



THE ABC's OF 2015

Creetings and Christmas salutations to friends and family all over the world. No matter how you are celebrating, no matter the weather, the location or the style, it is gratifying to know that we can all agree on the fact that we are commemorating the birth of our Risen Saviour Jesus Christ. What a privilege and a blessing this is indeed!



Early on in the New Year, **Andrea** and **Hunter** surprised us by announcing the joyful anticipation of a baby. We had been skyping, and Andrea asked if she could read out a Birthday Poem to **Peter**! Here is the Poem:

*From the moment I took my first breath, you've been there by my side;
And taught me everything there was to know about this life.
Giving me the zeal to learn and passion to explore the world,
Never ceasing to strive to be the best dad for your little girl.
Loving me at my best as well as at my worst,
I'm so thankful to know how loved I am, I feel like I could burst,
You've shown me how a loving parent really ought to be,
That life is an adventure and there's many a sight to see.
So with a PhD in parenting, it's time to graduate
With this, my gift to you, I hope excitement won't dissipate
It's time to embark on a new adventure with your family
So achieving a new degree in Grandparenting, we think
will do nicely. Congratulations, Dad, you've passed the test,
and now your new claim to fame: Come September, in someone's
precious eyes, you'll have a brand new name!*



It took Peter and I a few moments to comprehend the implications. So for the next many months, the **Arrival of Jeremy Christopher Combs** was anticipated. I was hoping to be able to join Andrea and Hunter for this event, but my health prevented me from traveling. We are so grateful that the Combs family has been able to join us for two months, and we are enjoying every moment of our time together. Hunter is still working on his Master's in Theology program and anticipates finishing by the end of 2016, Lord willing.

CHRISTOPHER



Christopher began the year working full time at **Frontline** in the IT department. He is apprenticing under our IT Specialist, Reinhard, and this has stretched him far beyond what he thought possible. His dedication to the KSI Karate discipline took him to represent South Africa at the European Championships this year, held in Luzern, Switzerland. He won a bronze medal for Kumite and a bronze medal for his Unison Team Kata. He also had the chance to meet his Austrian Cousins for the first time. Uncle Hans gave him a guided grand tour of many of the most beautiful parts of Austria and introduced him to the local cuisine. It was an unforgettable experience and a privilege to have been hosted by our European family.



Christopher is enjoying his new role as Uncle

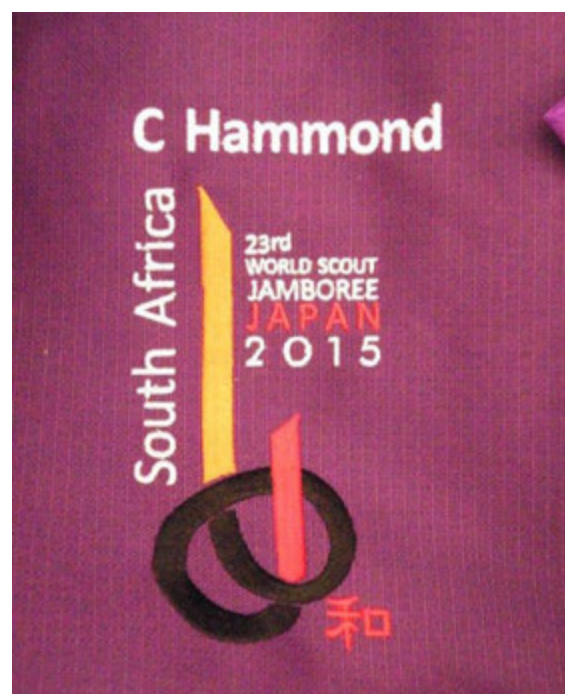
CALVIN

Calvin probably had the busiest year of all, in that the first 5 months were taken up in preparations for the 23rd World Scouting Jamboree. He had many requirements to complete to qualify for his First Class status. This included a Mapping course, a Backwoodsman Course and the completion of a Hike and a Camp that he had to plan, map and cater for. The attention to detail required for these are indeed impressive, and would challenge most adults. I served on the fundraising committee for this Japan Jamboree, and we were quite pleased with the amount we were able to raise to fund this event.

