

Running Out Of Steam

To quote a funny movie, Drop Dead Gorgeous, "I'm like, due or something." That's the response that's been popping into my head whenever my husband wants to make plans for our family. I am 38 weeks pregnant, and I don't feel like doing anything. I just want to lay in bed, get up to eat, then lay in bed some more. And I do sleep when I'm laying down, so I must be tired and needing the sleep. But this is weird for me. I haven't been bored in years, and now I feel bored, not because I have nothing to do but because I don't feel like doing anything. It's so annoying! There is so much to do around the house to get ready for the baby, and I don't feel like doing any of it. On top of that, I feel badly not having the desire to entertain my 4 kids, but luckily they're very good at self-entertaining and their oldest sister has been amazing with spending fun time with them every day while I rest. But I don't remember feeling like this with my other pregnancies. I do feel tired, but this lack-of-motivation-to-do-*anything* thing is getting old! Then again, this is the first pregnancy I've had being in my 30's. Maybe that has something to do with it?

A Most Blessed Day

Tuesday September 27 2011 was an amazing day. Our entire family was up before the crack of dawn because it was my husband's big day in Findlay Ohio – his meeting and official interview with the church conference that was going to decide if they agreed with the local church board's recommendation that my husband be their new pastor. We allowed plenty of extra time that morning because we weren't sure what bumps we

might encounter while rousing 4 kids out of bed while it was still dark outside. But it went perfectly – all the kids were agreeable and all were ready before it was time to leave, unprecedented! No one complained about going to the babysitter's; actually, they seemed excited about it. My husband and I dropped off the kids, and as we turned onto the long country road that would take us most of the way there, I noticed a stunning effect of the sunrise. A beam of orange light was coming down from the clouds – not in the east where the rest of the sunrise was visible, but off to the west. It was really more like a column of soft orange light – an orange rainbow. It was beautiful, unlike anything either of us had ever seen, and we enjoyed it together until it faded into the dawning of the new day.

The almost 2 hour drive was most pleasant; my husband and I always enjoy each other's company. Plus our spirits were buoyed by the kids' great behavior that morning and the blessing of the orange rainbow.

My husband's meeting went well while I explored Findlay by myself a bit. I found an African Grey Parrot (my favorite kind of bird!) at the pet store, so I played with her for a while and checked out some other stores. We ate a wonderful lunch, and then my husband got the call – the conference approved him; he is the new pastor of Union Chapel! Now the waiting is over, and we know for sure the direction that God has been pointing us. We finished out our day in Findlay with a movie and another peaceful long drive, just the two of us. As we left the town of Findlay and headed out into the Ohio countryside, there was a full-size, full-color rainbow in all its glory. Two rainbows in one day (occurring almost 12 hours and dozens of miles apart)? They seemed to perfectly epitomize God's blessings on this day for us, beginning with the kids being so great, followed by our long drives going safely and smoothly, and finally, the good news about my husband's new calling. Does God speak to people using

rainbows? For sure, He used a rainbow to illustrate his promise that He will never destroy the earth with flood again in Genesis 9:11-15:

"11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." 12 And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: 13 I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life."

And, God loves it when we notice His works of art in nature and offer praise to Him – there are more than a few examples of this in the Bible as well. My husband and I saw the rainbows as messages to us from God; reassurance to us as we embark on yet another new journey at this stage in our lives, stamps of approval for a very blessed day and extra nods of encouragement from Our Heavenly Father as we might be tempted to be distracted by our uncertainties.

It was a very blessed day spent with my favorite person in the whole world. I am so proud of him for everything that he is, everything he is becoming, and for his being hand-picked by God to take on this incredibly awesome responsibility. And to say that I am honored to realize that I am the one who gets to experience this life by his side is a gross understatement. For these reasons and others, I thank God every day.



Unfortunately, this isn't either of the rainbows we saw the other day because I didn't have my camera with me to take pictures. But I figured that I needed a picture of a beautiful rainbow on this post! ☐

Date Set

Well... I finally set the date in which I will put on glorious display that which I have been concentrating on for sometime.

It is just less than 5 months away but it will be here before I know it. Even with this leg of mine the last 7 months have not been slow... although I am sure others would disagree ;). I checked the school calendar to see if there was a weekend when there was no school event going on so there would be no excuse for some to not attend ☐

[At my latest blood test on Monday, I was informed that the blood is right where it needs to be. Not too thick, not too thin, but just right. Just call me Goldilocks]

Why so long? I had a feeling there was going to be a wait with not one but two shows in October, the Christmas show in

December, the awards night in January, and any other events scheduled in between so February was the first month available.

