lord, **power** and **wisdom** that we may bring these, our brethren, again unto thee.... And behold, as he clapped his hands upon them, they were filled with the Holy Spirit. ...And the Lord provided for them that they should hunger not, neither should they thirst; yea, and he also have them strength, that they should suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ. Now this was according to the prayer of Alma; and this because [he prayed in faith](#).

I like that he prayed not only for wisdom, but for power, and it was granted unto him because he prayed in faith. I have been praying for power and wisdom to know how to help my children and to be a better YW leader. I feel I need both. I'm grateful for the example of Alma. He is a great missionary example!

I tried to buy the pants, but Target online said your size is currently unavailable. And they didn't have that size in the black, just grey. I will keep checking online, but I'm so mad I didn't send you a couple of pairs when I had the chance!

Do you know what mission you are going to be in yet? Did you get the call? Did you ever get to go on splits with Wendell?

I am so proud of you! You are just the best missionary! (in my humble opinion!:) I am so grateful you are excited and willing to serve! I am so grateful you are converted and love the Lord! That brings me unspeakable joy! The Plan of Salvation is the Plan of Happiness! It is THE way, Heavenly Father's way and any other way is not right and won't bring lasting joy and peace. I hope you have a super fantastic, marvelous day and week!!! Keep smiling, and expect miracles!

I LOVE YOU!!!!

Mom

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6/9/13

Hello my amazing missionary son!

I love you!!! I got the pictures from the Wells. Did you have a good time? You look great in the pics! She said you were going to a baptism right after lunch. How wonderful!!!

Well, Dad rented this big camper trailer and we hooked it up to the truck and headed to Surfside Beach. Spencer stayed home to work, although he's been so bummed out about Emily Trotter that he didn't work. Poor guy, he should have come with us.:) Emily and I had a good time. We got some blowup inner tubes and had fun floating among the waves. We got burned and sandy and Emily was freaked out over the fish we saw jumping out of the water. The camper was nice, but it rocked when anyone walked around in it and the beds were hard and uncomfortable. The air conditioning had problems and was loud. Dad had to work almost the whole time, but he did come out and enjoy the water a few short times.:) Emily read a book and I reread *The Five Love Languages* for fun. Overall it was nice. We probably won't do it again. We decided hotels are better, and cheaper and a whole lot less work. Here's some pictures. There was a couple of hammocks that we enjoyed. You can see the RV in the background of that pic.









The rest of the week I've been getting ready for Girl's Camp. On Wednesday at mutual we figured out our ward skit. These skits are a big deal at camp, I don't know why they are made into such a big deal, but they are. So I wanted to let the girls come up with it and they are taking the Dr. Seuss theme and combining it with Star Trek. The Kangaroo in Horton and Yertle the Turtle hear Horton talking to the speck on his flower. They decide to visit the Grinch on the speck and teleport there. Horton overhears their plan and tells the mayor of Whoville. The mayor asks Horton to call in the Star Trek fleet to save them. The fleet is made up of Captain Lorax, Scotty (Scatty in the hatty- I just made that up just now!:) I'll have to tell them!:) and I can't remember who Spock is. Did you ever see any Star Trek shows or movies? Anyway, the three villains are tickling the Who's to death and they almost are going to tickle Cindy Lou Who when the star fleet arrives and the Lorax says his famous line: 'Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, Nothing is going to get better. It's not.' Then the Grinch's heart grows three sizes that day and they repent. The Cat in the Hat and

his Thing one and two go around bringing all the Who's Back to life and a sneech (maybe that is who spock is) says some line from his book about how we are all the same and unity. Then Horton skips happily off with his flower saying something about a person's a person no matter how small.

There you go. Now to make it make sense to the audience! I am the ward camp director and also one of two fifth year leaders. So I've been working on two devotionals I'm giving to the fifth years on Wed and Thursday at camp. The theme for camp is Oh, The Places You'll Go (Dr. Seuss) and so one of the days is focused on education, another day is missions and another is the temple. I have a handout I made for the temple devotional I'm doing. I am going to show that slideshow of the Nauvoo Temple and that song Mountain of the Lord. Here's a pic of the handout:



The dress says: Hang on to your values, Hang on to your testimony, hang on to your goals, so that someday you can hang your temple dress on me!

For the mission day one, I'm not comfortable just talking about full time missions as the girls aren't required to go, so I want to talk about life missions and I'm going to give them little bags of M&Ms and talk about the marvelous and magnificent missions the Lord has prepared for them some of which could be missions, marriage and motherhood (all Ms) and how keeping themselves worthy of the Holy Ghost will help them fulfill the destiny they are meant to live. Something like that. We leave for Girls Camp tomorrow and I still don't know what I'm going to say, but I need to make the handout today and then I can focus on what I'm going to say. Kind of backward, I know!:) )

Emily and I also on Thursday went and performed for the judge at Guild. Emily had memorized 5 songs from Suzuki 3 book, did Melody from Book 2, Buzzing Bee and Think of Me and a Hymn. I did the hymn Joseph Smith's First Prayer, three songs from Suzuki 3 The last song in Book 2 (Children at Play), and three other pieces that took me a while to memorize. In January when I made my line up I had only memorized one of the eight songs, so I really pushed myself! It went pretty good. I also did sight reading which I messed up a little on, and ear training which I did half and half good and bad. Oh well. It's over and we have a summer break! I am trying to get the recording of Emily's voice recital on a memory card, but am having problems. I want to record me and Emily playing our songs on the piano too, so maybe we will send some of those as well when I figure it out!

I know the gospel is true. I know that we have a Father in Heaven who watches over us and knows us. That is so comforting to me, that I can call on Him to help me in my life. I need it. Life is hard and it's confusing and I don't know everything, but I do know that I have an all knowing Father who can guide me through it. I don't know what I would do if I didn't have that knowledge and faith. I rely on Him daily, and sometimes hourly and minute to minute. Whatever sacrifices the gospel requires, it is worth it in the end and the blessings are far beyond our comprehension. The blessings are so much greater than even any other religion can teach of in the world! The doctrine of eternal progression and who we can become and the blessings God has for those who prove faithful through the atonement are unique to our church and make this really hard mortal existence meaningful.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, I LOVE YOU!!! I pray the blessings of Heaven rest upon you in your labor. We think about you and talk about you daily. You are in our hearts and are never far away. Have a marvelous and magnificent week my amazing son!

Love, Mom

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6/17/13

Hi Taylor!

I loved all the pictures you sent! You look so good! It's great to get a few each week. Is that how you are planning on doing it, or has it just worked out that way so far? You sound good too! I'm so happy that you had another baptism and how much you love them!

We just had a family baptized in our ward this week. They have been coming for a while and have been taking the discussions for the last 6 months. They are neighbors of the Coopers and are the Laroccos. (pronounced la rah coh) They were confirmed on Sunday. I asked the elders what the tipping point was and the elder who has been here the longest (a month) said that he didn't know, but that a couple of weeks ago

before transfers, they went up to Elder Williams and said, "This is the last week we will be visiting this church." Elder Williams was shocked and devastated. Then they said, "That's because we are going to be MEMBERS! We want to be baptized."haha Elder Williams was transferred before the baptisms, but was given permission to come for it and he spoke. (It was while I was at girls camp)

I think there were 4 non member girls at girls camp and one of them was in my fifth year group. I hope the Spirit touched her! It was a good week. The fifth years were a great group of girls and I enjoyed working with them. It was hard to communicate with all of them at the same time, because they were always split up as youth leaders among the rest of the levels. The 6th years put on a really nice program on Tuesday night and it wasn't as much of a show-off your vocal talents as it has become, and I felt the Spirit a few times. There was some drama (there always has to be at camp!:) between the 5th and 6th years and their traditional roles. It kind of blew up on Wed. night which was skit night. They both thought they would get to do a particular 'skit'/trick in between ward skits, where they take unsuspecting and energetic 1st years and have them act out being an astronaut, a bucking bronco and a race car driver or whatever and before they come out to do it, they tell the audience that the chair they use is a toilet. (You've probably heard of it, it's a cub scout or boy scout skit) Well, the 6th years were given the ok, mostly because they had also asked to lead the music on that night and had been told no because the 5th years always did the music, and they had also wanted to do a regular skit as a level and had been practicing it, but were told no because we were only going to do ward skits. Well, one fifth year was so mad that 6th years got to do the toilet thing, she told all the first years before and so when the first years were taken out and the audience had been told, a sixth year came back in the room and told everyone that the first years already knew about it and they refused to do it. It was silent for a second, and then all the 6th years on the stage started chanting "6th year skit! 6th year skit! 6th year skit!" and whooped like wild indians and ran off the stage down the middle of the room and I think ran over a few girls out the door to get their stuff for their skit. The stake leaders closed the door and wouldn't let them back in till they put their stuff back and told them they couldn't do it. The ward skits went on and when the last one was done, the stake leaders decided to let the 6th years do their skit because they felt their hand had been forced. AND IT WAS LAME!!! It was an inside thing with just the 6th years, from the year before and they literally acted out this murder mystery game they played last year. Everyone was so confused (except me, because I was their leader last year and knew what they were doing) and had to endure their 10-15 minute insider game skit. I don't know why I went into all that detail.:) I think it was pretty funny!

Another cool thing at camp was this time each day on rotation that they called Higher Ground and the first day they had a guest speaker come and talk about education, the next day, two women came and talked about missions, and the third day, they had Sister Anderson (Tim's mom) come and talk about preparing for the temple. Well the mission day, these two moms in their twenties came and they talked about their missions. They both now live in the Katy 1st ward. The first lady went and said she never wanted to serve a mission, thought that anyone that couldn't get married were the only ones that went on missions, etc. When she was 16, she was at a stake conference and the Stake President asked a recently returned sister missionary to come up and bear her testimony. She said she looked at her and she was gorgeous and articulate and bore a powerful testimony and from that day on, she wanted to serve and started saving and preparing. Anyway, she was called to Berlin, Germany. The mission pres and wife took her and her trainer to their area. That night she told her native German comp that the German they spoke was different than the German she had learned :) and she hadn't understood a word anyone had spoken since she got to Germany. She told her comp that if she would teach her a few phrases, she would approach people and say the phrase and if they responded, her comp could take over. It was agreed and became the plan.

So the next morning, the first person they saw was their neighbor, Peter, a 68 year old English professor. She went up to him and introduced themselves and asked if he believed in God. He laughed and said, "I think you meant to ask if I believed in God." She said that's right, what did I say? and her comp said she had asked do you believe in gas? But Peter replied, "in response to your question, no I don't believe in God. And the reason is because when I was a soldier in World War 2, my best friend, who was standing right next to me got blown to pieces, and he was the nicest, kindest guy ever and he believed in God. And if there was a God, He wouldn't let something like that happen." Well, Peter was willing to let them come teach him and his live in girlfriend, so they spent the next few weeks meeting with them. Right before this sister was transferred, he still held his same belief. She prayed to know how to reach him. She was studying the Book of Mormon and the part where Alma and Amulek are forced to watch their innocent converts and children get thrown into a fire and Amulek begging Alma to save them with their power. Alma said no, in order for God to have a just punishment on the murderers, they needed to allow and God was allowing this to happen. She felt prompted that this was the message she needed to share. So the last day before she was transferred, they went to Peter's and she shared that message. He sat there and thought and said that made a lot of sense and he could believe that. They asked him if he wanted to know for himself if there was a God and he said yes. They invited him to pray. He didn't know how. They taught him how. He kneeled down and prayed and the Spirit bore witness. He was crying and so was everyone.

Then the other lady from Katy 1st started talking. She said she had always wanted to serve a mission, so she prepared and went. She was called to Berlin, Germany. She went on her mission a couple of months after the other sister had come home, so they crossed paths, but never knew each other. Sometime during her mission, she was sent to that same area where Peter and his girlfriend were still seeing the missionaries regularly once a week, were attending church, but not committing to baptism. After a few weeks in, her companion and her felt they needed to nix Peter from their teaching pool. She felt awful because there were only 6 members in their group. (they didn't even have enough to call it a branch.) and Peter and Maria (?) came every week. Well, the next meeting they had with them, they told them that they had been called on a mission to teach and work with people who were willing to commit to baptism and they felt they needed to spend that time each week finding other people who would listen. A couple of weeks later, Peter and Maria came up to them and said, "We want to be baptized!"

Such a cool story, especially because we had both of the sisters there telling the story and now they live in the same ward in Katy, TX!!! Pretty Cool!

Here are a few pics of Emily at camp. She is the Lorax, Horton, and Thing 1. When she is herself, she is getting saddled up for the zipline. The last pic she is Max (from the Grinch) for our ward skit.













This has taken so long I hope I haven't run out of time and you will still get this!!! I love you soooooooooo much and I know Heavenly Father is watching over you and giving you the experiences you need to grow and also putting you in others lives to bless them! You are a wonderful amazing son and I'm so proud and grateful for you!!!!

Keep smiling and expect miracles! God is a God of miracles!

Love, Mom

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6/24/13

Hi My Boy! (Taylor)

You sound so good! I got a call the other night from a lady you had eaten dinner with. I'm sorry I forgot her name. She said it once at the beginning. She wanted to call me and tell me what a great son I had. Of course, I already knew that!:) She said she has a son whose papers are in and a 16 year old son who takes you around in a car sometimes because your companion had a bike or body problem recently (Sorry! I can't even remember what the problem was that she said!!! Ughh!:()). Does that ring a bell who I'm talking about? She gushed and had so many nice things to say. She was also very complimentary of your companion and how your companionship seems to be fantastic. I am so glad! I hope you are enjoying your companion. I know sometimes there's friction between the trainer and trainee, but you seem to be working well together!

Last night we watched the broadcast from Provo, did you? Did you see Mason Branning when they showed the Washington DC North Mission? He was right up front on the left. And I saw Wendell in the MTC missionaries twice when they panned. Did you see him too? It was a good meeting. I am feeling the momentum and a lot of emphasis is being placed on the ward councils and members. I had this thought when Elder Nelson was telling his parable and the father set the places in the morning for everyone. I pictured having a ward activity, like a dinner or breakfast and we set up tables and chairs and have a place set with a name tag of every single member in the ward, active, less active, etc. And when everyone comes to the activity, we all see how many are truly in our ward and the members each take a name and we have a goal to fill the ward up and a "no empty seats" goal.

Last week we had Julie here and I think the girls had fun mostly. I think they bugged each other sometimes too.:) The last day, they went over to the lake and Julie did a photo shoot of Emily and there are some really nice pictures! Unfortunately I don't know if I can get to them. She's at EFY this week. So I'll try to remind her next week to send you a few.

As I've been reading the Book of Mormon, one of the things I'm looking for is missionary type scriptures. I'm finding quite a few! Yesterday in my study, I was reading Alma the Younger's council to his sons. And his two youngest had gone with him on a mission to the Zoramites. But I think they aren't done with their missionary labors, so at the end of Alma chapter 38, he gives some good missionary training to his son Shiblon:

"And now as ye have begun to teach the word even so i would that ye should continue to teach; and I would that ye would be diligent and temperate in all things. See that ye are not lifted up unto pride; yea, see that ye do not boast in your own strength. Use boldness, but not overbearance; and also see that ye bridle all your passions, that ye may be filled with love; see that ye refrain from idleness. Do not pray as the Zoramites do, for ye have seen that they pray to be heard of men, and to be praised for their wisdom. Do not say: O God, I thank thee that we are better than our brethren; but rather say; O Lord, forgive my

unworthiness, and remember my brethren in mercy - yea, acknowledge your unworthiness before God at all times. And may the Lord bless your soul, and receive you at the last day into his kingdom, to sit down in peace. Now go, my son, and teach the word unto this people. Be sober."

And then to Corianton in chapter 42, the last verse, he says,

"And now, O my son, ye are called of God to preach the word unto this people. And now, my son, go thy way, declare the word with truth and soberness, that thou mayest bring souls unto repentance, that the great plan of mercy may have claim upon them. And may God grant unto you even according to my words. Amen."

I'm also marking my scriptures where it talks about the Savior's mission and the Plan of Salvation. These chapters are also pretty heavy with that too! I love the gospel. I love the Book of Mormon. It is true and is the word of God. It clarifies the teachings in the Bible and goes hand in hand with it. I am grateful for modern prophets and revelation. I am grateful to be part of this church. And I am so grateful you are serving and are happy serving and are learning and growing and teaching and testifying. Spencer, when he prays in family prayer prays that you will teach with power and authority. I love how he says that! I know you are.

