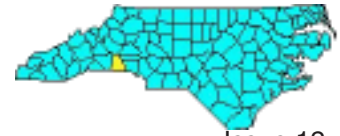




News from the Blue Ridge

Claire & Lorin Cranford



Volume 6

December 2003

Issue 12



Family Events:

The month of November just flew by before we realized it. The highlight of the month was toward the end when Claire and I traveled to Atlanta, GA. The annual, national meeting of the [Society of Biblical Literature](#) took place there in the downtown area on Nov. 22-25. This is the professional organization for biblical scholars in North America, somewhat comparable to the AMA for medical doctors. The SBL meets jointly with the American Academy of Religion (AAR), along with a large number of smaller professional groups with specialized interests. For example, the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion (NABPR) is one of those groups with national meetings in connection to the SBL-AAR meeting. Several thousand individuals attend these meetings each year. Claire and I enjoyed the time. For me, attending several sessions on sociological probes of NT texts, purchasing some books and software, and renewing friendships with colleagues and former students were the highlights. For Claire, some R&R and sight-seeing were primary activities.

On the way home, we spent two nights at the [Schell Haus B&B](#) at Table Rock in the



mountains of north-western SC. The stay was a wonderful time of relaxing and opportunity to spend quality time

together. Somewhat reluctantly we drove home on Thanksgiving day to begin the hectic pace of end of semester and holiday activities.

This past year has brought a lot of ups and downs for Claire and me. The high points have centered on trips for meetings and/or relaxation. My improving health has enabled us to do more things like this. The vacation trip to Texas in June was one of these. We have thoroughly enjoyed these opportunities. Spending time with grandkids is another of the highlights. The eleven grandkids are scattered from VA to TX and we cherish every opportunity to be with them. Teaching and preaching the NT is another thoroughly delightful activities. This year has provided opportunities for this both in the university classroom and in local churches.

Claire and I pray that you'll have a wonderful holiday!

105 Twin Lake Drive
Shelby, NC 28152-0660

For all kinds of info about us as well as a PDF copy and an expanded HTML version of this newsletter, check out our homepage [Cranfordville](http://cranfordville.com) at <http://cranfordville.com>

Ph: 704 434-5657
Fax: 704 434-0472
webmaster@cranfordville.com



University Happenings:

2003 for me academically has been an interesting year! Mostly it has been characterized by a slowing down of the pace of activities. The dark valley of health issues has brought home the reality of how destructive a high pressure pace of activities can be. Consequently, my commitment has been a determined effort to gradually begin cutting back on responsibilities to only that which is essential. Thus the teaching of overload courses has come to an end. No more summer school teaching. The involvement in extra activities is gradually coming to an end. The focus is increasingly on helping my students achieve all they're capable of through classroom learning. Everything else is very secondary.

The wonderful side of this developing pattern is the liberation it has brought me. My time is more my own; my emotions are less frazzled; a more satisfying sense of purpose and mission guides my commitments.

The effect has been to free me up to develop three new courses: NT Theology; the Synoptic Gospels; the history of NT Interpretation. This comes in addition to the Greek courses that I've taught consistently for over thirty years now. The stimulation of exploring more deeply these subject fields has been substantial. As always with the first run through a new course, things have been spotted that will be revised and strengthened

in subsequent offerings of these courses. But the stimulation keeps me growing personally even at 62 years. I've always been convinced that in a university or seminary everything revolves around what takes place in the classroom. A good professor should devote primary effort to making sure this classroom experience is as challenging and stretching intellectually and spiritually for each student as possible.

Another positive experience of this year has been the freeing up of my schedule to slowly begin doing serious research and writing again. Since coming to GWU in 98 this part of me has been stifled because of having to teach more courses and adjusting to teaching undergraduates after so many years of teaching mostly at the Ph.D. level. Consequently, some book reviews have been completed, a chapter in a Festschrift will be published in Europe this coming February, and several additional research projects are at various stages of development. To be able to explore more deeply the text of the NT is for me one of the more satisfying experiences possible.

I'm grateful for a year of very fulfilling experiences both inside and outside the classroom.

Claire & I
wish you
a blessed
Christmas
Season
and
a happy
New Year!



Claire's Musings:

Dec, 2003



This has been another eventful year full of good times and bad, in other words a normal year for most with some happiness and some sadness. We are thankful, as always, that the happiness far outweighs the tough times. God has been good to us, and Lorin and I have had a wonderful time together in North Carolina. I still can't believe that we live in the most beautiful part of the country complete with mountains.