In the meantime, I will dig through the books, find more material for future use, and focus on the program without making it stale. I was reminded of some of the splendiferous music from *West Side Story* the other night courtesy of "Glee."

Music, yes... choreography not so much. Plus, I suppose I can look back at the foreign pieces I had glanced at a few months ago. A small challenge.

I do see ads on television for *Jersey Boys* (the Frankie Valli and the 4 Seasons story... one of the few jukebox musicals I would like to see) set to play the Stranahan in February, too. Maybe it ISN'T that long away.

Notice something different?

I did too. As soon as I opened my blog this morning, I saw something wasn't quite right. What happened to my sunset? The three column design? I wasn't sure. But I do know it was too early in the morning to investigate. I was set to write about something else, and that is now gone. So much for creative thoughts this morning. Later, I will try to discover what happened to the layout of this little blog site...

It All Began (AGAIN) Here

Twenty years ago, a resurgence of Star Wars began not on the big screen but on the printed page. Back in 1991, the franchise itself was in danger of becoming obsolete and forgotten. It had been 8 years since *Return of the Jedi* (long before the Special Editions and bloody prequels came along). Enter Lucasfilm Publishing who got the ball rolling and eventually leading to [Timothy Zahn](#) penning a three volume series chronicling the further adventures of Luke Skywalker, Han Solo, Princess Leia, and all the rest following the events of the final film.

Yesterday, I finally received my copy of the 20th Anniversary edition of said novel: *Heir to the Empire*. It has been sometime since I have checked the novel out from the library.

The book itself is gorgeous featuring a silver-colored dustcover with the New Republic emblem prominently displayed.

Underneath the cover is a rendering of the original cover.

Inside in the introductory remarks, the author and his editor provide insight into the story behind the new trilogy.

Something new in the meat of the book is annotations by Zahn providing insight into the development of characters and events. Names of friends, acquaintances, and contest winners became a part of the Expanded Universe! I have not yet begun to read the story itself but was captivated by the anecdotes including some flack from fans the author took for introducing such "Earthly" items as hot chocolate into the SW universe.

Also a well-known Trek term was given some highlight but was quickly defended.

I must say that I am throughly enjoying the book and I haven't even started it yet!

Ok... ok... should I or shouldn't I comment on the OTHER big Star Wars event that happened yesterday. All right I will. For the first time, the entire cinematic saga (Episodes I-VI) are

available on Blu-Ray. Personally, I have no problem with the release itself. I just grow weary of George Lucas changing the movies for each new release. I accepted the Special Edition releases of the original films prior to the much-inferior (IMHO) prequels. Now it seems that he adds pointless bits every 10 years or so. I agree with those who state that they are his movies and can do what he likes with them but do not like the "inclusion for the sake of inclusion." Aliens being included via the wonder of CGI that were not there before. And the most awful inclusion of all:

One Foot Out The Door...

Changes abound! So many things happening that I can't keep up writing about them on my blog. It seems like every time I sit down to relax, I'm doing something with the kids – playing board games, homeschooling, doing puzzles, cuddling while we watch home videos together... Mommy and kid time is so much more important than blogging, of course, so I'm not losing sleep over it... but I do miss blogging, and I know I will miss having a chronicle of these days for future reading. I was just looking back at my blogs from the past; looking to see how I felt after my cesarean 3 years ago, hoping to maybe find some tips for recovery this time around. It was so nice to read about what was going on in our lives at that point, the challenges we were enduring, how the kids were growing, what they were doing, that kind of thing. But these days, if I have a kid in my lap, there is NO extra room to have a laptop nearby! As of Friday September 16, I am 36 weeks pregnant – home stretch for sure! While my belly is not bulging nearly as much as it did with my previous 4 pregnancies (I've actually LOST weight since July, but dr said baby is growing fine and that's what matters), I am looming large these days, and the seemingly most mundane of tasks is an effort on my part and seems to take me forever. I am blessed with an awesome Hubby who has really stepped up around the house to keep us running despite the craziness and challenges that a 4-kid household brings. Very Honorable Mention goes to my oldest daughter who has also been amazing lately with her willingness to help. She has gone above and beyond, not only doing everything that is asked of her but also coming up with her own ideas to pamper pregnant mom, following through with these ideas, and also excelling in our newly designed homeschooling program. A few weeks ago, Taylor surprised me

with a manicure/pedicure, and she even kept going outside to check on the little ones while Mom's nails were drying. The other day, she came up with the idea and made me breakfast in bed. Her emotional and spiritual growth lately has been amazing to see, and hopefully I will have the time to blog about the lesson in forgiveness that she taught our whole family.