I love you so much Taylor!!! You are such a bright spot in my life and when I think of you my heart swells with happiness. Keep being the great missionary and humble servant of the Lord. Keep smiling. Expect miracles. You are doing awesome!!!

Love, Mom

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6/24/13

Hi Mom,

I am so sorry you are suffering on multiple levels and that Heather is one of them. And I'm so sorry she is putting you in such a difficult position. Please know that each week I put your name on the prayer roll. I heard your devotional you read to Damon from President Hinckley's book and it was beautiful! I wonder if he is talking about a loved one straying from their testimony verses a loved one in the grips of addiction that threatens their life. Addiction is a crazy animal.

I just went to LDS.org and typed in "addict" in the search and the first article that came up verifies what we are doing. I think you might find it helpful. Here is the link:

<http://www.lds.org/ensign/2005/01/when-a-loved-one-struggles-with-addiction?lang=eng>

It is the hardest thing we've ever done. I am relying daily on the Savior's Atonement to strengthen me. There are times where I know He is carrying me and there are other times when I feel very alone. But this article does validate our approach. I know you have some negative feelings towards Jake, so I thought I would try to find another source that might help you more than trying to trust in Jake. I hope it helps! If you text Heather, please could you tell her I love her and believe in her!

Thank you so much for all you do and for all of your love. You are an amazing and strong woman and I love you so much and admire you and cherish our relationship! I look forward to seeing you in a couple of weeks!

Love,

Tiffany

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7/1/13

Hi Taylor!!!

I just read Dad's letter to you. He meant to say Spencer Riggs, not airings. hahaha! Yeah, Thursday Dad had been asked to officiate the 5:00 endowment session which put him leaving an hour later than his normal shift. Then Spencer Riggs asked if Dad and I could be at his endowment. It was going to be the 7:00 session on Friday night. We were thinking he wanted us to escort him. So Dad said yes. Then I called Rose and she said he was asking several people in the ward to be there. They are funny. So Dad arranged to come in later during his shift, otherwise he would be there from 11:30 am to 9:00 pm. I went with him and we arrived at 3:00 and I did a couple of hours of initiatory and then we did the 5:00 session and then the 7:00 session. It was nice to be in the temple so long that day.

Spencer Riggs gave his farewell talk yesterday. He winged most of it and you could tell. It was pretty awkward. One thing he said was his mission was true. Last night Sister Swope put on an open house for him. The church discourages them, but there were tons of people there and she had asked me to bring some dessert. So I went and so did Spencer. It's been a pretty big production.:) I hope he does well. He leaves next week.

So for the reunion, Allaire asked each family to make a video to share. Something like Dr. Drill. Well, I didn't know what to do and I wanted to include everyone, but only Spencer and Emily were here. I took Damon's little video promoting the ACT Edge and recorded the last little part and songified it. Then I made the video to match the words. It's not perfect, but it's funny. Then I took some of your mission pictures and did a slide show to the cute song I Hope They Call Me On a Mission from the CD Primary Colors. It's really cute. Then I was like, "Now what?" so I found this website called YearbookYourself.com and you can upload your picture and stick your face in different portraits of different years from 1950-2000. So I got a picture of each of us in each decade and made a collage for each decade. I pan the collage and have a song playing from each era. The pictures are so funny. Even though you can't see the video, you can see the pictures!

1950's:

1960's:

1970's:

1980's:

1990's-2000:

Isn't that funny?!!!!!!!:) I hope this isn't too large of an email and you get it! I will print these up and send them to you too.:)

I know that the gospel is true and I am so grateful for the Atonement. I rely on the strengthening power of the Atonement every day. I believe that faith is the absolute first principle of the gospel. It is the only way to get through life. If there is no faith, there is no hope. Faith is in every action and every thought. Faith as a power is doing all you can do and knowing what the result you want can only be accomplished with the grace of the Lord. And sometimes waiting on the Lord, for his timing and his will is painful. But it's the only way and his ways are higher than our ways. I love you and know you are where you are supposed to be, accomplishing what you are supposed to accomplish and growing in the ways you need to grow. This is all about progressing and progression. Moving forward, learning, making mistakes and learning and repenting and progressing. You are teaching this and I am so grateful and proud of you!

I hope you have a fantastic week!!! Know that we love you and pray for you and think about you all the time!!! You are awesome!!!

Love, Mom

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7/8/13

Hi Taylot!!!

It's so good to hear from you! It sounds so very hot!!! I'm sorry! I'm glad you are making the best of little quirks with your companion. We all have things that can annoy. I know when I popped my ankles all the time when Dad and I first got married it annoyed him. But then e=he decided to think I was saying "I love you" every time I did that and he felt much better. :) haha

Markus is doing fine. I had lunch with Sister Anderson and his job is working at a school for summer school with autistic kids or something. Anyway, the lady in charge thought Markus and Aisha (sp?) were a couple so she put them together working. So Sister Anderson thinks it's been hard for him, but he doesn't communicate at all with them, he just holds everything inside. He and Aisha are friends now I guess. I texted Sister A. for his email. Hopefully she will get it to me before you get off.

We flew to San Diego on Thursday, the 4th of July. By the way, how was your 4th? It is nice to be with Grandma and Grandpa. The weather is cool, like around 70 to 72 degrees. A little chilly for being in the water, but so perfect for strolling and enjoying the beauty here.

It was really crowded at the resort on the 4th of July, but the crowds were gone the next day. We rented a ski boat on Friday and had fun wake boarding and a big tube. I rode the tube for like ten minutes and then have been sore the rest of the weekend.:) We've gotten nice and painfully burned too. On Saturday we rented a Waverunner. I got Grandma and Grandpa to go on it. They putted and got all the way up to 17 mph.:) Spencer and Emily got up to 55.:) Damon got up to 53-54. Dad and I got up to 44. Then that night we went to the movies and watched Despicable Me 2. It was really cute.

Sunday was a long day. Me, Dad, Emily, Grandma and Grandpa went to a family ward in San Diego and stayed the full 3 hours. Emily even went by herself to Sunday School and YW. She was brave. The kids were not very friendly unfortunately, but WHATEVER! Last night we played games and had fun.

Grandma and Grandpa just left to go home and we are packing up our stuff to head an hour north to the Janis Reunion. You will be thought of and missed and our movie will bring you to full remembrance of where you are and what you are doing and the great work it is and more important things in life you are engaged in!

I am so proud of you! I am so happy you are where you are! The gospel means more to me than anything!  
And so does my family.

I love you so much!!!! Take care!

Mom





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7/14/13

Hi Damon!!!!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!!!!!!!!!!!! You are a marvelous son who has brought me TONS of joy for 23 years. You were my easiest pregnancy, and easiest delivery even!:) You have made being a mother the most rewarding occupation for me. You have given me hope and strength to endure these last two years, and the previous two years gave me a fulness of joy as I watched you in the Lord's hands, through your own sincere desire to make covenants and follow the prophet to serve a mission, become even more strong and capable.

It's so hard to express everything in my heart. It never comes out exactly the way I feel it. I hope this year is full of really amazing things for you. You have had some pretty amazing things happen in each of the past few years and I don't see it stopping as you continue on the strait and narrow path you are walking.

Unfortunately I got sick the day I would probably have started focusing on your birthday present. :) Maybe we could have gone shopping together and had a great time. I feel so bad that I got sick. It has been a doosey! I'm mostly better, but still weak. I was only able to eat more that a couple bites at a time until yesterday, so hopefully I'll start regaining my strength. But I want to get you a present. I always like to think of a great present to surprise people, but I don't think I get it as right on as if I would just ask. :) So if you would think about it, I will be calling you later on and will ask you.



I truly hope you have a super birthday!!!!

Love,  
Mom

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7/15/13

Hi my sweet boy!

How was your week? I hope you had more energy and didn't feel grumpy.:) I know that your schedule and the type of work you are doing is super exhausting. Do you need me to send vitamins or something to help you? Maybe instead of candy?:) Have you been teaching anyone? How is the work going? Your letters are wonderful! I know that you have many people to write and your time on the computer is limited, but whatever you can tell us about comps, experiences, people, is great!

It was a crazy week! I was asked to be the videographer for the Janis Reunion, so I started taking pictures as soon as we were all together. We met at the Mormon Battalion Monument/Museum to go through a tour. It was a pretty cool multimedia tour. A sister missionary took us through. She and videos told the story. It was cool cause after watching an overview video, we went in a room and the sister started talking to us. There were pictures on the wall of old fashioned looking people and in the middle of her presentation they started talking. When we finished the tour, she took our picture:



After that there was an area outside for kids to play with time period stuff, like a water pump, a brick making kiln play area, panning for gold, etc. So I got some fun videos there of all the kids busy playing, seriously playing.:) We went to a mexican restaurant afterwards. That night Allaire had asked Grandma to come up with a family motto, so she did and shared it and it is the scripture, "If ye are not one, ye are not mine." Then Grandpa taught the kids the techniques for surfing. The retreat was nice. It was up a hill, or mountain and was pretty remote. It was on a really nice land and was well maintained. There were several buildings we all stayed in. In our building there was a pool table and that was really enjoyed by many, both young and old.

The next day we went to a beach called La Jolla Shores Beach. (Pronounced La Hoya) The waves were good beginner waves and Spencer ended up getting up the most times. Dover only managed once. He couldn't seem to figure out when to catch a wave and Spencer thinks his weaker swimming skills made a difference too. Daenon actually caught a few, doing better than his older brother. Damon caught a few too and so I was satisfied with my boys!:) (You would have been amazing.:) ) And Emily enjoyed the boogy board. It was cloudy at first, but the sun finally came out and it burned anyone who didn't do their due diligence. I didn't put sunscreen on my legs below my knees, but I wore a shirt most of the day. So my feet and lower legs hurt that night and the next day, needless to say. Auna I heard was pretty bad. And Danae got it bad on her legs too. But Evan took the cake and burned everywhere but his swim trunk area. Oh boy it looked painful. He cried quite a bit for the rest of the reunion. Dover and Spencer took their mattresses out on the deck each night to sleep for better air, but that night, it rained a little so they came in. Evan was on the couch sitting up, not touching anything and just crying. Poor guy. I wish I had documented it with a picture, but I don't think I did. Oh! Mindy found tons of aloe vera plants growing just outside our house, so she started nursing everyone the next day with much better stuff than anything else people had brought. Go Mindy!

The next day was a meeting for the siblings and everyone else could just do whatever. Then lunch and pool time. Then the family movies that I had compiled onto one DVD. Then a BB-Q dinner, followed by a variety show. Sounds pretty great, huh? Yeah, except that at lunch I was not feeling too well and was sitting on a couch and suddenly got the massive chills, just like I did right after girls camp. People had to support me back to my building and into my bed where I shook uncontrollably for 45 minutes. I was covered in wraps. I had to jump out of bed a couple of times to run to the bathroom to throw up. After the chills went away I could finally relax. Then a fever set in and it felt like I was 500 degrees. I slept on and off the rest of the day. Unfortunately we had no air conditioning and just a small fan in the room and a window open for circulation. The pool was right outside the window. The little girls screamed non stop for the entire time it was pool time. I don't know how their throats kept that up, but they did. :) Same with after the dinner, there was more swimming and screaming.

Anyway, it has been a slow recovery. And I missed the rest of the reunion, which was that day and night's activities. I had Dad video a little, but it wasn't as much as I would have done and I feel really bad about it. It was good to see everyone. Emily ended up driving back to Provo with Damon and she comes home today. Spencer went with Brandon's family to the airport because we realized we had the same flight as them. But I was too sick to travel, so Dad changed our flight to the following day and checked us into a hotel where I could just sleep. It was weird. I was hungry, but I couldn't eat more than a couple of bites before I felt like sick in my mouth, so I just nibbled and sipped water all day for two days. Traveling was hard on Friday, but much better after another day of rest. I rested all day Saturday and went to church on Sunday. But even today I'm not fully better. But I can eat!!!:)

Well, how was that for a long letter! I will try to send some pictures from the reunion in the mail. I think I have time to make this a bit longer.:) My lesson in Mia Maids was about what does taking upon us the name of

Jesus Christ mean. As I was studying for it I came across a talk by Elder Bednar titled Honorably Hold a Name and a Standing. What he said struck me because I knew Heather had said to me the night she told me on the phone that she had lost her faith and one of the reasons she gave was that when you are 8 years old you don't know what you are doing when you are making these covenants that you are held to the rest of your life. Investigators are adults and have more knowledge of what they are doing. I haven't really had much of an answer, except that when children are old enough to know right from wrong, they are given the opportunity to make a covenant so that Heavenly Father can give them the wonderful gift of the Holy Ghost.

This is what Elder Bednar says, "[Elder Dallin H. Oaks has explained that in renewing our baptismal covenants by partaking of the emblems of the sacrament, “we do not witness that we take upon us the name of Jesus Christ. \[Rather\], we witness that we are willing to do so. \(See D&C 20:77.\) The fact that we only witness to our willingness suggests that something else must happen before we actually take that sacred name upon us in the \[ultimate and\] most important sense” \(“Taking upon Us the Name of Jesus Christ,” Ensign, May 1985, 81\).](#) The baptismal covenant clearly contemplates a future event or events and looks forward to the temple.

In modern revelations the Lord refers to temples as houses “built unto my name” (D&C 105:33; see also D&C 109:2–5; 124:39). In the dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet Joseph Smith petitioned the Father “that thy servants may go forth from this house armed with thy power, and that thy name may be upon them” (D&C 109:22). He also asked for a blessing “over thy people upon whom thy name shall be put in this house” (v. 26). And as the Lord appeared in and accepted the Kirtland Temple as His house, He declared, “For behold, I have accepted this house, and my name shall be here; and I will manifest myself to my people in mercy in this house” (D&C 110:7).

These scriptures help us understand that the process of taking upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ that is commenced in the waters of baptism is continued and enlarged in the house of the Lord. As we stand in the waters of baptism, we look to the temple. As we partake of the sacrament, we look to the temple. We pledge to always remember the Savior and to keep His commandments as preparation to participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple and receive the highest blessings available through the name and by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, in the ordinances of the holy temple we more completely and fully take upon us the name of Jesus Christ."

I will send you the full talk with the pictures so if you are interested, you can study it or refer to it again without having to get on the computer. I just liked the concept of a preparing covenant that gives us an initial blessing and points us to greater covenants and greater blessings. A line upon line, but that is very closely related. I was also thinking about how new converts don't know very much when they are baptized and may not realize the full import of their decision to be baptized, just like an 8 year old, but the willingness to follow Jesus is their and that , plus worthiness seem to be enough. It is just the beginning, "entering the gate" as it says. Somehow that seems clearer to me. Anyway, I thought I would pass on that bit of learning I had this week. It may be helpful in some way maybe in your own learning or your teaching.

I love you so much Taylor! You are doing such great work! Dad is starting to get excited about us serving in the next few years and so am I! I've waited my whole life to get to do this and it is something I care about so deeply! I want to be able to serve people without being asked or assigned to serve, though, so that is my personal challenge to develop and strengthen before we go. I'm so proud and grateful for you and what you are doing. The gratitude is so strong it brings me to tears sometimes. I don't let myself miss you to tears though. I pray for you and cheer you on back here in the humid state of TEXAS! Yeehaw!!!!!!:)

Love,  
Mom

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7/15/13

Becky,

I haven't had a chance till now to reply to your wonderful email. Thank you so much for your love and concern!!! For your prayers and timely words of encouragement that always end up with me in the bathroom blowing my nose. :) You are such an elect lady! Maybe at the reunion we didn't get a chance to talk, but you have reached out to me many more times than I have to you. You are such an example of thinking of others. In this trial I have seen so many reach out without me approaching or talking. It's taught me how many people there are in my life who care, and also how focused on myself I feel I am.