Lorin and I have enjoyed our annual fall trips to see the colorful leaves. We have even more fun now with our digital camera. I have always enjoyed taking pictures, but now I can take all I want to get that "perfect shot" and delete the bad ones. We have just recently traveled to Atlanta, Georgia and then to a Bed and Breakfast in the mountains. We both work long hours and truly enjoy getting away and resting for a while.

My classes at ECU are going fine and I just finished up my class, Literature for Young Adults and Children. That gives me 27 hours of the needed 39. The spring class will be Collection Development. I am still hoping to graduate this August.

During this month of December, Lorin is preaching in a small church in Gaffney and I am really enjoying it. I love getting to hear Lorin preach, or teach a Sunday school class. I'm having a lot of fun sitting in church with some of the sweetest little ole' gray-haired ladies. It's fun to make new friends, especially such sweet ones.

We will spend one evening this week with Brian, Clay and Taylor for a Christmas celebration and then another evening with Angie, Carrie, Clay, and Taylor. Brian and the kids will be going to Texas for Christmas. Angie will be leaving for Washington to live and Carrie wants to live in Asheville. Life is changing drastically around here and it will take some adjusting to.

Lorin and I will travel to Virginia to spend Christmas with Donald, Hallie, and the kids. I'm really looking forward to the visit and know that we will have a great time.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Write and let us know how all of you are doing.



Lorin's Musings:

Die unseren vielen deutschen Freunden, wer dieses

Informationsblatt lesen, wollen wir Weihnachtsgrüße lassen. Claire und ich haben viele liebevollen Erinnerungen von Deutschland und unsere Erfahrungen dort. Wir hoffen, daß wir in der nicht zu weit Zukunft nach das Deutschland wieder reisen können.

Durch dieses Jahr 2003 habe die Welt manche unbequemen Ereignisse gesehen. Die Wirtschaftlichkeit in vielen Ländern ist kaputt; die Armut und das Leiden sind im Zunehmen überall; die USA setzte einen sittenlosen Krieg gegen Irak an. In meinem Heimatland haben wir ein wachsameres Auge auf eine erwachsenen Fäulnis von unserer Gesellschaft, die bis zu dem Weißenhaus reicht. Der triumphierende Hahn von Texas dort spreizt sich als ob er die Welt besitze. Deswegen schäme ich mich vor sich gegen meiner texanischen Erbschaft.

Aber gibt's Hoffnung in unserer dunklen Welt. Die Retter von Bethlehem lebt! Dadurch haben wir Hoffnung für einem besseren Tag. Die gute Nachricht der Adventzeit ist, daß Gott für uns sorgt, und dabei wir Hoffnung haben. Durch diesen Gottesgnadenakt kommt sie. Dafür sind Claire und ich dankbar.

Unsere Dankbarkeit kommt aus viele verschiedenen Erfahrungen. Die Situation mit unserer zwei Touchtern, die ihre Familien und Ehre aufgesetzt haben, ist sehr schwer für uns gewesen. Aber haben wir dadurch zu einander zusammengewachsen. Jeder ist die Unterstützung zu den anderen geworden. Nicht viele Erfahrungen im Leben sind so wichtig, wie die Lebensteilnehmerin die beste Freundin auch zu sein. Wir sind auf den Schweigersohn stolz, und darauf, wie er die zwei Enkelkindern wie ein Alleinstehendervati erzieht.

In unserser Urlaubsreise letztes Sommer nach Texas haben wir so vielen Freunden und Familien gesehen. Wir lassen so selten mit diesen besuchen, seit wir vor sechs Jahren zu North Carolina gezogen sind. Die Zeit war wunderbar, obwohl sie nicht lang genug war, und wir fast 5000 Kilometer gefahren haben.

Unsere Arbeit letztes Jahr -- für Claire in der Grundschule wie die Bibliothekarin und für mich in der Universität wie Religionsprofessor -- wird leichter und mehr genußreich geworden. Claire wird nächsten August die Arbeit für ihres Masters of Library Science Diplom von East Carolina State University vollenden. Sie lernt immer mehr darüber, wie die Bibliothekarinsarbeit zu machen, und dadurch sie wird immer leichter für sie. Meine Universitätsarbeit wird auch leichter geworden, weil ich am meistens immer weniger an der Universität und immer mehr im Büro zu Hause arbeite. Dabei lege ich mehr Zeit auf verschiedene wissenschaftlichen Projekts an. Deshalb kann ich mehr Schreiben machen.

Letztes. In diesem vergangen Jahr habe ich mehr Gelegenheiten das Evangelium in vershiedenen Kirchen zu predigen und zu lehren. Meine Gesundheit hat jetzt verbessert, so daß sie möglich geworden werden. Deswegen bin ich sehr dankbar.

Claire und ich willen Ihrer nicht aber die beste und Gottes reichsten Segen in dem kommenden Jahr.

