

December 11, 2001

Greetings:

To our family and friends, once again the joyful season of Christmas is upon us. We give thanks daily to God, the Father, for the opportunity to service and share his love with all.

This is our 35th edition of the Mouning Saga. We hope this saga will bring you faith, hope, charity (love); but love is the greatest of these. The new year and another decade opened with excitement and great expectation in our hearts for the future. We just began our new Prayer and Bible Study Ministry.

People began to gather in our new enlarged kitchen every Wednesday evening and Sunday Morning for prayer and Bible study and great fellowship and the number grew rapidly. In March, we began our studies at Yale University.

On January 25, 2001, Johnnie had a cataract removed from his left eye. The procedure was successful--it was over in less than an hour with no bandage, stitches or patch and seeing 20/20 in his foresight and getting better all the time.

In February we went to Topeka, Kansas to visit the Lassiter's, our friends for more than twenty years. During this visit to Kansas, Verita Bunson Rudd went along with us. She was very helpful especially while enjoying the flat open interstate. We found Rev. Clearance Lassiter much improved. Mother Lassiter was encouraged and gave us the Big tour around the town of Topeka. We were welcomed by and visited with Bishop and Mrs. Ronald Lassiter. Principal Mrs. Sander Lassiter gave us a tour of her elementary school. The fellowship was wonderful for the short time we were there. Returned home to find everything in order. We enjoyed our annual Easter dinner with Mrs. Marion Wright.

Spring came and it was time to tilt the garden, and plant it. We pruned and planted more fruit trees. We planted two plums, one pear, two Bing cherries and one peach tree. In a few years the fruit trees should be yielding much fruit. In 2000, we cut down all our old trees and planted two apples and a maple tree. These are hardy miniature trees. We have a few chickens and get a few eggs daily. Next year we will be getting a new batch of day olds that will lay in six months. We will have chicken soup out of the old ones, as you know they make the best chicken pot pie.

Fred and Sally Richards are doing well--he comes in to work regularly. Johnnie is still working at Yale and Thelma has retired but she still works a few hours a week. We are moving in life with great expectation for the future. Our sons and their families we are doing well.

Marvin and DeÉtta, our oldest son and his wife, have settled in their house and made it a wonderful home. DeÉtta is still employed with the state. Marvin has changed his employment from Whitney Manor to Hill Health Center in New Haven. They are happy and enjoying life and it's benefits. They are also active in church and doing well. DeÉtta's mother, Mrs. Wright, celebrated her 70th birthday this year and all had a joyous time.

Gregory, our second son, is enjoying his acting career and work at Yale University. With two careers he stays very busy. This year he had the opportunity to be a part of several productions that included theatre and film. On stage, he played the part of a death row inmate finding religion while in prison. It is a true story, titled "The Test" which was based on his life.

In another show, he replicated the daily routines of a Wall Street executive entitled, "Day In, Day Out". Both of these productions are original one-act plays which were presented as part of the International Festival of Arts in New Haven, CT. In film, Greg participated in two educational training video projects. One was sponsored by the UConn Health Center and the Connecticut Coalition for Problem Gamblers. It was shot on location at the Mohegan Sun Casino, in Norwich, CT. The other, an educational video for kids about American government which is intended for libraries and classrooms. These projects prompted him to create his own website and host a Theatre Announcement e-Mail List service. The sole purpose for creating this list is to announce various upcoming productions, invite anyone to attend and give pertinent information regarding each performance. Most of these announcements are live performances primarily targeted toward a theatre audience.

Jeffrey, Linda, Marcus and Jordan, our third son and his family, are growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord. Marcus is a junior in High School and playing on the hockey team. It's hard to believe that Marcus is already sixteen. Jeff and Marcus competed in the 4th annual high school alumni hockey game. Marcus appears to be getting stronger and faster while Jeff appears to get more graceful. Jordan, now five, has started Kindergarten. He attends half days in the morning and loves it. He also skates and is learning how to play hockey.

Ken, Rose, Kenneth Jr. and Malachi are doing very well. They are active in their church and are involved in other activities in the Hartford area. Ken has begun a project for people of color families--training them in computer technology. In February, the program gave away 10 new computers and train over 50 people how to use the Internet. The event was well attended in Bloomfield, CT. The speakers were Senator John Larson and Dr. Michael Eric Dyson. Next year Ken is expecting to grow even more. Rose organized a young girls group that encourages godly principles. She works full time and maintains her roll as a wife and mother. She also graduated from UConn with a Masters in Social Work. Ken Jr. is 6 and in the first grade and is doing very well. Malachi is 5 and in Kindergarten is doing extremely well with his wheelchair and crutches. Ken, Kenneth Jr. and Malachi participate in the March of Dimes WalkAmerica each year, they raised over \$10,000 over the past five years to help eliminate birth defects.

Our annual vacation trip took us too Lowell, MA. There we attended the Jesse Duplantis Conference for three days. We continued on to Ogunquit, Maine where we had five days of relaxing and carefree time. There were lots of things to see and do.

We returned home in time to observe the terrorist events September 11, 2001 (9/11) live on T.V. We all are still in shock. Thousands of people died in the Twin Towers, Pentagon and the plane crash in Pa. Many people are afraid to fly or travel.

The follow up on the anthrax scare has affected the health and well being of our country. Thus the new war on terrorism!!! Americans from our President down are praying and that's a good thing. There is an old saying that "the family that prays together stays together". Maybe this can be extended to "the nation that prays together stays together". We continue to pray for those families here in America and abroad that lost loved ones in this targeted and new war.

We had a sumptuous Thanksgiving Day celebration at our home. Thelma cooked for three days and we hosted about 30 family member and friends. We started early in the day and went into late evening. Johnnie's brother Bishop C. E. Mouning was the first to arrive and next to the last to leave. He and Thelma's brother-in-law Eric Harris talked all day about family and old times. Thelma's sister Delois Harris was stricken with a heart attack in October but she

recovered and was with us for Thanksgiving dinner. We are looking forward to Christmas dinner at Jeff and Linda's home.

December 9 is Johnnie's oldest brother Rev. John W. Mouning's birthday and we attended. We had another sumptuous meal and good fellowship. His immediate family and all his siblings were there.

We can't forget families and friends that passed this year: James Moorning, Volilet Roberson, Theresa Bowen, Willie Augustus Moore, Alzena Daniels and Helen Cooke. We pause to pray for the many hurting, broken and suffering people around the world. We have to keep trusting and believing that we are in God's hands and things will be well with us. Remember Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill said "Never, NEVER., NEVER give up" on life.

May you have a Merry Christmas and Blessed New Year

Love and Peace,

Johnnie & Thelma L. Mouning