I am so sorry you were struggling last week. I had NO idea!! I got a call from Elaine soliciting my support and of course I gave her a hearty vote. I never saw emails or heard conversations before the reunion except I got the drift of Roark setting an ultimatum and I wondered how that was received by some and then wondered if we would be seeing you. Then later getting the drift that you were coming and being so glad. I don't even know how I got that info. Oh, actually, when Taylor had his farewell, there may have been some discussion at a table after dinner that I didn't get involved with and which I seemed to get the impression from Damon that he thought whatever the discussion was about was going in circles. But it may have been about Alissa or Dad for all I knew. (See how I'm too self absorbed right now? Gossip doesn't even peak my interest.:))

If I had known all the thoughts flying through your head, I would have immediately inserted myself in your face and given you a big hug! You seemed a bit distant and sticking to Roark, so I was figuring I would get some opportunity to visit with you and I was also busy being the videographer. Plus I never even found the barn! And I'm so mad I got sick!!!! I think it was too much sun and not enough water. I'm sorry we didn't get to sit and talk. Once I got sick there was so much time we could have! I've really missed our get togethers here in Texas. I love you like a sister and have learned so much from you. Damon wants to try to support more events out in Utah if possible, so we will hopefully get that missed chance made up sooner than later!

Thank you again for reaching out and your sweet, sweet words of love and hope and faith. I hope if you have a pain in your life you need to vent and need a new set of ears to listen and understand, mine are ready and willing! It was wonderful to see you all and I was impressed with Andrew! He seems like a really great guy!

Have a wonderful day! Love you!

Tiffany

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7/15/13

Allaire,

when we were on the phone yesterday and you were talking about the party and about the three birthdays, I heard you say Damon and Joseph, but I didn't catch the third name.:) You probably said, "Damon, and then mine and then Joseph's is at the end of the month." When I got off, I was telling Spencer about the three birthdays and a little party going on at Grandma's and he asked who are the three. So I said Damon, and

then it dawned on me that it was you. But it was even later in the day that I thought, Ugggh! I wish I had gotten it and wished you a happy birthday early right there on the phone! :) Long explanation to just tell you HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!!

I hope this year is a good one. Last one ended on a great note with a fantastic reunion! I feel so bad I got sick!! The video will be sparser for the Wed. festivities, but I did have Damon do a little for me. But the place was wonderful! And the activities were great. And I enjoyed visiting with and reuniting with the family! Thanks for all your work!! And Ed as well!

You are an amazing woman and have so many skills and talents, always learning new ones! I'm so impressed! You are doing a fantastic job homeschooling and mothering your children. They are awesome kids!

Happy Birthday again!

Tiffany

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7/22/13

Hi Taylor!

What a wonderful experience with Ernie! Has anything more happened with him this week? What a great thing to focus on charity! I'm sure you saw people with different eyes last week while doing that! And having your ward be good and loving neighbors is so interesting! I remember when Dad was called as Ward Mission Leader many years ago, I had that same thought. But it wasn't my calling.:) I'm sure you will see things happen if the members act on your invitation.

This week was real slow. I was still recovering and so I took it easy. I started making the family reunion video and I'm having a lot of fun with that! Before we went, I had read a few ideas of how to video these events and I tried to incorporate them. So they said that when filming children, get down at their eye level, so I tried to do that. There is one time at the Mormon Battalion Historic Site that I put my camera way down at Jacob's level. (Daron and Heather's little guy) He is walking and I was right behind him as he toddled through the crowd. It's a pretty funny perspective. Another fun thing (I think) is when we got sandwiches for lunch at the beach, I took pictures of individuals taking a bite. So when I do that part in the movie, it will just go through those pictures fast and just be people chomping down. I didn't get a lot of people talking, though, adding comments or answering questions. That would make it tons more interesting. Oh well. Each one I do I get better at!

Last night we went over to Kylee and Ryan's for dinner and games. Dover is in Austin selling Vivant, so he came over and Auna is here with Staussen while Ron is at a military camp for a couple of weeks. So we had fun playing several games. We played Psychologist where the person that is it goes around asking questions to see what our "problem" is. One we did was the first person asked, answered and touched his head, then the next person answered touching their shoulders, then the next answered touching their knees and then the next their toes. The funniest round was when Mindy was it and we decided we would answer as if we were Staussen. Mindy asked great questions, like she asked Spencer what his favorite thing as a lifeguard is and he said, "Everyone likes to hold me." And Mindy asked Brandon why he never danced with her and he said, "I just like jumping up and down all the time." Anyway, it was fun.

I don't think anyone has told you, but Jeff and Shelby are moving to Modesto! This Thursday! There was a profusion job that came up in Modesto and Jeff went out and interviewed and they offered and he accepted and he was released as bishop yesterday (he wasn't even there, he was out of town running in a Ragnar race with his dad and brothers) and they are packing and leaving this week. It was all pretty sudden, but it really is the Lord's hand in their life. Shelby has been trying to get licensed in Texas as a court reporter to bring in more income, but it wasn't happening. Jeff was going in to Houston and working all nighters to bring in more income, but that was wearing him out. This job is so much better in many ways. But me and Emily are really sad. I'm not letting it sink in yet, but it is really going to be hard not having her here. But I'm happy for them. Today, me, Emily and Dad are going over there and I'm going to help Shelby pack. We may stay overnight.

I will try to get a package sent to you this week, hopefully tomorrow or Wed. I love you so much! I am so proud of you! This is not easy, but it's so worth it! The blessings you will receive are so many! As it says in 1 Cor 2:9 "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." We give what we can which is our heart, might, mind, strength, and our will, and we receive everything. You are such a great son, Taylor! I'm so happy to be your mother! You have so much to offer the people in Arizona! Your love, your warmth, smile, laugh, knowledge of the gospel, a great example, your humor, your strong spirit. All these things lift others and then see they can have a brighter hope. It's like what Peter said, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (1 Peter 3:15) You have an answer and it is full of hope. And you radiate hope and gladness and I'm lucky to be your mom!:) Have a wonderful week my wonderful son!!!

Love, Mom

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7/29/13

Hi Taylor!!!

I will send you a letter today! I had visiting teaching this morning and forgot to email when I got back! I hope you get this. Know that I love you and think about you every day!!! I can't believe I forgot!!!!

You are so precious to me! I love you so much!!!! The gospel is true and I am so grateful for it!

I sent your package. It should have gotten to you Saturday or today.

You are the best!!!!!!!!!!!!

Love, Mom

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8/4/13

Hi Brian! (Elder Bingham!)

I'm sorry I'm so bad at writing to you! Your letters are great and you sound so good! I went out to Beaumont for a few days to help your mom pack and give her moral support and just to spend time with her before saying goodbye. We worked hard, but had to keep taking breaks. We must be getting old!:) It's amazing how much stuff we can accumulate in a few years, just tucking it away in a cupboard or closet. And what is crazy is how hard it is to let go of and get rid of, even if it means packing tons more boxes! I was razzing your parents about some of the stuff they weren't ready to let go of. One thing I found in the laundry room was

part of a phone. It had push button numbers and it was the part you held to your head and listened and talked with, but it didn't have the base unit. Your dad said I could throw it away, but only because he had two other complete phones in their boxes new. They were called Slim Phones, but it looked like "Slime", so I called them slime phones.:) Anyway, when I got home, I realized how much stuff I have too and felt bad for teasing them so much.:)

I went to girls camp this summer and there was this class that two ladies taught one day and I wanted to share it with you, but I just kept procrastinating. So now I'm finally doing it! So at camp there was this time each day on rotation that they called Higher Ground and the first day they had a guest speaker come and talk about education, the next day, two women came and talked about missions, and the third day, they had a lady come and talk about preparing for the temple. Well the mission day, these two moms in their twenties came and they talked about their missions. They both now live in the Katy 1st ward. The first lady started and said she never wanted to serve a mission, thought that women that couldn't get married were the only ones that went on missions, etc. When she was 16, she was at a stake conference and the Stake President asked a recently returned sister missionary to come up and bear her testimony. She said she looked at her and she was gorgeous and articulate and bore a powerful testimony and from that day on, she wanted to serve and started saving and preparing. Anyway, she was called to Berlin, Germany. The mission pres and wife took her and her trainer to their area. That night she told her native German comp that the German they spoke was different than the German she had learned at the MTC :) and she hadn't understood a word anyone had spoken since she got to Germany. She told her comp that if she would teach her a few phrases, she would approach people and say the phrase and if they responded, her comp could take over. It was agreed and became the plan.

So the next morning, the first person they saw was their neighbor, Peter, a 68 year old English professor. She went up to him and introduced themselves and asked if he believed in God. He laughed and said, "I think you meant to ask if I believed in God." She said that's right, what did I say? and her comp said she had asked do you believe in gas? But Peter replied, "in response to your question, no I don't believe in God. And the reason is because when I was a soldier in World War 2, my best friend, who was standing right next to me got blown to pieces, and he was the nicest, kindest guy ever and he believed in God. And if there was a God, He wouldn't let something like that happen." Well, Peter was willing to let them come teach him and his live in girlfriend, so they spent the next few weeks meeting with them. Right before this sister was transferred, he still held his same belief. She prayed to know how to reach him. She was studying the Book of Mormon and the part where Alma and Amulek are forced to watch their innocent converts and children get thrown into a fire and Amulek begging Alma to save them with their power. Alma said no, in order for God to have a just punishment on the murderers, they needed to allow and God was allowing this to happen. She felt prompted that this was the message she needed to share. So the last day before she was transferred, they went to Peter's and she shared that message. He sat there and thought and said that made a lot of sense and he could believe that. They asked him if he wanted to know for himself if there was a God and he said yes. They invited him to pray. He didn't know how. They taught him how. He kneeled down and prayed and the Spirit bore witness. He was crying and so was everyone.

Then the other lady from Katy 1st started talking. She said she had always wanted to serve a mission, so she prepared and went. She was called to Berlin, Germany. She went on her mission a couple of months after the other sister had come home, so they crossed paths, but never knew each other. Sometime during her mission, she was sent to that same area where Peter and his girlfriend were still seeing the missionaries regularly once a week, were attending church, but not committing to baptism. After a few weeks in, her companion and her felt they needed to nix Peter from their teaching pool. She felt awful because there were only 6 members in their group. (they didn't even have enough to call it a branch.) and Peter and Maria (?)

came every week. Well, the next meeting they had with them, they told them that they had been called on a mission to teach and work with people who were willing to commit to baptism and they felt they needed to spend that time each week finding other people who would listen. A couple of weeks later, Peter and Maria came up to them and said, "We want to be baptized!"

Such a cool story, especially because we had both of the sisters there telling the story and now they live in the same ward in Katy, TX!!! Pretty Cool! I thought you might find that interesting!

We are enjoying our summer. We went to southern California for a Janis reunion last month and that was fun. I was asked to be the videographer, so now I'm making a movie, just like the one I did last summer for the Scott reunion. I just love doing that! When I was in Beaumont, the day before your family moved away, Julie put the reunion movie in and we watched it twice that afternoon! Good memories!

So we left when your dad had just loaded the washing machine onto the truck and it was the very first thing. But Uncle Damon had a meeting he had to go to, so we had to leave. Anyway, the next day, they finally left Beaumont at 3 in the afternoon and were heading to San Antonio. But at 5 or so they were passing Katy, so we met them off the freeway at a Fazoli's and had dinner with them. I took a few pictures to send to you. They look pretty tired, but they did it!!! I'm so proud of them!









And I am so proud of YOU!!!! You are a great missionary! Period! You have a testimony of the gospel, you love the Lord, you want to serve people, you are trying your very best to live worthy of the priesthood and the Spirit. That is a formula for a powerful, warrior in the army of the Lord! Keep up the great work! The field is white, all ready to harvest! Thrust in that sickle!!!!)

Love you Brian!

Aunt Tiffany

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8/18/13

Hello Taylor!!!!

You are awesome!!! Can I just tell you that! I am so grateful for you and what you are doing it fills my heart with such joy. My joy is truly full when I think of you. Your last letter was so funny!!! What a funny story about the guy who said your church was started by a lizard. hahaha! Crazy stories! They are the best!

So last Monday I went and got some blood tests to see what's up, cause I haven't been up to par for a while and I'm not bouncing back. So the results show that my red blood cell count is low, which means I'm low on iron. I probably have iron deficiency anemia. I was always anemic with each pregnancy. The first one, the doctor told me to take iron supplements and then never checked me again. The supplements made me

constipated.:) I think when I was expecting you, my midwife told me to take liquid chlorophyl and she kept checking my levels. I don't remember if that worked or not, but I bought some liquid chlorophyl this week.

Anyway, I'm going in to a doctor tomorrow to have them go over my test results and see if I can get a few more answers. Because I also am having a pain in my lower ab region and today it's like there's a prickly bubble of gas on my left side that if I stand up straight, it hurts. So at church I was hobbling around hunched to one side like this decrepit, old lady.{{:p} (does that look like a decrepit old lady face?:) A couple of people noticed. Ughh!:) Anyway, I want to be better! This is getting old!:)

I chaperoned a quad stake dance last night. It's fun to watch people and especially the youth. So many different personalities and antics. Tanner Pope was totally sticking his bum out and shaking it. Brother Pope was at the dance, but of course not around during this show.:) I thought it would be hilarious if someone gave him a big smack on the rear. I think his girlfriend was embarrassed. Funny, but not respectful or decent. (I'm an old, decrepit lady, so that's my take:))

Spencer's being a poo. :D (don't tell him I said that) He is not wanting to go back out in a pretty bad way. I don't know what's going to happen. I just have to try not to freak out, but that's hard. I am learning trust in the Lord at such a completely helpless level. The other day I was "crying unto the Lord" pretty passionately and I had been reading a book by Elder Holland commenting on Psalms and it's called, "For Times of Trouble: Spiritual Solace from the Psalms." After my outburst, I got on my phone Kindle and the next chapter was based on this set of Psalms and this is what I read: "Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. ————— Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord. ————— Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." Psalms 4:4; 27:14; 46:10 A little note from Heavenly Father to me.

I sent you another letter from Dad's mission along with one of his ties. Also I put in the last 3 chapters of the book Divine Signatures, by Gerald Lund. They are inspiring and the first of the last three chapters is more focused on missionary work, so I thought you would find it interesting. He is the author of The Work and the Glory series. Recently he was called as a Seventy and this book talks about some of his experiences in that capacity too. I don't know when you'll get it, hopefully in a couple of days.

I am grateful for the Gospel, for the Restoration, for the gift of the Holy Ghost, for ordinances and covenants, for prayer, for the Atoning Sacrifice of the Savior, for my dear, wonderful husband, for my beautiful home and so many luxuries of life, for my precious children, including one AMAZING son in Chandler, Arizona!!! I am so richly blessed! I can see the beauties of this world, I can hear the music and voices and magic of sound, I can read and write, I have great friends, and live in the greatest country on Earth.

I hope you have a super, extra terrific week and you see miracles and feel the power of the Spirit as you serve and teach. What a marvelous work! I love you so much! So much!

Love,  
Mom

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8/26/13

Hi Taylor!!

Isaac sounds awesome!!! What a wonderful experience!!! There truly are people that are searching for something, but don't know where to find it. And when they do, it is such a joyful experience! And it's so joyful for the **messenger**- as you are finding out!

I'm glad you didn't get bit by the devil's dogs! That probably got your adrenaline pumping!!:)

Thank you for being so kind in your letters to me! You are such a wonderful son and full of praise and love and you just bless my life so much!

We saw a picture of you in between the two men at a baptism. You are all three wearing white, but I thought one of them baptized the other. It's a great picture! Look forward to the story! The bishop who sent it to us was so complimentary of you! The people in Arizona are **loving** you and letting us know!

We are getting a huge storm and it's so nice to hear the rain. Today is the first day of school/seminary and it just feels more like Fall to have it rain. Emily LOVES Sister Hansen so far and first day felt the Spirit, learned, got more understanding and came home happy. Yea!!!! And Sister Hansen will not let this class goof off. And she told them why. She said that there is a difference between being light minded and being light hearted. And she wants a culture of light heartedness in the class, not light mindedness. That when they are giggling or making silly comments during a song or discussing spiritual things, that was wrong. Time and place, etc. Emily was thrilled to see that she isn't going to let this class beat her. I am so glad! Jen can be a little over controlling, but she makes up for it in her love for the gospel and bringing things out of the scriptures that you never thought about before. I know Emily will learn a lot from her and the "click" won't be as in-her-face either.