So how is the homeschooling going for us? If you remember, we began homeschooling our two eldest this year – 6th and 2nd grades. Many people have asked how it's going, so it's time for a formal update on the blog... It's going GREAT! Thanks for asking! We began with a very planned out schedule, but we've found it necessary to be more flexible. We've also tweaked our planned curriculum here and there and attended our first homeschooling book sale and picked up some things to supplement our curriculum. All normal and necessary parts of the process, and we've seen the kids become closer with each other and us their parents, all while getting to watch them learn new things up close. I can't wait to jump in as a full time homeschool teacher, but my patience is being tested since I have to wait until I recover from my planned cesarean in October.

Now for the big news: a few blog posts ago, I wrote about many doors opening for our family. We were still determining at that time which paths to explore, and our prayers have been answered; the paths whittled down to an almost definite road. Loonnnng story made very short is this: my husband was offered a job as a pastor at a local church, and he accepted. This means that we will be, in effect, switching churches. Talk about something that came out of the blue! There is nothing about our current church that I don't like, and I had planned on going there for years to come and raising our kids among our church community. But, as we all too often learn, God has plans for us. And who am I to argue? I KNOW His plans are so much better than any road map I could have drafted for myself

and my family. So now comes the transition to the new church. It's a much smaller church, so among my husband's and my first duties will be to acclimate ourselves into the new church environment and create a children's ministry. It will be challenging but also extremely exciting. My husband has one final meeting with the regional governing board of the church to finish out the interview process, but everything we've been told by the elders of the church is that this is just procedure. So, last Tuesday, I sadly gave my notice to my friend and mentor that oversees my 2nd/3rd grade girls Sunday school class. Oh, how I will miss those kids! I've known them and watched them grow for a year and a half now, ever since I had them as 1st grade students last year. But as I said, who am I to challenge God's plan? While this all happened so suddenly in our lives, the chain of events and circumstances that led up to my husband being chosen to lead this church was so obviously orchestrated by God that there is no need to doubt whether it was meant to be, nor is there need to go into detail about exactly how it happened. I will just say how much we KNOW that it was meant to happen, and that will guide me in the future if I ever begin to have fears or doubts in my own abilities to fulfill His work for me.

October 7 is when I am scheduled to have the baby, and 2 days later (while I'm still in the hospital) is when my husband is to spend his first Sunday at our new church. As soon as I feel up to it, I will join him there, and our kids will follow as soon as we set up our children's ministry. That leaves me 2 Sundays to teach my current Sunday school students, or possibly just one if I decide to go and meet more of the congregation at the new church before I go into the hospital. I may have one foot out the door, but I'm walking into a whole new world. Because it is the world that God has designed for me at this point in my life, I could not be more excited!!!

At Least The Party Was A Success

This afternoon, the family made the @ 2 hour trek to our cousin's home in Huron... not a "fur piece" from the Amusement Park.. in fact once we exited, we had the choice of turning left to go to DRM's or right to go to the Point. This time, the left turn (at Albuquerque) won out. ☐ I had never been to the house before as I seem to have been involved in one production or another when the birthdays arose. For some reason, I am not involved in any shows so I was really excited to make the trip! I must say that it is a very nice place.

Next time when there is not so much craziness, I will ask for the guided tour.

As usual, fun was had with some gentle ribbing among some and catching up with relatives and a friend I rarely get to see.

Almost 20 years since *Annie*! WHAAAATTT??!!!!!! Food glorious food. An abundance of pizza, ICE CREAM CAKE (one of the greatest inventions ever), and more. Something unusual in the festivities... a pinata in which you pull streamers instead of hitting the object with a stick. Did someone see the youtube video of my brother attempting to hit Spongebob? Needless to say that the pulling of the streamers was a bit anticlimactic.

I must say that the 4 year old birthday girl made out like a bandit: Princess paraphernalia, My Little Pony (everything old is new again), the obligatory clothing, and a bicycle.

FUN TIMES!