The Jamboree in Japan and was designed to co-inside with the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. Needless to say it was an incredible and life-altering experience, and one we are very glad he was able to be a part of. Calvin's article reporting on this historic event was published in full in the local *Muse* magazine.



On the sporting front, Calvin ran his first half-marathon (13.1 miles / 21.1km)





this year in one hour and 28 minutes. He continues to run for a local running club, plays hockey for a hockey club and also plays water-polo and hockey for school. The following was printed in the local Running Club newsletter: "Calvin Hammond is a junior member of the club. In June he was awarded the club's 'Athlete of the Month' for his improved times particularly over 15km. He has kept the fastest junior time for the year in the 15 km."



Early on in the year, I went for a routine check-up with my Oncologist, and she was a little concerned about some enlarged glands under my arm. The radiologist agreed and instead of a needle biopsy, they were surgically removed. All six glands were malignant. My original bout with Cancer had presented 3 positive glands on the same side. So in a sense this is not so much a spread of cancer but a few rogue cancer cells that have been there for years. The approach this time around has been quite radical (3 months of chemo therapy and 5 weeks of radiation), but we have added a more stringent nutritional approach as well.

My sister **Debbie** visited our shores twice this year! This means we had more time together than we have ever had in one calendar year as sisters. Her visits to Cape Town are precious and the support she offered as our family faced another medical crisis was precious.





Lecturing at the War Museum on the Crimean War, Russia and Ukraine



Irish dancing at the Ballroom Showcase *Around the World in 80 Minutes* (Representing Ireland)

DANIELA

Daniela has had quite a number of internship opportunities this year. She has worked with a variety of companies in design and marketing, and has been able to hone her graphics skills at each occasion. Daniela maintains a bewildering schedule of coaching at the ice-rink, Ballroom dancing, Lindy Hop dancing, as well as the Cape Town Youth Choir. This year they performed the incredible, inspiring and incomparable **Handel's Messiah** at the Groote Kerk. This is Cape Town's oldest Church and the event celebrated its 300th anniversary. After being a part of this prestigious choir for three years Daniela is taking a break from this commitment and finished out the year with an inspiring Carol Service at the magnificent Dutch Reformed Church in Ceres. It was a beautifully put together evening and an appropriate finale for Daniela.

Peter has for over a year now been participating in a discipline called 'Historic European Martial Arts' (HEMA). They use Middle Ages Manuals that Knights and Crusaders were trained from for techniques and fighting skills. Long Swords, Back Swords, and Cutlasses are used for training as well as tournaments. All this provides an excellent work out, and Peter has collected an impressive array of multi-coloured bruises and swollen wrists. For the final tournament of the year, Peter was a contender into the final minutes of the event. Despite being double the age of most of the participants, Peter is able to win against much more experienced sword fighters.



Peter also joins me on our Dragon Boat on a weekly basis and has even participated in mock races. Last week he had a try at helming, which is quite a new sensation in balance and agility.

For some time now, we have wondered what the most cost-effective way to add a little more space to our home would be. So in faith, we began a Building project into our roof space. We never seem to have enough space for books and guests and I was in need of some work space for quilting, scrap-booking sewing and other projects. Who knew there was so much scope for creative space in the roof? This adventure took up much of this year and is only now coming to an end. The constant activity of builders, noise and disruption was trying at times, and in the middle we hosted our good friends the **Rices** (all 11 of them) and the **Kellers** (only 6 at this stage) in our construction site, but in exchange we now have a delightful 'upper room' to enjoy as a family.



We are in awe of God's protection and provision for this year. I certainly was caught off guard by my Cancer rearing its ugly head again. But God has a Sovereign plan for each of us, and for each of our families, and I rest in the knowledge that I cannot add another day to the life that God has foreordained for me. I am so grateful to my friends and family for their support, nutritional advice, encouragement and prayers. Thank you for coming alongside us as a family and for the friendship that has been freely given.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and that God's presence would be ever real in your situation as you celebrate.

Greetings from our family to yours.

Lenora Hammond





FROM DANIELA

Merry Christmas, and blessings for the New Year to you all! This has definitely been a unique year, and one that I have truly grown into Adulthood.