So we FINALLY, last night, decided how we are doing school this year!! And this morning I enrolled Emily in 4 BYU Independent High School courses (Geometry, 10th Grade English, Creative Writing, and Interior Design) I'm hopeful this will keep her busier than last semester without being overwhelming. Also, Mindy is putting together a class of home schooled teens to do a film making class. Each teen will write their own script (in the style of BYU's Studio C show, if you've heard of it) and then they will film, using the other teens. Then they will edit. So at the end of the semester or year (not sure) each teen will have their own movie, and we will have a movie night to present. It will be another project for her to be working on, and will give her a social outlet as well, (hopefully positive!) She will still take piano and dance. In a couple of weeks I may look into a guitar teacher at Katy Music. She says she wants to learn.

Last week I got so sick! On Tuesday through Friday I just lay in bed with fever, a little chills, some nausea that didn't make me want to eat, but I had to. I had some pain in my lower stomach and a headache, a constant cough, shallow breathing, and TONS of awful gas. Ugghh! It was the worst!!! Thursday afternoon I had an appointment with a doctor who delivers babies and deals with women's health issues. I was so sick, but went anyway. She gave me an exam and felt I had an infection in my uterus (place where the baby develops) so gave me a prescription for antibiotics. She told me not to get the ultrasound yet (which may show what is causing me to have such a low red blood cell count) because it will be too painful with my infection. So I will schedule that in a couple of weeks.

Saturday I woke up feeling a lot better, so I went to the 3 hour yearly youth planning meeting. I was tired by the end, but it was good to be out of bed and around people and laughing and stuff. I still am tired and taking it easy, but I'm glad I'm getting better and getting taken care of.

Please keep praying for Spencer. His heart doesn't want to even consider the gospel. It will take another miracle to soften his heart and for him to become converted. He has no desire, so nothing anyone says will do anything, only the Lord. He just has to do everything the opposite or hard way, doesn't he? :) I don't think there is a molecule of conformity in him.

Brandon Morris had his homecoming yesterday in the 3rd ward. The Meldrum's daughter had her homecoming in our ward. After church we were waiting for Dad to count tithing and were in the hall and saw Brother Swingle and Scott (who just got home from his mission to Singapore)! They just moved back and are in the 4th ward.

I had this thought the other morning. When the Lord told Lehi to leave Jerusalem, Nephi went, but while in the wilderness, he prayed for a confirmation.(1 Ne 2:16) So then they had to go back and get the plates. It was a mission of sorts and it was life-threatening. But they accomplished their mission, or kept the commandments of the Lord. Then, like King Benjamin says that after we keep His commandments, He doth immediately bless you, they are sent back again to bring back Ishmeal's family and they got married. I had not really thought about how when they were told to leave at first, Nephi must have realized his situation and how he most likely would be single the rest of his life and that might be one of the reasons he needed to get his own witness. And then when he did, he had to totally step out in faith. It's one thing to leave your possessions and inheritance and even civilization behind, but to willingly give up a future family and companionship may have been the hardest thing. Anyway, as soon as they acted in faith, had another assignment and obediently acted in faith, they were truly blessed and the Lord solved the future family problem. Anyway, that was my thought!

I love you so much Taylor. I am proud of your dedication and desire. I'm sure you are trying to be the best trainer. And you probably are!! You are serving the Lord with ALL your heart, might, mind, and strength (and GUTS!:D ) I'm so glad you are on fire. Let it grow brighter and brighter till you are in the flames like Lehi and Nephi in Helaman chapter 5! Just make sure your bike is fire safe!

## LOVE,

Mom

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9/2/13

Hi Taylor!!

I got your Facebook note to me this morning. Sounds exciting! It sounds like your work in Chandler is really picking up and you are seeing some great results from all your efforts. That is so wonderful!! You are planting seeds and harvesting some too! I'm so glad you have so many opportunities to teach and meet a lot of people.

Mindy tells me Daenon loves loves your letters, and many family members have let me know they really enjoy hearing about your mission. Damon was saying you are a great writer and I agree!!! Your letters are wonderful!

I'm sorry you got sick! I hope you're back to normal now. Being sick is the pits! I AM SICK AND TIRED OF BEING SICK AND TIRED!!!:D Tomorrow I go in to get a couple of ultrasounds and hopefully figure something out! I am on these antibiotics that are making me nauseous and giving me a yeast infection. And I don't even know if they got rid of my infection. (I don't even know if the infection was properly diagnosed

either.) Ughh! But I will be done with them on Thursday unless the Dr. tells me to stop taking them after the ultrasound. I'm just in enduring mode and trying to keep positive and think of my many blessings.

I've been reading Elder Holland's book, *For Times of Trouble, Solace from the Psalms*. I think I told you that already. But I finished it and at the end there are links to some videos of Elder Holland in a small room with people asking him tough questions. In one of the video segments he told of him being with a baptist priest one time at a function and how the priest said he believed the Lord gives us the desires of our hearts or something better. And Elder Holland believes that too. When our will is swallowed up in the Lord's will, He knows what's best, and sometimes it's not what we think. He also talked about how he's learning about the word trust more and is seeing it everywhere in the scriptures. He said it's different than faith, hope or charity. He said picture yourself leaning at a deep angle against a pillar, and if the pillar were to crash, it would not go well for you. So if you are leaning against it, you would really have to have a lot of trust in that pillar. Then he talked about the first vision and how he felt Joseph was given the word pillar to describe the light that the Father and Son descended in. It wasn't just an illumination of light, it was a pillar. And then he said that when we are struggling and going through our times of trouble, that we can most assuredly lean against that pillar of light with all trust and confidence. Those were some of the thoughts that I really appreciated and thought I would share.

We had the missionaries over to dinner last night. They are funny guys. One, Elder Smith, is so great. He and Spencer are like soul mates. At dinner, Spencer was talking about hipsters and how they wear skinny jeans and plaid shirts that are too small and you can see the fat that is bulging over their pants. And I objected, of course, and he said they had muffin tops. Then Elder Smith said you take too much yeast! :) haha It was so funny thinking about that idea.

After dinner they had a message and Elder Smith started with the scripture in Mosiah of the rising generation that were too little to remember the speech of King Benjamin and they didn't believe. Then he told about his life, how at age five his mom got Lou Gehrig's disease and how he was taught to pray and you would be blessed and he did, but when he was twelve his mom died. And he didn't understand and turned away from the Lord and the gospel. He got involved in drugs and I don't know what else. His dad tried rehabs and they didn't help him. But his dad prayed like Alma the Elder. And fasted every week for two years at one point.

He was arrested many times and there was one particularly bad time and he remembers sitting on his couch and he asked out loud what he was supposed to do. And he heard his father's voice in his head say Alma such and such (I forget the exact reference) but he opened his scriptures to the spot and it was the one about do not procrastinate the day of your repentance. And then he asked some other question out loud and got another verse. And he all of a sudden had a desire to just be happy and he knew it would only come from turning his will over to the Lord. And it wasn't easy, but he went in to the bishop and started repenting. He bore a powerful testimony. Then the other elder who is half Samoan and half Mexican or hispanic said he wasn't eloquent with words, so he wanted to sing to us. He sang a song in Samoan about the Savior and it brought a powerful spirit into the room. It was really neat.

I hope you have a terrific week and find more searching souls to testify to and invite to action! I love you so so so much, it almost hurts sometimes. (But that's WAY better than nothing, huh Dad?:) ) You are such a special son to me and I thank Heavenly Father for you every day. You are such an important person in my life Taylor I don't know what I would do without you! Precious boy, keep keepin' on and give your mission your best and Heavenly Father will not forget!!!

Love,  
Mom

ps I found your Priesthood lineage so I'll send it in the mail this week with a couple of letters of Dad's mission he printed up. But we are still trying to find the notes from your setting apart. I can't find it on our computer in any docs, so Dad would have had to have put it on his ipad and he can't find it yet. I'm so sorry!!! I really thought he emailed it to you that night on your missionary email. But he doesn't even have an email record of it. I'm praying we will find it.

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9/9/13

Hi Taylor!!!

You are sounding great even in the midst of difficulties! I hope Elder Caldwell's ear is better! Has the heat let up at all yet? It's still super hot and super humid here in Katy. Congratulations on Tim's baptism!!! I'm so happy for him and for you! What a great day that must have been, even with the hot water. (You are so funny!:) Are you enjoying the Facebook contacting?

Guess what?! We have bananas growing on the tree outside!!! I'll take a picture for you.





And the people next door finally took out the trees that our trees sprouted on their side of the fence! Yea!

I'm still not feeling well. I went to an OBGYN doctor last Tuesday and had an ultrasound and it came back fine. She wants me to now go to a GI (Gastroenterologist) Dr. and I have an appointment tomorrow. I'm not really looking forward to it, but I need to know if anything is majorly wrong. If not, then it could be the stress of things that finally got through and weakened my immune system, lowered my stomach acid levels which lowered the iron and vitamin absorption. That is what a dr. that Grandma and Grandpa Janis called and gave him my history and symptoms thinks. So I guess we are still waiting. Dad's being so good taking care of me and feeding us and doing everything else he has to do. I've still been reading *The Infinite Atonement* and it just gives me such an appreciation for what He bore. All the pain I feel was nothing to His. It helps me be patient.

Heather called me this week. We had a nice talk. I mostly talked about myself and when I asked about her all she said was she was 63 days sober and doing well. Then at the end of the conversation she said her AA sponsor had told her she couldn't talk about herself that day. But it was good to hear her voice and I'm so proud of her for staying strong that long!

On Saturday night Emily went to a Cinco football game with some friends. Cinco won. Yea! It was against a Cy school. Dad and I watched the BYU football game against the Texas Longhorns. BYU played a beautiful game and Texas couldn't compete! And Texas was ranked 15th. It was a very satisfying game to watch for a change!)

Emily said that in her group at the game there was a new girl that came with and had just moved here. She sat by Emily and was a talker and Emily was glad. :) Somehow the subject of religion came up and the girl found out Emily was Mormon and she said she wanted to talk to her more about it some time because she has questions. Emily was excited.

Jeff and Shelby finally sold their house in Beaumont. It takes about a month to close, but by the end of September it should be a done deal. They have been staying every other week with Grandma and Grandpa Scott and the other weeks at Jeff's parents home. I think they are going to start looking for homes now. In California, there has not been much building with the economy and housing recession, so any homes that go up for sale get snatched up right away. I'm sure they'll find something that will be good for them. Everything else in this move has gone pretty smoothly.

Kylee and Ryan's baby was due a couple of days ago. If she doesn't go into labor in another week, they will take the baby C-Section. It's a boy. I forget what they are going to name him.

Keep up the great work Taylor!!! We are cheering for you here in Katy and are so proud of you and your efforts, your desires and your love of the work you are involved in! The gospel is the great news and many are searching but don't know where to find it. I've got to get out of my bubble. I just don't seem to interact with anyone outside the church. But you are and are making a tremendous difference in their lives!!! I hope Tim gets swallowed up in the ward and continues to be nurtured and fed the good word of God that his faith is unshaken and his life is forever blessed! Take care! I love you with all my heart! I feel blessed every minute because you are my son and in my life!!!!

Love, Mom

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9/16/13

Hi Taylor!

How is your new area and companion? I know you were on fire in your old area and loved your companion, but hopefully this new chapter will be just as great!

Today I get to go get a colonoscopy!!! Yesterday I had to prep for it and that was one of the worst days of my life! All day I was on a liquid diet. At 10 am I had to take 2 laxative pills with water. Then at noon I had to pour a cup of laxative powder into a 64 oz bottle of liquid. I chose apple juice. Then I had to drink half of it over an hours time. This was during Sunday School. Everything was fine till about a half hour after I got home. Then the fun began! Lots of really loud and bubbly noises and rumblings in my tummy, and painful gas. Of course bathroom time, but I also threw up twice. By about 5, everything had settled down. BUT! I

had to do it all over again at 6. I didn't know if I could do it, but I started with the first 8 oz and called Grandpa Scott. He had this done a few years ago and I wanted to know if throwing up was part of the experience. It's not. He told me I only had to drink a couple of cups this round, that the sheet of instructions is generic for everyone, like a 300 pound person as well as a 115 pound person like me. So I was greatly relieved to only have half. The next five hours were horrible! I felt awful as I switched between throwing up and going to the bathroom. I lost count of how many times I threw up, but it was around 7 or 8 times this round. Around midnight it all settled down. I have nothing in my stomach. My bowel is still making liquid noises, but it's almost cleared out.

Today I will be put out, so when I wake up it will be all over. Hopefully they won't find anything. The past few days I have been feeling stronger, probably from the liquid iron I've been drinking. My appointment is at noon, but I have to be there at 10:30.

Kylee had her baby! A boy named Alex Ryan Wayment. Red hair, 9 lbs 8 oz.

Colter gave his farewell talk yesterday and he did a very good job. The Spirit was felt. He will be a wonderful missionary, he's ready!

Wes and April Young are moving to Chicago this week. We will miss them! There seem to be so many people moving into our ward right now!

I've got to go now, but I want you to know that I love you so so so much!!! I think of you all the time and pray for your success in the strength of the Lord. We can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us! (That was probably incorrect grammar, but hopefully you get the point!:) Keep doing the fantastic work that you do! Be strictly obedient, smile, and expect miracles!!!!

Love you!!!  
Mom

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10/7/13  
Hi!!!!:) (Taylor)

We are driving to the airport to fly to Atlanta and Emily is going to Utah. She just turned on the radio and "Under the Bridge" is on and we are listening to it in your memory.:) LOVE YOU MY BOY!!!!

Well I'm recovering really good from surgery. I'm doing all I can to eat as alkaline and healthy to build up my immune system. I will be at a place this week called the Cancer Treatment Centers of America. There are several of them around the country. Our insurance gives more if we go to the Atlanta one. They will do their own tests on me this week and then give us their plan for treatment. If we feel good about it we may stay over the weekend and I'll start treatment next week. If not, we'll fly home Friday. Dad is doing more research and doing all he can to find the best, most effective treatment for me. Then we will try to rely on the Spirit to guide us, knowing we have done all we can do, then in faith, asking the Lord to help us where we lack.

This has been an amazing experience thus far. I have been so flooded with love from so many people!!! Starting with both Grandma and Grandpa Scott and Grandma Janis all flying out right after my surgery to support me. Then Sister Merrill and Sister Young gave me a journal and a very soft fuzzy blanket, Sister Anderson has brought 3 meals over, Sister Wells has brought over super alkaline water by the gallon, Sister Hansen has created a Facebook page called "Tiffany's Happy Corner...Where Virtual Hugs Abound" where

people can post comforting scriptures or quotes to give me love, Sister Lopez brought over a catalog of some powder stuff that her sister cured her cancer with a few years ago (so we ordered it and I've been taking it), Grandpa Scott sent me a book about a nurse who got a recipe for a herbal tea in the 1930's from a lady who was cured of cancer from a Canadian Indian medicine man and the nurse spent the rest of her life (50 years!) treating people who had cancer having really good results. He also sent me a bottle of the herbal tea, which I've also been taking.

Brandon has been researching hours on end about everything cancer related to sort through all kinds of information and has also helped with nutrition and what I should eat. A couple of days ago I was feeling really anxious and panicky. The next day it still hadn't gone away and I called Mindy and she came over and gave me just what I needed to calm down in word and just her reassurances. Auna drew that beautiful picture, cards have come from Sister Elliott, Sister Combs, Sister Riley, Sister Jergens, Aunt Rita, my cousin, Michelle, Sister Swingle (who also came and visited me. They moved back to Katy a few weeks ago), and the YW. The Mia Maid class came over Wed night and visited and some shared a scripture or quote to cheer me up and they all sang I Know That My Redeemer Lives, all verses. Powerful spirit! Spencer has been so affectionate and loving. Every day he kisses me on the head when he first sees me and when he leaves. And Dad has been the hero of heroes doing everything in his power to give me comfort and love.

Above all, I have felt the sustaining and strengthening power of the Savior through His marvelous and infinite atonement.

So life is beautiful and I'm full of gratitude! General Conference was just what I needed to be enveloped in the Spirit for two whole days.

You sound so good!! I am so full of joy knowing you are loving this special privilege of serving the Lord as a missionary!!!! You are a powerful and fantastic missionary because of your conversion of the gospel and your love of the Savior and love of people!