While the merriment of celebration continued, the highlight of the evening turned out to be a lowlight. The Buckeyes played (if you want to call it that) abysmally. Listening to it on

the way home on the radio was bad enough, I would have hated to watch it. I read on my Nook most of the way (I was a passenger in the car not the driver).

Next summer, I think a trip to the park will be LONG overdue! I've been to the Island since I have been to the Point!

Limping along

For the past week I've been limping along on my sore foot. Silly injury caused by yours truly. I'm still hoping that this makes me a bit more careful while doing household chores, but only time will tell.

I had play rehearsal tonight and I limped my way through the paces. I desperately need to get the script out of my hands. Time is moving quickly, and the show will be here before I can blink twice.

It does have the makings of a very good show. I'm looking forward to having an audience. It has been a while since I've felt that way about a show I've been in.

In other areas, things have been changing. Life is getting interesting. I do believe I like the changes. It should be fun.

And one other different thing this September, the Tigers are doing very well. Right now they look to be playoff bound. I'm looking forward to it.

But he's not dead...

Over the years I have wondered if I actually have any emotions. Besides anger. When my grandparents, one by one, passed away (one is still alive at about 90) I know I should have felt more than I did. I'm embarrassed to say that even when I lost my father I didn't grieve overly much, though maybe that's because of how he died. It wasn't sudden but spread out over weeks. I guess I did experience more during the drawn out days, but never the extent that I often see in others.

No one passed away this time, so what's going on? Well, it started the weekend before last. Eight days ago. Following the message by our campus pastor (the senior pastor was on sabbatical and returned this past weekend) the associate pastor went up to give an announcement. A very discouraging announcement. It would be inappropriate for me to go into the details but it turned out our children's pastor, a man who I called friend for several years now had to resign and was gone from our campus. I had just spoken to him the week before, as had many people, and we never knew what would become the basis of the announcement. Nothing illegal by the way, so don't let your thoughts go there friends.

So he is suddenly gone and I may never see him again. I do know from what another pastor mentioned during our children's leadership meeting that he and his wife are doing okay, attending another church, and definitely in contact with at least that one pastor. The discussion about him, the "elephant in the room" during a meeting where as far as everyone knew he would be too just eight or nine days prior, was yet an emotional one for our family pastor who will be taking on the duties he gave up to the now-former pastor several years ago once again.

He's grieving. I'm grieving. But no one died. Yet things

won't be the same. Can I call him? I have his number. I called him friend at church, but I never saw him outside of church. Not appropriate then? I don't know what I would even say if I called. Perhaps the best thing is what our pastor said to us- just pray for him and his family.

Okay, it's proven, I have emotion- now when will this feeling go away?

A Day Of Heroes... Ten Years Later

It just seems surreal that we are already remembering the tenth anniversary of one of the two days that "will live in infamy." It seems like only yesterday when I rushed out into the beauty shop (on a Tuesday... don't remember why Mom was working unusually on a Tuesday) to tell everyone that a plane had just crashed into one of the twin towers. I'm sure, like millions of others, that this had to have been a horrific accidental however, minutes later it became clear that the United States of America was under attack! Like everyone else, we were glued to the television.

A few years ago, I travelled with some friends to Ground Zero and saw first hand the remains of the horror. I remember vividly standing at the site where a few years ago, I was on tour with the BGSU Men's chorus on Spring Tour. Totally stunned! Walking through the building which houses items from the site, video clips, recordings, fragments of the buildings, and a myriad of other memorabilia was very emotional. Seeing the skyline from outside our hotel complex was haunting. Remembering, what to me, was the worst day in the country's

history. The worst day perhaps but not without a sense of pride in hearing America's response to the attacks. The hundreds of firefighters, police, and other rescue personnel bravely, selflessly rushing in to deadly environments to rescue the living and search for the departed. Hearing the voices and hearing the stories of those who fought back when their plane was hijacked. TRUE heroes who do not wear capes or leap tall buildings in a single bound!

This weekend, I was presented with a brilliant question: "What do we tell the little ones who may or may not understand the why and consequences of September 11, 2001?" How are the children of those who sacrificed their lives remembering their parents or do they even remember them?

Today, let our nation remember those heroes not in the spirit of retaliation of those who were responsible for the devastation but in a spirit of forgiveness. This morning's readings and Father Art's sermon could not have been poignant. How many times must we ourselves forgive others? Seventy-seven. Drawing from the parable of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11-32): [We are] still a long way off.

Remember and forgive.