Finishing my studies last year, I set off on the journey of being a graphic designer in the work industry. This was a scary, but exciting step. In March, I had my Graduation ceremony from CityVarsity. This was a bittersweet event, saying goodbye to those I studied with and learned under, and hello to the design industry. I experienced my first full-time job, and also accepted some free-lance design work on the side, including a Christian student magazine, distributed at UCT's Student Y. I also had the privilege of working with designer and illustrator Lauren Fowler, and doing a temporary filler-in position at BOS Ice Tea, assisting with the design of the BOS Sport campaign.

This year, I have also pursued my passion of dancing. I don't think I've ever done so much dancing in a year! It's one of my favorite things to do. In the beginning of the year I joined the UCT Ballroom society. Through ballroom dancing, I discovered a Lindy Hop swing dancing scene in Cape Town, known as **Cape Town Swing**. This 1920's inspired kind of dancing is very popular in America and Europe, but is still growing in Africa. I am very excited to have become a team member of Cape Town Swing, and an organizer for **Mother City Hop**.

This was sadly my last year of being an alto in the Cape Town Youth Choir, (*at least for the time being*). It has been such an honor and an enriching experience. Earlier this year we learned **Handel's Messiah** and performed it in the oldest church in Cape Town. It was truly wonderful to perform such God-honoring music. Someone even created a documentary on the process of learning the Messiah music. I am so glad I got to be apart of this project.

I am also excited to be involved with the running and marketing of the **Great Commission Camp!** I am really looking forward to the camp and course in January, and I pray that many will be able to attend. I am also anticipating being able to work more with **Frontline** this coming year.

Thank you ever so much for all your continuous love, prayers, and support. May God be with you everyday of your life.

Lots of love, Daniela





FROM ANDREA & HUNTER COMBS

It is a joy and a privilege to be wishing you a very Merry Christmas all the way from Cape Town this year! After two years spent away from the Hammond family, it's been a wonderful blessing to enjoy the past few weeks fellowshipping with them and introducing them to our newborn son, Jeremy. We look forward to celebrating Christmas and the New Year in South Africa with great anticipation.

The year of 2015 has been the biggest year of change for us as a family. It all started on Christmas Day 2014 when we discovered God had chosen to bless us with a baby. We were (and still are) humbled and in awe that He chose to give us such a precious gift in the midst of our celebration of Christ's birth.

This news was a prelude to many changes that were to take place this year. In January, we bought our first home (a townhouse to be more precise)! With the lease in our apartment almost up and after much research, we came to the conclusion that paying a mortgage for a home would be far more cost effective than paying rent. In the future when we plan to move to Cape Town, we'll rent out the townhouse and keep it as an investment. Having a space to truly call our own and have more room for our growing family has been an immense blessing to us, and we are thankful to the Lord for providing it to us.

As I continued working as the managing editor and contributing writer for Lifiable Media, Hunter has continued his Theological studies at Phoenix Seminary, thoroughly enjoying the valuable knowledge and education he has been able to receive there. As this semester draws to a close, Hunter will embark on his final year of studies there in the New Year. We are both enthusiastic to see how God chooses to use Hunter's Master's Degree for His glory and divine purpose.

With each passing month of the year my belly continued to grow, and with that growth our elation grew as well. We made the tough decision for me to say farewell to my career with Lifiable so that I could stay at home to raise our son. Although it was difficult for me to say goodbye to my coworkers, we know the choice we made was the right one. Once we are stateside again, I will look for another writing job that will enable me to work from home. We can't wait to see what kind of opportunities await.





Jeremy Christopher arrived safely into this world nine days late on September 17, via C-section, at 9lbs 1 ounce (4kgs), and 21 ½ inches long (54.6 cms). Next to God's grace, he has been the most incredible blessing God has ever given us. We are amazed at the beauty of His creation every day and wonder how He could possibly use sinners like us to make something so perfect. Parenthood has proven to be a phenomenal adventure so far and we are very thankful to have Jeremy as our firstborn child.

As we enter into this time of remembering our Saviour's birth, may we never forget to thank Him for all He has blessed us with - the big things as well as the small things, for nothing is too small to escape the Creator's notice. May we strive to live with same grace and mercy to others as our Lord Jesus offers us on a daily basis, for His mercy never ceases. Praise God for coming down to this lowly world to save us!



With much love in Christ,
Hunter, Andrea, and Jeremy



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