So you got a package from us of brownie mixes and other food. A few months ago we had a Mia Maid activity and asked the girls to bring 7 of the same item to make missionary care packages to send. A few did, but I contributed the most.:) Anyway, we were going to have them write notes to all y'all and we never did. So these bags of stuff were in my room forever and Spencer and Emily started raiding them. So finally I just combined them and put them in a box and sent it all to YOU!!:) (actually Mindy sent it.) Another activity, Sister Turick showed the girls how to make the cups that go along with the missionary lesson on the apostasy and restoration. She has instructions on how to use it, so I'll try to get that to you. Emily put the cups in the package, and she made them.

I hope you have a super terrific week! I know you will!! Expect miracles. I do! I love you so much!!! You are in my thoughts and prayers and always in my heart!!!

Love, Mom

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10/14/2013

Hi Taylor!!!

Loved your letter last week!! You sound as awesomely enthusiastic as ever! I'm sure your district is all fired up and ready to "teach and preach and work" with you leading the charge!:) I hope you were able to get

back out and work and your companion is feeling better! Does George have a date for baptism yet? I got a call this week from Bishop Tomlinson. (sp?) I didn't hear it so I didn't get it, but he left a voice message telling me what a great missionary you are and how much good you are doing for their area. You are well loved!!!

Dad sent me the letter he wrote you so it sounds like he filled you in on the latest stuff. The reason we are going out to Arizona is because all the other oncologists that we talked to have the same exact plan, so it's just deciding which doctor or facility we want. The place in Scottsdale, called Envita does a different treatment. so I wanted to check that out to weigh in with the other options. We are hoping we will get a confirmation from Heavenly Father on which way to go. The Envita place, from what we've read does chemo on a much reduced scale, but over a longer time. Traditional medicine pumps it in over 48 hours and then you wait for two weeks and do it again. At Envita, they do it in much smaller doses, but do it every day. The other places I will be taking a drug that will make my hair fall out. It's the least of my worries, but I'm not thrilled. (Spencer is so shaggy, but is holding out and wants to shave his head.:) ) Although, Grandma Scott told me about a lady in Aunt Rita's ward who didn't want her hair to fall out, so she iced her head every time she got chemo and her hair didn't fall out, and that there's this website called penguin ice caps that you can rent for a lot of money that you put on and it does that same thing and keeps your hair from falling out. So I might look into that.:) The other thing that Envita does is totally build up your immune system so that your body is alkalized and oxygenated so the cancer dies in that environment. They do it through IV I think. Anyway, we shall see. If I do the Envita, I will have to be in Scottsdale for a while, not just back and forth type thing. Big decisions!

Yesterday was Eric Frame's talk in sacrament meeting. He gave more of a youth talk, quoted a couple of things about prayer from an apostle and gave his input, then bore a brief testimony. He is a man of few words. And an interesting sense of humor. :) There was also a girl that her family moved in a year ago, the Bird family. She is going on a mission and she spoke and gave a great talk on obedience and freedom. Oh! We just got sister missionaries assigned to our ward. One went in the MTC on April 10th, so she was there when you got there, or was just leaving. The other one (Sister Combs - haha - Dad told you that funny story!) just got here to Texas from the MTC this week, so she's getting trained. Anyway, if you want to transfer your investigator from Katy still, I think the sisters are more trust-worthy than our elders.

One of the days I was in Atlanta, I decided to go to this art expressions activity. The activity was to think of a childhood dream and then pick a pallet of colors and paint something to represent the dream. So I thought and realized that my main childhood dream was to be a mom, so I painted this picture: five hearts one for each of my wonderful children.



So Dad sent out a group text to Heather, Damon, Spencer and Emily and me to show them. Then I texted and asked if they knew which color was theirs. Damon, Spencer and Emily started guessing. Spencer finally figured out my pattern and guessed them all right. Heather is the light turquoise, Damon is red, Spencer is green, you are dark blue and Emily is the pink/purple. Everyone kept texting and it was pretty funny. I wish I could show you, like copy and paste it in here. But it did degenerate to bathroom humor in emotocons, like

one that Spencer sent and said it looked like a happy poo. He also threw in a candy mountain picture and said candy mountain. Emily asked what that had to do with anything. And Damon responded, we're on an adventure... It was fun!

On our way to the Atlanta airport we were in a limo with another couple. They are from Louisiana and talked just like the swamp people!! The poor guy has really been through the ringer. I feel so blessed and grateful that I've had it pretty good so far and am in good health and am younger than most, that I have Dad who can tune into me 24/7 and that I have such a huge support system of family and friends. Doing this gratitude thing for 28 days is really making me aware of how much I have taken for granted before and how my life is so comfortable and blessed because of all the people who serve, invent and work and I benefit so much from all of them!

You are so awesome!!! I can't even describe how grateful I feel that you are on your mission!!! I guess when you have trials or don't have something, you appreciate it more!!! When Damon went, I just expected it and I did feel a huge amount of gratitude. But after the whole thing with Spencer, I realized I couldn't take it for granted that all my boys would want to go and be excited. But you are and it just makes my heart burst with gratitude! ( I **choose** to have my heart burst with gratitude.:) ) I hope this week is even more amazing and wonderful than last week!!! I will be praying for you in Arizona, feeling close to you!

I LOVE YOU SO MUCH!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

 Mom

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10/27/13

Hi Taylor!!!

Another wonderful week in your beautiful Arizona country!

I talked on the phone this week with several family members, and Sister Johnson (piano teacher), Sister Combs, and even your Sister Juliann Bear. (Sp?) she was very nice. She's waiting for some test results to come back before she gets serious about homeschooling, but she's going to call sometime this week and we may get together. She thinks the world of you. So do I, precious son of mine!!!

Damon wants to come down to visit this next Friday and leave Sunday. He wants to bring Haley. That should be interesting! Spencer and Emily will also be driving out and arriving on Saturday. Spencer will go home on Tuesday. Then the following Friday, Aunt Amy will fly out and stay till the next Thursday. Pretty crazy huh?:)

Envita (the place I go to) has me on an organic diet and I am amazed at the different restaurants around here that cater to that! There's a place that supposedly opened this summer called Grab a Green. They make very healthy smoothies and have juicers and meals that are all totally in line with my way of eating. We go there every day. And there are other places as well that are good. I'm so grateful!

Today in Sunday School we had a discussion about the Lord's requiring us to take care of the poor and needy. We read Alma 34:28: "And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye

do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith." And I realized that Dad and I had tried over the years to give generously to fast offerings and the humanitarian fund and perpetual education fund and it made me grateful that I could petition the Lord with more confidence in receiving blessings because of that. As King Benjamin says we are all beggars, and sometimes we aren't begging for money or food. We are begging for other things just as fervently though, and if we have blessed His children, He will bless us. So the moral of it all is to be generous and your life will be better!

I love you so much!!! I pray for you each day! I know you are in the right place at the right time doing the right things. Your life will ever be blessed because of these two years you dedicate to Heavenly Father. The last thing you said in your letter last week was SO profound! You said: "I absolutely know that anyone is able to receive a witness of the truth of the gospel if they truly want it. It takes faith, sacrifice, and obedience. The blessings are happiness, confidence, and purpose. The purpose of our life becomes clear as we draw closer to God." I think you are so right on!!! Wow! You are learning so much!!!

Have a super week!!! Expect miracles!  
Love, Mom

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11/4/13

Here's a silly picture of me in the infrared sauna today after my chemo treatment.





11/4/13

Hi wonderful son!!

Do I even have to say IT WAS SOOO GOOD TO SEE YOU!!!!!!? That was a day for a big end of day satisfied sigh!:) you looked good, sounded good and felt good! (A very good spirit with you!) so good to talk missionary work with you! It is a passion of mine even though I can't open my mouth much. Actually, I've been opening it everyday while I've been here. I think my problem has been that I haven't been around non Mormons. I've lived in a Mormon bubble except swim team for 15 years. But my greatest desire is to bring people to Christ. I just need to get out of my comfort zone. I can't wait to serve missions with Dad!!!!

I'll send a picture of the beautiful flower arrangement Sister Baer gave me along with your letter. Also in the picture is a nativity that is made of olive wood that Ethan gave us for helping him go to Jerusalem study abroad. It's beautiful! Also are two sweet Willow Tree angels that Grandma Scott and Sister Larsen sent me.

Just had my fifth chemo treatment and I still feel good! I'm so grateful! There was another lady in the chemo room who just ripped the nurse up and down because she waited too long to start treatment. I felt bad for her. She also complained last week when we had Damon and Haley there because we were too loud. She didn't talk to us about it or we totally would have been quiet. But now there is a new policy that you can only have one person in the chemo room with you at a time. So Emily and Spencer and Dad took turns rotating. When the lady came in today I told her I was so sorry and felt bad. She looked at me then looked in her purse and didn't say a word. Wow! I feel bad for her.

Thank you for your blessing. It was beautiful and a lot to think about. And thank you for giving Dad a blessing. He's studying the scriptures and I know it will help. He and I have been having good companion study since I came home from surgery and it's been really awesome!

I hope you have a fantastic week!! Keep the energy up! Love everyone and send good health and happiness wishes to those that are rude and abusive because it just means there is a lot of hurt and pain somewhere inside. You have light and truth and the Gift of the Holy Ghost and the marvelous priesthood and the knowledge of the great plan of happiness. Those who are looking for it will find you.

I love you soooooo much!!!!!!!!!!

Love,  
Mom

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11/10/13

Hi Nynke,

It was so good to hear from you! Thank you! I am sorry to be missing the Christmas concert!! That was fun last year even though I could only play half of the crazy song!:)

I have Emily here with me right now. Last weekend, my son who is at BYU came down and brought his girlfriend to meet me. And my son Spencer and Emily drove our car out from Katy. Then on Halloween, my son, Taylor, who is serving his mission in Tempe, AZ called my husband and told us we could call him and see him! So I called and we were able to go to one of his baptisms last Saturday! I had all of my children except for my oldest there. It was such a blessing! Afterward, my husband, missionary son and I drove

around looking at his area, and ate dinner and then he gave each of us a priesthood blessing. It was an amazing day!

My treatments are going well. I'm feeling good and am so grateful! I'm at a place that does a low-dose targeted chemotherapy as well as a lot of other alternative therapies that build the immune system. We had a really peaceful confirmation as we were trying to decide where to go. We haven't gotten any results yet, but there was a blood test number last week that was very encouraging.

Thank you for your sweet thoughts. I truly believe there are many good things that will come from this experience. I know I have learned a lot so far and even in the midst of this trial, I see the Lord's hand in my life every day.

Take care and enjoy dusting off your violin and playing it with the beautiful talent you have been blessed with!! Thank you again for writing to me! You are a wonderful lady and friend!!! Thank you also for your prayers!!! That means so much to me!!!

Tiffany

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11/11/13

Hi Taylor!!!!

I am sitting in an infrared sauna right now after my chemo treatment. Amy came Friday night to visit for a week. I was super tired and a touch queezy over the weekend. But we had fun just sitting and talking and played Yatzee and another game she brought. This morning I didn't feel very good and was so so tired, but I'm feeling better now.

Heather was able to come down to visit too!! She got here last night with the lady whose house she's living in. She came to my treatment today which I'm so glad. She is doing so much better!

I let sister Hansen know we would LOVE to come to her house for Thanksgiving! That is so nice of them! Maybe Damon and Heather can drive down. I'm working on figuring out who can be there.

You sound so busy!! That is so cool that you are teaching that man from China! We saw the picture and post on Facebook!! So amazing the hastening!!!! I'm so glad you are part of it!!!!!! I want to be part of it too!!! Today, our nurse Ashlee said every time she meets an LDS person, their children are the most beautiful kids she sees. Then she said her boyfriend calls her a wannabe. I said, "I can totally see you being LDS" and she said she's looked into it and is interested. Her boyfriend's best friend is LDS and a few years ago they were somewhere where there was gambling. Her boyfriend gambled. He put all of his money down and told his friend, you pick the number and pray to your Joseph Smith and if I win, I'll quit smoking and drinking and join your church. So his friend picked like 33 black. And it landed on that and he won. So her boyfriend actually stopped drinking and smoking. But he hasn't joined the church.:) anyway, hopefully we'll talk about this again! The nurses are busy and are running in and out of the rooms, so we just get little blips of time with them. I'll see if I can get a picture of Ashlee before I leave today and send it to you.

I love you so much!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I am so proud of you and all you are doing!!! Soldier on! Smile on! Hasten on! And expect miracles!!!

Love, Mom

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11/18/13

Hi Taylor!!!

I hope this letter finds you just as pumped as ever in the great work of the Lord!!! What an incredible time in the whole history of the world to be alive and to have the knowledge and privilege of preaching the everlasting gospel in the final winding up scenes before His return!! You are one of His special sons and one of MY special sons and I'm so grateful for you!!!

So last Friday, I was asked by our case manager, Amanda what I was going to do this weekend, and I told her that we were going to the temple in Mesa. And she seems to know about it, and then I told her about the Gilbert temple and said she should go to the open house in January, that it was open to the public and it is supposed to be amazingly beautiful. She sounded excited and interested. She is Catholic, but loves beautiful churches. I told her to get with one of the three guys that works at Envita who are members to get a ticket. Yea! I invited!:) )

I just am having such a strong desire to share the Savior's love and do His will. But I'm having a hard time knowing how to do it. I guess it's a process of learning how to hear the Spirit.

This weekend I read a book called Visions of Glory about a guy who narrated his experiences to an author because he wants to remain anonymous. He's LDS and has had some pretty amazing experiences in his life. He was born stillborn and revived. He's had a couple of times where he died and had an out of body experience, but returned to his body. He also has had visitations and visions. He was told not to share until he was told. So finally he felt he was allowed and could share some stuff. It's really interesting and has given me more perspective on the love of the Savior, the part we get to play in the time before and after the 2nd Coming, and the glorious blessings Heavenly Father and the Savior want to bless their children with. All we have to do is be humble, obedient and faithful.

With so many things in my life that are totally out of my control, I am learning to wholly rely on the grace of the Lord and put my trust in Him like I never have. I don't know what will happen, but I do know that if I try to know and do His will, all things will work out for my best good and my happiness. It is an interesting, but powerful lesson.

We had a wonderful time at the temple on Saturday. It was so good to be back! Our recommends expired at the end of September, and with all that happened, we hadn't gotten them renewed before we came to Arizona. So we got permission to have phone interviews with Bishop McClain and President Allen. We got the new recommends in the mail on October 1st. Such a blessing! I'm so grateful for the temples!

Yesterday we ate dinner at the Young Women president's home with her husband and three cute boys. They reminded me of you three boys.:) It was so nice of them to invite us over!

Amy went home on Thursday and Emily went home on Thursday too. It was so fun to have Amy and I know it was fun for Emily to get to know her better. Amy is the game player in the family and she brought Yatzee and Clue and a couple of other games and Emily really liked playing, as you can imagine!L) Now it's just Dad and I and it's quiet, but relaxing.

I loved seeing the picture of you wrestling the steer!!! It was totally you!!! What a great experience!!! I just sent it to you in an email from my phone. You look strong and strapping!!!:) )

I hope you have a super fabulous week! Work hard, share love, smile big, trust Heavenly Father and expect miracles!

I love you!!!  
Mom

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11/25/13

Hi Taylor!!!

You are so POSITIVE!!!!!! I I am so glad you are doing well and having a great experience!!! It sounds like missionary work online is going great and you are reaching more people than just in your little area! It is truly amazing how this will explode the work!

I am still doing great and am so thankful!!! This week was quieter because it was just Dad and I. But this next week will be crazy and fun with so many of us crammed into the hotel room. But it's a nice big place, so hopefully we won't feel claustrophobic!

This Thursday will definitely be a Thanksgiving to remember!!! I think this is not by accident. I mean, how many times have you heard of missionaries getting to spend Thanksgiving with their whole family? :) I have been praying that the family will be prepared for this day and that the Lord will manifest His design for us. I've been also praying that He will heal our family. I don't know if this will be the start, but I feel His hand orchestrating this event, for whatever purpose, I don't know, but I feel there is a purpose. But I am soooooo looking forward to seeing you!!!

I've decided to read the standard works from beginning to end starting with the Old Testament and look for my own victory scriptures. So far, in 20 chapters, i have only found one, or part of a verse. But that's ok. In chapter 18 of Genesis, it is talking about when the Lord tells Abraham that Sarah will conceive and bear a son. Sarah hears and laughs. In verse 13 the Lord questions Abraham why Sarah would laugh and then in verse 14 He says, "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" So I like that scripture and put my trust in Him.

