



features are a warm and glowing pine paneled kitchen, uneven wooden floors, lots of space indoors and out, wide southern windows that let the winter sun pour in, a

hedgerow around the farmstead that consists of wild grapes, plums, roses, and various bird berries, and its proximity to an old railway made into a trail for Jim to run on., and the children and I to walk and bike--and also its closeness to the Dahl farm--under two miles away!

This year we began the adventure of homeschooling. Sophia has memorized her grandparent's phone numbers and can spell our names and other words like B-O-X! She has also learned to ride a bike without training wheels. Maria turned into a fish this summer when she learned how to swim at our local pool. She can write "MMMMM" (for Maria) and loves to dress her dolls and discuss their discipline problems with Sophia. For Peter, its all about tractors, combines and skid loaders. These must dominate the topic of his bedtime stories.



The first time that Peter held his brother ("Wilem"), he lovingly kissed his head and when it became Maria's turn, he indignantly resisted, protesting "MINE, MINE!" All of our children have taken on responsibility to care for "our" baby. They love to hold him. Rarely does he escape their watchful eyes whether he is sleeping, awake, eating, or getting a diaper change. The primary caregiver always has three miniture supervisors.

In August we prayed for work for Jim. As it turned out, the city of Rolfe needed a police officer while its regular full-time officer went to the academy. It has worked out well for Jim to fill this position from September 15 to December 19. Its been an interesting time of early mornings, late nights, emergency calls, and radio traffic chattering in the background of our daily routine. With a population of seven hundred people, Rolfe is not really Sin City--its much more like Mayberry. However, some of Jim's more interesting incidents include catching a burglar on the roof of the bar, kicking in a door (almost--the guy finally came out), a high speed pursuit (I listened to it on the radio), and a big drug bust (there



was still some residue in the baggie). Oh yeah, and then there was the CPR on the dead guy.



Jim remains excited about his thesis and burningly interested in his topic, even though completion keeps getting pushed back due to a growing family and the need to keep us all provided for. Its getting closer though--hopefully to be finished early this spring, along with several other related writing projects. The title is, '*A Diamond in the Sun: The Idea of "Glory" in the Teleology of Jonathan Edwards.*

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) was one of America's greatest thinkers. In Jim's thesis, he is trying to understand what Edwards meant when he used the term "glory" as the chief end in his 1755 *Dissertation Concerning the End for Which God Created the World.*

As the ultimate purpose of Creation, the concept of glory is the unifying principle of the universe and ultimate reality. The very meaning of life is bound up in the meaning of "glory"--it is the crux of the crux.

In *End of Creation*, Edwards illustrates the communication of God's glory to Creation with an analogy of a circuit of light:

the internal processes of the sun (or God's internal glory) emit rays of light which travel through space, illuminate a cut diamond (or believer) and cause a brilliant "sparkle" to reflect back to the sun. This process, Edwards likens to the existence and communication of God's glory, in which greatness and beauty are communicated by God, multiplied through His creation, and return back to God--magnified many times over! Edwards finally describes the whole universe of glory as *an awesome and infinite view of God's greatness and beauty combined!* If you are interested in reading the one page abstract, just let us know and we will be glad to email it to you.

We trust that you will enjoy this Advent Season by drawing close to our loving Creator and Savior. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." John 1:14

With warm wishes,

James, Heidi, Sophia, Maria, Peter & William

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