I hope you have a wonderful week! Work hard and pray hard. Nothing is too hard for the Lord, and He will part the sea to accomplish his work in Chandler if needs be. You are a wonderful instrument in His hands and His work will progress swiftly through you because you have mighty faith and a love for Him, and you feel the urgency and are willing to roll up your sleeves and get to work.

I love you so much!!!! See you Thursday!!!  
Love, Mom

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12/2/13

Hi my wonderful son!!! (Taylor)

I can't believe how amazing it was to see you and be with you!! The Hansen's were so awesome to invite us and to give us such a wonderful feast!!! It was so amazing to sit in on a discussion with you!!!! Bruce and Sam are great guys! I could really feel a sweet spirit from both of them!

I had to take Heather in to an urgent care place Friday morning. They made an incision in her lip and drained some fluid. That alleviated some pressure as well as pain. They also put her on a different antibiotic and a stronger pain medication. She is at Grandma's till Tuesday and then has to go into a place for 30 days in order to be able to live where she was. I guess she had a setback a few weeks ago, but is more determined to turn her will over to the Lord. Hopefully she is improving.

Dad is still in pain. He didn't take any pain killers on Saturday, but took two yesterday. We are still trying to get to the bottom of it. I feel so bad for him! But we'll get through this.

I hope you had a great birthday!!!:) It was do fun to celebrate with you!!

Uncle John's mission president had a motto for his missionaries. I don't know if he's shared it with you, but I LOVE it!! Here it is:

OBEDIENCE is the PRICE  
FAITH is the POWER  
LOVE is the MOTIVE  
THE SPIRIT is the KEY  
CHRIST is the REASON

His president would sometimes have them focus on one of those for a week, kind of like Benjamin Franklin.

I hope you have a wonderful week and can stay a little warmer!:) Keep up the great work!!! You are doing soooo good!! I'm so proud of you!!! I'm so thankful for you!!!

I love you soooo much!!!!  
Love Mom

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12/9/13

Hi sweet son!! (Taylor)

I hope your week was good! You sound like you are teaching quite a lot! That is wonderful!!! So many people you are blessing! That is what brings the greatest joy is serving others, especially helping others come unto Christ and feel his love.

This past week was a little bit of a roller coaster. The CT scan results didn't show a shrinking of the tumors, so that got Dad worried, which affected me. Between money, time and results, there is so much unknown that it really makes him (and me to a lesser degree) feel out of control and helpless. This takes us to putting our trust and faith in the Lord to a higher level. The first doctor who went over the results was talking about maybe we would want to go to conventional chemo and that freaked me out. Then a couple of days later we met with two other doctors here and they were much more positive and encouraging. They said my numbers are really good, I am handling their treatments which is also very good, and they have a lot of chemo drugs that a test said I would be responsive to is also very good. They said it will just take time. And time equals money, and he desperately wants to see the tumors shrinking and going away, so Dad is worried. But I have faith that Heavenly Father led us here and gave us the means, and if we need more, He will provide it. I don't know how, but he always has provided for us.

We are in the middle of many trials, but there are tender mercies all around. I am trying to stay focused on those good things, because it could be so much worse. Heavenly Father is truly taking care of me. And so is Dad. I have new friends and old that encourage and support me, we are staying at a wonderful hotel that feels like a little home and it gets cleaned every day, I have felt good almost this whole time, Emily is being taken care of by Brandon and Mindy and Spencer, I've gotten to see you TWICE!!! So with all of these blessings, I just thank Heavenly Father every day and try to wait on Him and His timing.

We went to the Mesa Temple on Saturday and did initiatories. (sp) it was very nice to be in the temple and hear the blessings and feel the Spirit. The broadcast on Sunday wasn't long enough for me. It was so nice!

I know the work you are doing is the greatest work. I love the gospel, I know it is true and that Jesus Christ is the Savior and Redeemer and this church is the Kingdom of God on the earth. I am so grateful for you and your optimism and your enthusiasm for the work. I am grateful for your optimism and encouragement for me too! It is very strengthening. I love you so much!!! You are such a wonderful son!

Have a wonderful week!!!!

Love, Mom

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12/15/13

Hello Elder Janis!!! (Chad)

I know I'm suddenly showing up on your mission and I apologize! I enjoy your letters and you sound so incredibly awesome!!! I'm so happy for you and this amazing chance you have in Europe to teach, lead, become converted, learn a language, meet people from all over the world and just grow in so many ways!!!

I sent you a package. I don't know if you have it yet. I really hope so! In my rush to get it to the post office I may have forgotten to write on it that I want you to open it on December 14th. (which was Saturday) If I didn't write that on the package, then PLEASE open it! If I did, then, whew! I'm not as senile as I thought!:) If you haven't gotten it, well, I'm sorry, and open it as soon as you DO get it!

Life has been a little crazy these past couple of years and has intensified these past few months. It's been a refiners fire and I am trying to stay positive and feel gratitude for the many blessings the Lord has showered down on me and my family. I assume your mom or dad has let you know that I'm in Arizona getting treated for cancer. I am responding very well to the treatment and the past few test results have been in the right direction. I have felt a great amount of peace throughout this time and have faith that I will recover and that there is a purpose to all of this.

I have a deeper appreciation and love for Jesus Christ and what he did, and I feel his enabling and strengthening power in my life. Even though my problems haven't been taken away, he gives me strength to endure and gives me tender mercies that I recognize all the time that help me know that he is aware of me and I'm not alone. And I have faith that one day, the sorrows I have will be turned into joys.

I have learned that the Lord wants to bless those who are humble. I did a search on the word humble and a majority of the references had blessings associated with being humble. They are truly beautiful blessings too! I learned in King Benjamin's address that humility centers around the recognition that you are

dependent on Jesus Christ and his Atonement, that we can't do it alone, and as we recognize that and accept it, we become as little children. And he can change us and we progress and do more amazing things than we would on our own and become more perfect and like him.

I admire you and cheer you on! Your letters show a true dedication and consecration to the Lord, an incredible love for those you are teaching, and a very strong work ethic. You are truly anxiously engaged in a good cause!! I hope this week is as terrific as the last and you feel the Lord's goodness and power in your work!

I love you Chad!

Love,  
Aunt Tiffany

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12/16/13

Hi! (Taylor)

I wrote to Chad for the first time on his mission last night. I feel so bad that I haven't written to him. I have no excuse except that I've felt so sad about Spencer that I was too bummed out to write him. It's a lame reason, but true. But I sent Chad and Brian 12 days of Christmas packages and that was really fun to put together. I wasn't sure if I had put on the outside of the package when to open it, so I sent a quick letter to Chad telling him to open it. It actually felt really good to write to him and maybe I'll send a few more before he gets home. I called Shelby and asked her to convey the opening of the 12 days of Christmas to Brian. With Grandma and Grandpa Scott coming yesterday, I didn't know if I would have time to write to both.

Anyway, I hope your week has been great and you are still doing fabulous! Uncle John came out on Thursday as Dad left for Houston. We had a great time and watched the first Hobbit movie on DVD since I hadn't seen it last year. Then on Friday we went to the theater to see the new Hobbit movie. They were good. I think they took some license away from the book, but it's been so long since I read the book, I can't totally remember. It's making me want to read the book again! John left on Saturday. After I dropped him off at the airport, I went to the Baer's home and took your package and talked with Sister Baer for about 2 hours. It was a lot of fun.

Then I went to my ward Christmas party. It was nice. The next day I went to church by myself and that night Grandma and Grandpa arrived. So today they came with me to my treatment. I am starting another 4 weeks of chemo. Grandma brought a Christmas book and read a few chapters to me while I was getting some bags dripping in to me. It was fun. I am so enjoying their visit already!

I'm in Exodus right now in my reading and as I read the 10 commandments in Ex 20, it says honor thy father and thy mother *that thy days may be long upon the land that the Lord thy God shall give thee*. or something like that. I have honored my parents, so that is a blessing that gives me more faith and hope in my healing and recovery, along with your priesthood blessing, my patriarchal blessing, my living the word of wisdom, and the blessings I received in the temple.

I think I'm going to take Grandma and Grandpa to see the lights of the Mesa Temple and show them the Gilbert Temple. We will talk and do Christmas shopping and watch YouTube videos. I feel so lucky to have them here. Dad is really struggling. His toe was hurting last night and his lower abdomen felt pain and had



some swelling. He is stressed out about me, Spencer, Heather and Emily to a lesser degree. I think it's causing all of this pain. Please pray for him. I feel so bad. Here I am with cancer and I'm feeling great, I have peace, and Dad is in more pain than me! I am stressed about Spencer, Heather and Emily, but I'm still trying to be positive.

I hope you have a super terrific week! I don't know when a good time would be to meet again. Maybe Christmas? We could maybe get a meeting room at our hotel to have a dinner, if that is ok. I don't know what you want or are comfortable with. I think Damon, Emily and Spencer will be here. Heather only gets like 4 hours and so it wouldn't be worth it to drive all the way up to Utah to see her for only a couple of hours. Plus with my therapy, the center is only closed on the 24th and 25th, so I should keep going there to keep things going. Anyway, let me know what you would like to do. I don't want to overstep any bounds. What are your thoughts about how you feel part of your mission here in Tempe is to bless our family? I'm interested in that. I have been praying that Heavenly Father would heal our family. We have so much that needs healing.

I love you so much!!!! You bring such joy to my heart and soul!!!! You are a true light in my life and you are doing such good in Chandler!!!! Everyone loves you and you are making a difference!!!! Keep up the great work, for it IS great!!!!

Love you with all my heart!  
Mom

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12/23/13

Hello!!!! (Taylor)

Wow! Another week gone by! I'm sitting in a recliner getting my treatment. Today is another chemo day. So weird to be saying that! I'm getting more used to the fact I have cancer, but I'm also feeling like it's getting better and I will be clear in a few weeks to months. I'm so grateful every day for the care I'm receiving!!!

So what's the deal with Christmas?! Let me tell you what I have in mind and if that jives with what you can do! Because the cost of the hotel is going to jump really high in January, we decided to look at apartments last Friday. We found one and signed a lease about 5 minutes away from the hotel we've been at. We get the keys today. It's unfurnished, so we were looking at renting furniture, and then Dad thought we might as well buy the furniture. So on Saturday, we went to IKEA for 5 hours and had a shopping spree. It was fun, but we were tired afterward. It was our anniversary, so we went to Fogos and then went home and Dad fell asleep on the couch while we were watching a food show and I was doing laundry.:)

Anyway, IKEA is delivering the furniture tomorrow, so we will move in then. We are also going to buy stuff to do random acts of kindness around the area. So on Tuesday, we will probably take crayons and coloring books to a hospital, and some water bottles and snacks for fire or police. Then we will go out to eat and come home, do the Christmas Eve present and play games or something. I'd like to watch a movie, but we may not internet yet and we won't have a tv.

Christmas morning we will eat and go somewhere to pass out socks, gift cards, a candy cane and maybe a pass along card to homeless people. When you are available, we will pick you up (is Elder Goates coming too, we hope?) and bring you to our apartment for food and good times and we will do our nativity pageant and anything else you have in mind. Then we will go down to Mesa where there is a woman's transition community. They house women who are trying to get off the streets from alcoholism, etc. They have 52

women there right now. We will bring a small gift bag for each of them. Then we will go to the Mesa Temple to see the lights and then drive to the Gilbert Temple to see it in all its glory. Then we can take you home. If any of those things that I planned for Christmas day don't work for you, please let me know. We are very flexible and I want you to feel perfectly comfortable with everything!

Do you have access to any Christmas DVD's that we could give to the Women's Transition community? Like Luke 2, or if the new Nativity the Church just did is on DVD?

I can't wait to see you!!! I love you so much!!! Have a great two days!

Love,  
Mom

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12/30/13

Hi Taylor!!!!

It was soooooooooooooo great to see you and be with you and hear your testimony and laugh!!! I realized the next day that you were going to bring notes from your mission conference about healing and curing and share that with us. It sounded so interesting and I was looking forward to it! I hope the rest of the week was a great one for you!

We are settled in the apartment. But we've been unsettled with so many things! There are a lot of unknowns and decisions to make about my treatment and the cost and Emily's situation. Also, Heather will be getting out in a week or two and she's trying to decide where to go and what to do, and Spencer is restless and I think making plans to leave the house and do something else, so those two are making decisions that indirectly affect us. All of this uncertainty is quite overwhelming. So last night I asked for a blessing and Dad anointed me and Damon gave me the blessing and it was a beautiful blessing and gave me a lot of comfort and strength. I'm so grateful for the priesthood and for the wonderful priesthood holders in my family that I can call upon when I need it!

So Emily will be going to Texas and living with Brandon and Mindy, either in their home, or our home. She will be going to Cinco Ranch High to give her structure and hopefully help her feel more confident in the social department. I don't like that she is away from us, but I pray that Heavenly Father will watch over her and compensate.

On Friday we had a doctor consult and my tumor marker number had popped up to 53 from 29 and that was discouraging, but I still feel confident it's all good. Then they told us that the girl who has been doing my chemo treatments gave me a wrong drug. I get three chemo drugs right now and she got mixed up and three times gave me one of them that wasn't right. It's probably fine, but they had to let her go and I feel really bad about it. I really liked her. Today I'm going in to meet the radiation oncologist and may start radiation.

So life is happening and is kind of crazy, but I know Heavenly Father is aware of me and of our family and that He will make things work for our good. I trust in Him and His goodness and mercy and love. He has always taken care of me and I know He will continue to take care of me. Here are some scriptures about trusting in the Lord that I like:

The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him. Ps 28:7

Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. Ps 22:4

O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh. Yea, cursed is he that putteth his trust in man or maketh flesh his arm. 2 Ne 4:34

For thou art my hope, O Lord God: thou art my trust from my youth. Ps 71:5

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. Ps 36:7

Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee. Ps 143:8

Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Prov 30:5

And now, their preservation was astonishing to our whole army, yea, that they should be spared while there was a thousand of our brethren who were slain. And we do justly ascribe it to the miraculous power of God, because of their exceeding faith in that which they had been taught to believe—that there was a just God, and whosoever did not doubt, that they should be preserved by his marvelous power.

Now this was the faith of these of whom I have spoken; they are young, and their minds are firm, and they do put their trust in God continually. Alma 57:26-27

But behold he doth not command us that we shall subject ourselves to our enemies, but that we should put our trust in him, and he will deliver us. Alma 61:13

I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Ps 91:2

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. Ps 5:11

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. Ps 56:3

And they that know thy name will put their trust in thee: for thou, Lord, hast not forsaken them that seek thee. Ps 9:10

As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all them that trust in him. Sam 22:31

In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness. Ps 31:1

Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. Ps 37:5

And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them: he shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in him. Ps 37:40

Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength: Isa 26:4

Ok, I'll stop!:) I could go on more, but time is running out. Dad just got your email. So I need to send this!

I love you so much Taylor!! You are such a bright spot in my life!!! I am so proud of you and your decisions and the hard work you are doing and your conversion and your positive energy that is making such a difference in the lives of those you are touching! Have a great week!!!!

I love you!

Mom

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1/6/14

(Taylor)

I hope your week was good and you are all recovered from your sickness! Isn't the weather great right now? I guess everywhere else in the country is pretty cold.

I started radiation last Thursday. It targets just the tumors and he's blasting the center of the tumors. It only takes 6 1/2 minutes to radiate, about ten to set it up, so it's not too bad. The machine is like a CT scan. It looks like a donut tube. I lay on a bed like thing and put my arms above my head. Then the bed goes into the tube and I'm radiated. I haven't had any side effects from it so far, so I'm very grateful!

Shelby flew out on Saturday right after Dad left to go back to Houston. It's very fun to have her here! We are just talking and talking. We never seem to run out of things to say.:)

We didn't do anything for New Year's Eve and actually went to bed by around 11:30. On New Years Day, we lounged and I worked on a puzzle Grandma Scott gave us for Christmas. It was very relaxing.

I am so proud of you! You are a great servant of the Lord! I know He is pleased with you! You bring Him honor. I know Dad is proud of you and you are bringing *him* honor and joy. The gospel is beautiful! The Plan is of Happiness and joy and progress and the Restoration is glorious and we get to be part of the winding up scenes and we were saved for this time. You are doing a marvelous work and a wonder!!!

I love you so much! Keep smiling. Keep radiating light and love. Keep being the wonderful son that you are!!!! I just love you so much!!!

Love,  
Mom

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1/13/14

Hello Taylor!!!

How is my boy? I love you!!!:) Sounds like you are busy and doing great things! That story about the less active lady, Wendy, was funny! Some people just aren't ready for incredible blessings and a peace that passeth all understanding.

I had a full week last week. Between Envita in the morning and radiation in the afternoon, it felt like a full time job! On Friday I had a reaction to something. I think it was an Envita special (PME) that is a derivative of aloe Vera. I got chills and pain in my neck and shoulders, then after that subsided I went to radiation and after laying on the form with my arms above my head for 20 min., the pain came back. When I got home I laid down on the couch and tried to get in a comfortable position, but couldn't. Then the pain went to my head. It was a skull headache. Like my whole head hurt. When Dad and Emily flew in, he texted me and said he could get a taxi and I took him up on it. When they got to the apartment he gave me a Tylenol and it subsided mostly. Then in the middle of the night it came back but I was able to sleep for the most part. After I ate the next morning, the pain finally went away. Oh, and I asked the technician at radiation if there has been any shrinking and she said yes. But I didn't ask anything else and she didn't say anything else, so today or tomorrow I'm having a consult with the radiation oncologist and should get more information.

So Saturday I took it really easy and stayed in my pj's. It felt so good to just sit around. I know you don't know what that's like.:) I am doing better now. Now I'm in the chair to get chemo and I'm hoping the nurse will administer the PME slower and maybe I won't have the reaction. But if I do, if it is helping, I'll just take it, because "getting hurt is better than nothing!";D

I had such a good time with Shelby! In the evenings we watched Jane Austin movies: Persuasion, Emma, and Pride and Prejudice. Too fun.:)

Emily started seminary today at the local high school. It's in the teacher's lounge area or something before school. She actually liked it! And two of the girls in the class are in our ward, so that is nice!

Taylor, I want you to know that I have a strong testimony of the Plan of Salvation, that I know we have a Father in Heaven who loves us and a Savior who loves us and atoned for us. I know that this church is His kingdom on the earth with all of the organization, ordinances, fruits and revelation as in the days of Christ. It

is the most beautiful and exalting doctrine and I'm so grateful to know it! I want to share it and am trying to in very quiet ways, but my spirit wants to shout it out!

I am so proud of you and your desire to build the Lord's kingdom and to preach the gospel and that you are giving it your all!!! I am soooooooo grateful!!!!!! I can't tell you how deeply I feel that!!!

Have a beautiful week! Live each moment to the fullest! Expect miracles and keep smiling! I love you so much!!!!!!

Love,  
Mom

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1/20/14

Hi Taylor!!

I'm so glad that you are training again!!! You are the BEST trainer!!! I am sure your companion is so happy to be with you!!! What is his name? Tell me all about him!

It was a rough week!! I did chemo on Monday and Wednesday and on Wed. I had another reaction to something which I had chills for a half hour and then after radiation I had a headache that was awful until I took a Tylenol. Monday through Thursday I had radiation and it's just making me so tired. Thursday I could only eat protein and veggies for breakfast, so Dad made me bacon and boiled a zucchini for breakfast. I went in for immunotherapy and then went to get a pet scan. You have to fast for 4 hours before the scan. They put an IV in your arm and then inject some radioactive dextrose. Then you have a 20 minute scan. Then we went to radiation and I got radiation. But in order to have their software work for lining everything up with the pet scan, they had to do a CT scan. So I had so much radiation on Thursday. It was crazy!

I hope there is some good news with the scans!! I just have to have faith. On Friday I didn't think I could handle doing chemo because of the reaction and the fact that I have to fast before chemo each time. And I was feeling so depleted. So I just went in to get vitamin c and get the weekly tube pulled out of my port. Then I relaxed. I didn't have radiation. Then on Saturday I just stayed on the couch and just rested the whole day. Sunday I had more energy and went to church. Now I'm hungry and in my chair getting some immuno stuff before the chemo. I'm praying for strength to just get through all of these therapies.

Aunt Becky sends us a thought for the day everyday. This week she shared an article given by Bonnie Parkin, a former General RS President. It was about personal ministry. It was so good! There was something in her talk I wanted to share with you:

"We become the hands of our Savior as we do His work. In a missionary zone conference we discussed being the answer to someone's prayers. One pair of missionaries went home and prayed that evening and the next morning that they would be the answer to someone's prayers. The next morning they walked down the high street, and a man came running out of a hotel. He asked if they had a copy of the Book of Mormon—and they did! He explained he was a member attending a business conference. He was worried about some personal problems, and, as he prayed, he received the impression that his answer was in the Book of Mormon. But he did not have one with him. That morning he was sitting in the hotel restaurant. He

suddenly had the impression to go immediately to the front of the hotel, where he saw the missionaries, who provided him with the answer to his prayer.

Asking to be an answer to someone's prayer has a powerful impact. There are sacred, quiet experiences for those who participate with the Lord in answering prayers. As we go about listening, watching, and feeling for the answer to those prayers—even in the midst of our busy schedules—I testify that our earthly ministry unfolds by revelation and divine empowerment. Our testimonies, faith, and feelings of connectedness to the Lord expand in amazing, unexpected ways.

And we can increase that participation with the Lord through prayer and even fasting for others. This helps us become aware of the great power the Lord grants us to make a difference for our brothers and sisters. In short, we can initiate and partake in small miracles on behalf of others—miracles that we are uniquely prepared to do, and that *only* we can do.

Wherever and whenever we are ministering, we are sharing God's love. Then, as He always does, both the giver and the receiver are blessed. May I suggest that finding your personal ministry begins with making a decision about a consistent way of being: a way that seeks to nurture, to be entirely helpful—not just now and again, but always. Ultimately, it is a decision to further consecrate ourselves to the Lord, to more fully take upon ourselves His name—to do as He did. Making this decision deepens our connectedness to one another and to the Lord. Such a responsive way of being is who we really are—from before this life."

I hope you have a really good week!!! You are so wonderful! I am so grateful for you! I pray for you and hope that you are doing wonderful things and I know you are blessing so many people!!!! Keep up the great work!!! This gospel is what keeps me going and positive. I am so grateful for the Savior. Because He descended below all things, He can lift me and strengthen me and succor me. And I feel it.

I love you soooooooooooooo much!!!

Love,  
Mom

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1/27/14

Hello Taylor!!

Well, I'm glad you get to train again!!! You are a fantastic trainer I know it!! Elder Jolley is very lucky to have you as a trainer!!! Are you getting to go to the Open House? Do you get to go if you have investigators, or do you get to go either way? When it is dedicated, will it be the temple you go to every 6 weeks, or will it still be Mesa? Next time you see President Toone, tell him I am praying for his daughter.

Well this week was crazy! On Monday we got the pet scan report back and Dad told you the results. Well, the doctors at Envita didn't look at the scan, they just looked at the radiologist report. They didn't see any change and were really discouraged. The doctor even told us maybe we should go to conventional chemo with MD Anderson or Cancer Treatment Centers. So then a couple of hours later we went to Dr. Grado, the radiation oncologist and he *had* looked at the scan and said he couldn't see the smaller tumors and that the larger tumors had slightly shrunk and the liver had shrunk, which he said he's never seen at this point in the

treatment. So that was great news. My blood count from the week before was lower, but last Tuesday's lab test came back and they had popped back up to decent levels, so we continued with chemo and radiation. On Friday, Dad wanted me to have another blood test. So they did it and my red blood cell numbers had dropped even more. So a doctor at Envita ordered a blood transfusion for me. So on Saturday I spent 6 hours at the Shea Hospital getting 2 units of blood. I felt better afterward, but I'm still tired and food is hard to make myself eat. But I am trying.

So as you can see, it was a bit of a roller coaster ride last week! This week I will do immunotherapy and radiation and just try to build myself back up on the blood and energy. I just sit around or lay around most of the day. Dad is doing the cooking and he's working so hard to help Emily with her school, plus trying to fit work in for Dentma and Lifestyles. He's trying to keep his toe from having a gout attack too. Life is just crazy right now.

On Friday night, our home teachers were scheduled to come over for a visit. I was really dragging and Dad suggested that we reschedule. I said that I would really like them to give me a blessing. I was feeling anxiety about the transfusion too. So Dad called them and they said they would. When they came, they anointed and then blessed me. The blessing was another one of healing, as well as one of strength and comfort. I am so grateful for the priesthood and for all the blessings I have received through all of this. Dad has given me a few, Brandon gave me one, Grandpa Scott, Brother Hatfield, you, Damon, and my home teachers.

I am looking forward to this week! Tuesday we will be going to the open house and I'm so glad Emily is here and can go! Also, on Friday, we are driving up to St. George. James is on the tour team of the BYU Ballroom dance team and they are coming to St. George this weekend. When I found out I said I was coming. John of course is there, and Grandma and Grandpa Scott are driving out. Then Amy said she wanted to come as a surprise to James. Then Whitney and Shelby found out and they didn't want to be left out, so Whitney and her little guy, Mason, and Shelby are tagging a ride with Grandma and Grandpa. It's going to be great!

Taylor, I love you so much! I just saw your email come through and I have been talking with people and now I probably missed you! I will send this also to message you on Facebook. Oh, I'm so sorry!!!!

I am so grateful for you and for the blessing you gave me! It gives me strength and hope. I am so grateful you are serving and doing your best. I know it is blessing me and I am sooooo thankful. Please know how much I love you and feel such deep gratitude for your service and how it is directly blessing me. Have a beautiful week!!!!!!

I LOVE YOU!!!!  
Love, Mom

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2/10/14

Hi Taylor!!!

Well, I will hopefully get this email to you before you get on today! I'm sitting in the infrared sauna and it's warm and quiet in here and no one is interrupting me!

So I didn't have any radiation treatments last week because my white blood cell count was low. So I just did immunotherapy all last week and it was a nice recovery week. Today I got another blood test and the count



will probably be up again, so I will go in and have my last three radiation treatments and then just continue with immuno to build my body up and continue to get rid of the cancer.

I don't know if you read Dad's email that he sent to all of you children yet, but my doctor told us last week that we finally have the tumors on the run and I won't need any more chemo and it looks like I've got this beat. It is so amazing and relieving! It seemed for so long that nothing was happening, but now that we've had 2 scans that show shrinking and cell death, and the blood test with more good news, we are feeling so grateful!!

Dad has immediately felt better after the news, although his gout is still bothering him. He is still trying to find answers and solutions.

Last night we had our neighbor, Judy, come over for dinner. Dad made stroganoff and we had a nice visit. I'm glad we did that.

Dad will be going back to Katy on Saturday till the following Thursday. When the bishop learned of it he asked Dad if he would lead the Sunday Evening Discussion with the youth on Sunday night. So Dad is going to do that and talk about going through trials and holding on to your faith rather than letting go of it. We discussed it a little this morning and I suggested a few things, some things I have learned through this experience. One is that it makes it a whole lot easier to endure when you count your blessings, because things can ALWAYS be worse. So listing out the blessings, even in my mind, helps me realize I have much to be grateful for. Also, asking for priesthood blessings has helped me so much!!! And looking for the tender mercies and divine signatures is big too. And it seems like the bigger the trial, the bigger those miracles are. And to me that tells me that Heavenly Father is there, and is watching over me. He may not be taking my problem away just yet, but He is there. That is so comforting! And I submit more willingly and cheerfully knowing that. And another thing that has helped is looking outside of myself and trying to serve others. I haven't done a ton, but even the little bit that I have done has brought me joy and a temporary forgetting of the hard thing I'm going through.

I can't think of any funny thing that happened this week. It was a good week, but nothing really funny stands out. So I'm sorry I don't have a great story.

I am so grateful for you. I am being blessed because of your service. I know! Thank you for being such an amazing son and missionary!!! I pray for you every day and I hope you are having wonderful experiences that are increasing your faith, testimony and love of the gospel! Keep up the great work, keep smiling, and expect miracles! They are real! They happen all the time, especially when you are on the Lord's errand!!!!

I love you soooooooooo much!!!!  
Love, Mom

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2/17/14

Hi Taylor!

I've seen a few pictures of you on Facebook and you look so GREAT!!!!!! I LOVE YOU!!!! I'm so glad you are having such opportunities to share the gospel!!!! Will the Gilbert Temple be the temple you go to every 6 weeks from now on?

Radiation is DONE!! Yay!!! I am feeling better and better. A few days ago I was driving somewhere with Dad and I started ranting passionately about something. Then I apologized for being so intense. Dad was like, "You must be getting better. I haven't heard you this riled up in months." :) I am feeling a lot more energy and almost normal! I've been saying out loud this last week: my liver is tumor free, my body is cancer free, I am healthy, I am well, I am whole. I feel like when I say that I'm telling my body how to be :)

The ward in katy has been sending me letters these past couple weeks. Just about everyone from the ward counsel has written to me with uplifting, encouraging, and faith building letters. Some of them have made me cry. Brother Funk, the ward clerk, wrote me a letter with some really cool insights. He talked about the Atonement and how an angel was sent to strengthen Jesus. And there's another scripture in the Book of Mormon that talks about him being strengthened or about how he saw his seed. Something like that. I will get the exact reference to you sometime :) he drew the correlation that possibly the angel helped him by showing him those who would benefit and be grateful for what he was doing and that he derived strength from that. It was an insight I hadn't thought about. Sister McLain sent me socks with sunbeams on them. Sister Hancock is sending me a letter every week with a divine signature from her life through personal stories. I've received 15-20 letters and I'm so grateful for their support. It makes me feel connected to them, I feel their strength and love.

One day last week at Envita there was a man that was in for testing, he has Lyme disease, we got talking and he said that he had had a stuttering problem for over 20 years. Two years ago he found a place that did a twelve day intensive program and he came out of it fluent. They took a video of him the first day and I watched it, it was pretty bad. He said that 2 or 3% of the population have a stuttering problem. It's pretty debilitating. He talked about how going to a restaurant where you order at the counter with the menu up front would be like for a stutterer. He said he would look at the menu and would order what he felt he could say easily rather than what he wanted to eat. Then if the employee was asking for their name, he would quickly scan the restaurant to see if he knew anybody and then if he didn't he'd say his brothers name which was a lot easier for him to say than his own name. He talked about different coping strategies and it really gave me a sense of compassion for people with that trial. He's starting a non profit to give people hope and inspire them. It was really interesting and now he's struggling with Lyme and has learned to completely surrender to The Lord.

Taylor you're doing awesome! I love you so much! Stay strong, I'm so proud of you. I'm so grateful for you. Expect miracles and have an awesome week!

I love you!  
Love mom

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2/24/14

Hi my wonderful son!!!!

So life is good and God is great!!! I am so thankful for everything!! A couple of weeks ago when I had my last radiation treatment, one of the techs said we should celebrate. Maybe go see a movie. And suggested the Lego Movie. So we did.:) Anyway, there is a song in it that I LOVE and it's funny and goofy, but the first line is great. It goes: "EVERYTHING IS AWESOME!" When we left the theater, I decided I want to get that in vinyl lettering and put it on our wall at home.:) Everything IS awesome! And that is because of hundreds of prayers, priesthood blessings, amazing doctors and nurses, the most incredible support from family and

friends, and mostly because my Heavenly Father loves me and has blessed me beyond words!!! There have been so many miracles in this whole experience It is overwhelming to me!

So if all goes well this week, my doctor is sending me home for a month. Then I will be back for a week of immunotherapy and a scan and blood work, then back home for three weeks and then back here for a week of immuno. I'll stay on that protocol for maybe a year depending on how things go. It seems crazy that I'm going home. Things just started turning so fast and now with my tumor marker at 12, it's just awesome! I'm glad I'll get to see Damon at least a few days before he returns to BYU.

So about the past 3 weeks or so, our ward in Katy has been sending me letters and cards by the bunches! Some of the letters are so touching I cry. (surprise!:) ) I think I mentioned that last week. Anyway, this past Saturday I got 11 letters!!! Some of the letters are from people I don't even know! One of my favorites, actually, was from Rand Gardner. He and his wife moved into the ward a few months before I left. He wrote me a 4 page hand written letter. (on binder paper) He shared about 4 experiences from his life that testified to him that Heavenly Father is aware of him and of His goodness. It was written in the Gardner boys style and was very good! I feel like there are probably a lot more people in the ward that could use this outpouring of love more than me, but I will do something about that when I get home!! :)

Taylor, I am so glad you have been so busy and teaching like crazy!!! I'm so glad that this mission is such a great experience!!! Keep up the magnificent work you are doing!!! Keep smiling. Expect miracles because when it comes to the gospel and Heavenly Father and our Savior, EVERYTHING IS AWESOME!!!!!! :)

I love you with all my heart and soul and couldn't be more proud and grateful for you!!!!

Love, Mom

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3/3/14

Hi Taylor!

We are in Texas now!!! We're leaving a place called Ft. Stockton Tx and have 7 hours till we get to Dear Ol' Katy. Yesterday we went to the Gilbert temple dedication. I know you went as well and it was cool to participate in something that I knew you were participating in it as well.

It's been weird saying good bye to everyone. Some people I know I won't see ever again like the patients at Envita. I'll be back in a month so I'll see most of the staff next time I come out here. I may not go to church again in Scottsdale so I probably won't see them. I've been there for 4 months. And it feels like I've started to sprout roots. Even though the circumstances that made me go there were not the best, I feel like it's been a really wonderful experience. I made a lot of good memories there. But I'm excited to get back to Katy.

I loved your letter last week. You sound so good and busy. I am excited for all that you are doing and all the people you are working with. I got a Facebook message from \_\_\_\_\_ telling me what a great missionary you are. She said she was thinking about me and wanted to know how I was doing. I told her that I didn't know what you'd told her, but that I was getting good treatment and have enjoyed the Gilbert temple activities. She responded that you hadn't said anything about treatment and inquired. I told her I had cancer and I guess you aren't telling people. She said she wouldn't say anything and was very kind. Then she said that she had just gotten word that you aren't serving in her ward anymore. So I'm sure you're going to tell us about that.

I love you so much!

I've got a talk I want to send to you by elder holland. It's super good. I love the savior. I'm so grateful for the atonement, it's the reason for all happiness. Have a super fantastic week!! Keep smiling. Expect miracles. Be grateful.

Love mom

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3/3/14

Oh and I forgot to mention that the lady in your ward was sister bowman!

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3/10/14

Hi Taylor!!

Your letter was wonderful last week like always!! I'm sure it is a bummer that you got severed from so many wonderful investigators!! Your positive outlook on the situation, though is amazing!!! At church I was asked to share in Relief Society about you. It's something they do each week or month called missionary mom moment or something. Anyway, I shared part of your letter from last week where you talked about how great this setback is because you are taking it as a challenge to teach more discussions and baptize more people. You are AWESOME!!!! I also briefly told them about Bruce and Sam. But what's up with them? I haven't heard about them in a while. I bet you WILL teach more discussions and baptize more!!! You will rally the ward and show your faith by praying hard on your knees and then standing tall and rolling up your sleeves and getting to work!!! Your challenge about a family mission plan is wonderful, and for FHE tonight we will decide on one and I'll let you know what that is in next week's letter!

We bought a portable far infrared sauna that our doctor suggested for me while I'm home. We looked up all the benefits of the sauna and it said that it helps to eliminate toxins through the skin including uric acid, which is what causes gout. So Dad is using it too. He looked so funny when he first went in, I had to take a picture of him! It reminded me of the movie Charlie and the Chocolate Factory where Violet Bouregard turned into a blueberry. Here is a picture:



I'm in the sauna right now writing to you. It's making me sweat. (I'm not choosing to sweat, it is literally MAKING me sweat!:) )

In Sunday School yesterday we talked about Abraham and Isaac. We talked about their obedience in the face of so great a trial and someone said that Heavenly Father knew Abraham would obey and do His will, but Abraham didn't know till he did it. It got me thinking about how this life is a test and that it's not necessarily to prove ourselves to God, but maybe to prove ourselves to ourselves.

We have sister missionaries in our ward and one of them spoke in sacrament meeting yesterday. She talked about why we do things and our motives. She focused on guilt and love as two big motivators. And then

related that to our missionary work as members, how most of us feel guilt. That isn't the right motive. She talked about how we do it better when it's driven by love. But not just our love for God, but for his love for us. She relates it to a child and parent and how we know how much our father loves us and we do things to please him. Sometimes our choices don't please, like when she would put on a skirt that was a little too short. She would see a cloud over his face. So she would pull her skirt lower and promise to keep it that way and he would be satisfied. But she knows that if she would have gone and changed her skirt for a more modest one, she would have pleased him. In the same way, the better relationship we have with our Heavenly Father, the greater desire we will have to please him, not just satisfy him, and the more we will reach out to others and share the gospel, which is what we are being asked to do. So it's important to have that relationship. Jesus taught us that. He spent time on that relationship and then went about doing things to please his Father. And the scriptures record that Heavenly Father said He was WELL pleased!

I know He is well pleased with you too!! I know that I am well pleased with you!! And I am so grateful for your choices and example and good works and positive attitude and willingness to help people and your love for people!! Your actions show your relationship with Heavenly Father and your desire to please him!!

I hope you have a truly wonderful week ahead and you teach teach teach with power and humility and with the Spirit and witness mighty miracles!!! I LOVE YOU SOOOOO MUCH!!!!!!!

Love, Mom

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3/17/14

Hi Taylor!!!

It sounds like you and Elder Jolley are working hard and already seeing some great success! Good for you!! I talked to Rose Riggs after church yesterday and she said that she wrote Spencer (Riggs) on Monday and told him about what I had shared about you last week in Relief Society and how you were excited for the challenge after losing your investigators. He responded, "That's my buddy!" :D He then went on to tell about how they didn't have any investigators, but there were 7 not active families they were working with and how if they became active it would double the branch size and wasn't that awesome?! So your enthusiasm is "catching FIRE!":)

I had a great week visiting people and cooking, cleaning and doing laundry! It feels so good to do those basic things again and feel productive!

Yesterday I took banana bread to the Mallicks and just wanted to reach out. I know they haven't been coming to church much so I thought I'd take advantage of the fact that I just got home and wanted to thank them for the meal they brought and the letter Mikayla sent to me. We had a nice visit.

It's sad Damon is gone back to BYU but I'm so glad I got two weeks with him!!! The last night he was here we had the sister missionaries over to get to know us. That was the night Emily went to the emergency room. Damon and I had a great time with the sisters.

Our family mission plan is to invite a newly baptized family and the sister missionaries over for family home evening. They just had a new baby a month ago, so I will wait for another month. We will also be trying to strengthen Rose Riggs and family. I am also going to try to encourage the ward to be super loving, because that is huge when there are investigators visiting. That's a start. I think I may pop over to a few neighbor's

homes and visit with the women about where I've been and my situation. That will hopefully open a dialog with them.

I love you and am rooting for you here in Texas!!!!!! Every good thing you do has good consequences, even if you don't see them! You are building Zion each day!!! You are doing good in the world today!!! Keep it up!!

The sheaves are gathering on your back! (D&C 33:9)

I love you soooo much!!!!!!

Love, Mom

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3/24/14

Hi Taylor!!!!

I hope things are still going really great! The young man you took to the Mesa Temple visitors center sounds like he's having a wonderful experience with you! It would be so cool if he truly converted and then went on a mission! His life would be completely different for the good! And how neat to go on the reservation and teach the gospel to the Lamanites!!

The sister missionaries brought an investigator to church yesterday and she is Jewish. One of the sisters came to find me after Sacrament meeting and she took me and Dad over to meet her. We chatted a little and talked about how she is married to a mormon (not active) and Grandma and Grandpa joining the church and how we celebrate Passover and Hanukkah. She was interested in how we do that and yet are Mormon. I told her there is a lot more in common as Mormons with Jews than even other Christian churches. She agreed and said that her parents would have liked her to marry a Jewish man, but were ok with a Mormon. (I guess by that point they were just glad she was married!:) ) She said she was interested in talking more about all that. The Meldrums talked with her and so did Tammi Bauer, so hopefully she felt more welcomed and that is great! After church I told the sisters that our home is open if they want to come over with this family to have a discussion or talk about Jewish stuff and Mormon stuff. Also I suggested that if they want, they could invite the family to our house for Passover to have a "Mormon Seder." So we'll see what happens!

Me and Emily went over to the Riggs on Thursday and visited with Rose and Abigail. Then Rose and I went to a Relief Society meeting together and Emily and Abigail went to see a movie. We all had a good time.

We went up to Dallas on Friday to see Esther get baptized. She is a great missionary! She made invitations and gave them to everyone in her school class and teachers, etc. Her best friend at school is Catholic and is being raised by her single grandmother. They came and Esther's Kindergarten teacher and her teacher's two friends also came. One of the non members gave her a Primary CD, so she must have gone to an LDS bookstore to get it. That was pretty cool! It was great to see family!! Grandma Janis got shingles and is pretty sick. She's on anti viral medication, but she was too sick to come. She had been asked to give the talk on the Holy Ghost. Daron and Heather came by after a meeting Friday night to our hotel room to visit and asked if one of us would give it. They asked Emily and she said yes. She was not happy when they left! She can't say no, but was terrified to give the talk. She almost texted them and said Dad or I would give it, but decided to do it. I helped her think of what she wanted to communicate and the next day at the baptism, she got up and gave a perfect talk! She said she wasn't nervous and many people came up to her and said what a great job she did. I'm glad she went through with it and I know through preparing and sharing her feelings about the Holy Ghost, she has more appreciation for that amazing gift!

On Tuesday we went to the Houston Rodeo. We went during the day, so we didn't see the actual rodeo or a concert, but did go on rides and ate and saw a few animals. It was nice to get out and do something together. Dad's gout is acting up again, so he was not as mobile. Poor Dad! I don't know what to do to help him. He has tried so many things! The only thing that works for a while is either the steroid medication that is really harsh on the body, or some other plant-based medication our naturopathic doctor prescribed for him, but is also toxic on the body. He bought this cold laser machine that has helped a little to keep it from totally flaring up, but even that wasn't working by Friday night. So he took the prescription medicine. He will keep trying to figure all of this out.

In Relief Society yesterday I had an impression to contact Regina Kim (Regina Hunter, but she's married a new husband who isn't a member.) I haven't seen her in a while and I know her well and I want to reach out to her. I don't think she has come to church in a long time. Last night I called her, but the phone just kept ringing. I will try again today.

Heather has been calling me almost every day. We are both really liking talking with each other so frequently! She got a job at a bakery place called Kneaders. She gets discouraged a lot because she has so many needs and can't seem to get herself on her own feet and it seems like it will be forever before she does. But I keep reminding her she has come so far and to try to look at all she does have and that doors are going to start opening for her. I ordered a bus pass for her for the month of April and 5 day passes to get her through the rest of March. When I told her, she cried and said that was a load off her mind. I wish this was not the reality of her situation. And I wish Spencer was having the same awesome experiences that you are having. I am so grateful you are doing what you are doing and having the experiences you are! It gives me so much joy and gratitude in my heart! I keep hoping and praying for more miracles. I realized that my patriarchal blessing blesses me that my children will help to build and strengthen the Kingdom in these the last days. That is a blessing given to me if I am faithful. So, like Abraham, who received an incredible blessing from the Lord and then was asked to sacrifice his son, thus making it impossible for the blessing to be fulfilled, he trusted in the Lord. He didn't know how things could work out, but he knew the Lord could do all things according to his words. And he went forward in faith. So I am going forward in faith, knowing that the Lord gave me that blessing, and somehow He will accomplish it according to his word to me. But you are fulfilling it right now and what a blessing!

I love you so much Taylor!!! Keep up the amazing work you are doing!!! Keep loving the people you are teaching, meeting and serving with. As you are losing yourself in the work, you are fining yourself, your BEST self, and your life will be fuller and richer and more beautiful because of this!!! I am so proud of you!!! You are not only doing your duty, but doing it with all your heart, might, mind and strength! And that is the best way to do it!!!! Have a blessed and miracle-filled week my marvelous missionary!!!!

Love, Mom

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3/31/14

Hi Taylor!

It has been a crazy week and now I'm in Arizona! I am so full of energy but I know in a few hours a wave of sleepiness is going to hit me! As I was in the shuttle from the airport to the rental car place, I saw the Arizona landscape and trees and cactus and I felt a beautiful wave of love for this place. I was so glad, because I didn't know how I would react to being back and seeing all the familiar places and if the trauma of everything would hit me. But it didn't and I'm really glad to be here!

You sound like you are doing as great as ever!!! I'm so happy! I just don't worry about you and I feel so happy when I think of you and pray for you!!! It seems that in one way or another and to one degree or another I am worried and praying over the rest of your siblings! So thank you for being a sunshine in my life!

Dad told you about Rory, the Jewish lady I went to help teach. She asked me a lot of questions and at one point when she was talking to her daughter or something, I looked at the missionaries and motioned for them to kick in! I didn't know if I was going the right way!:) It's interesting how the Jews only believe in God, not Jesus Christ or the Holy Ghost, so it makes teaching a lot harder! The sisters taught about the Restoration, and Rory was very still and was processing the whole Joseph Smith story and Sister Newhouse asked her what she thought and felt about it. It looked like she was going to cry, but she didn't. She just said it was a lot to process and take in. She believes in God, but doesn't have a personal relationship with him, where she feels his hand in her individual life or to know if he answered a prayer, so she's got a way to go. I tried to help her bridge Jewish doctrine to Christian/LDS doctrine in a couple of ways.

One was that in order to be "Inscribed in the Book of Life" for another year, you have to do so many good deeds. And on the Day of Atonement, the priest would offer a sin offering for the people as a ransom for their sins. I said it was to help them look forward to Jesus Christ who would offer himself for the great and last sacrifice for all mankind.

I also talked about prophets and how God spoke to prophets in the Old Testament, and we need a prophet today and that is what we do have, from Joseph Smith on.

Her husband was sometimes helpful and would say something that validated us, and then he would go on about something totally not doctrinal, like Neanderthal Man and how evolution was God's way of experimenting with creation, and stuff. haha! I guess when you get away from the church long enough, you start getting all kinds of ideas twisting and turning around. When she came to church she saw how involved the members were in the services and realized what a time commitment it was to be part of this church and she doesn't think she would be good for that. That is because she isn't converted and doesn't have the love of God in her heart yet.

But it was a very cool experience, and I am sure I will be following up on that!

Jen Hansen invited me to go to her scripture study group that meets every Tuesday morning. I went and it was really fun! We spent like an hour studying and discussing 2 Nephi chapter 2. There were so many things in there to apply to my life! Lehi is saying his final words to his sons and rehearsing to them the great miracles that the Lord has done for them. And he says, "notwithstanding our afflictions," and then tells them what the Lord has given them. It just seemed so perfect for my story right now. That notwithstanding my afflictions, the Lord has been with us and has given us miracles and is leading us along. Later in the chapter, in verses 21-23 it is a plea to be real men and the qualities that true men and brothers have. Then in verses 24-28, Lehi is telling his rebellious sons about Nephi, but I noticed that in those verses, Nephi is a type of Christ.

It was a great discussion, lots of applications and testimonies shared. When everyone left, Jen and I were talking about service stuff and she wanted to show me a new center called the Ballard House that just opened up in December. It's down on Mason Road near Creech Elementary School, near the Oetli's neighborhood. So we went and a lady gave us a tour. (This place is named after someone who donated the money to have it built. Not LDS) Anyway, it is a facility that has 24 guest rooms and some common rooms



like a kitchen, living room, library, chapel, media room. It is for people who have a life threatening illness and their families to have a place to stay for free up to 30 days while they are in treatment, like cancer patients. So there are many ways to serve there and I picked up a volunteer application. I will try to decide what I can do and get Emily to get involved too when I get back.

Well, I've rambled on and on and you only have so much time on the computer, so I'll sign off. I love you soooooooooo much and I pray for you and I know you are doing the right thing at the right time in the right place and your life will be forever blessed because of the work and service you are giving!!! It's all about thinking outward, losing yourself, and then you find yourself!

Keep it up! Get excited!!! The hot days are coming on!!!! Yea!!!:) Expect miracles!!! Love you!!!!!!

Love, Mom

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