

Cahill Family Newsletter 2025

Hello family and friends!

This year has been one of blessing and great loss, and with that some of the year has been a bit of a fog, so there may not be quite as many details as usual. I don't think I quite realized what an emotional toll I was under until later this year when the fog lifted. With that said, let's get started.

We started the year in expectation! I was heavy pregnant and hoping that our newest addition would arrive sooner rather than later, and she most certainly did—a whole 2+ weeks sooner than we thought! After a more speedy labor than expected, Verity Lynn made her entrance into our hearts and home.



Thanks to various family members, we got a peaceful week at home with just the new baby to rest and recover. Once that was over, we were ready to welcome everyone back and start the process of adjusting to being a family of 7. That first week is something that I so look forward to. So much so that I start thinking about it shortly after I find out I'm pregnant.

I'm not sure if I'm just getting used to newborns or if Verity is just particularly easy but she slid right in to the order of things around here. During the 2nd week of my recovery, Benj was able to come home

from 10am until after lunch to school the girls and give me a bit more rest after being up with the baby at night. After that week, I was able to take over and get back into a new rhythm of school and life between nursings.



As we mentioned last year, my Mom was still struggling with cancer throughout the first half of this year. February came with a visit to the hospital to see Mom while she was there for various things. I still did not realize how bad her condition was. Life continued in full swing and we enjoyed the ALERT Reunion, where Verity got to meet an Aunt and Uncle plus some cousins for the first time. She also attended the staff Valentine's banquet with us.

March saw us attending two beautiful weddings, visiting family, and enjoying small moments of the baby falling asleep in my arms, etc.



April brought Haven's birthday! Our spunky little girl turned 4 years old. It is so fun to watch her creativity grow along with her understanding. The other girls love to ask Haven to tell them a story. I would not be surprised if this girl becomes an author someday! She is so imaginative and descriptive at 4 that I can't wait to see what she can do at 14!

Benj also decided to put all those years he spent taking music lessons to use in a new way this month. He took the leap and started giving Cherish piano lessons every Tuesday evening! The picture is Cherish during a lesson wanting to point to something without lifting her fingers. She "used her head" and came up with a creative solution.



With May came the awareness that my Mom was likely not getting better. She was always so tough that it was hard to tell how bad it was, but the signs were getting hard to miss.

Somewhere in all this, I started to pick up my sister Shalem for her weekly music lesson with our neighbors down the road. With that came another need for a schedule tweak. We made it happen, though, and I'm grateful for the opportunities it has given me to get to know her a little better. Often another sibling will come along too (we only have two extra seats in our van).

I also took some field trips with the girls to Tyler, Texas to visit the zoo and the Tyler Rose Garden. My brother-in-law's wife Ruth was able to join us on those outings as well. It was a great help to have an extra set of eyes and hands!

Ruth has been such a sweet support during this time of grief and processing through it all. She too has lost her Mama and her empathy and listening ear have been invaluable! I have truly seen this year how sweet, important and valuable it is to have a community of believers who are willing and able to be a support in time of need.



Anyway, Shalem also graduated this month! She is growing into such an accomplished and capable young woman.

Somewhere in these months we also started visiting my family's house every weekend that we could as it was getting hard for Mom to leave the house. (We stayed away when we had colds for Mom's sake.)

In June we celebrated Cherish and Felicity's birthdays. Cherish is becoming more helpful every year! She has really taken to Verity and loves to help with anything relating to her. She loves to take her around to greet people on Sunday mornings before church starts. The feeling is mutual, and Verity now looks to her for comfort when Mom and Dad are on dates and such.

Felicity is growing like a weed and I occasionally have to remind myself that she is still only 2 even though she is so big and capable. At the time I am writing this, her speech has made a lot of progress as well. Strong, sweet and adventurous is how I would describe her.



This month we also visited the Discover Science Center in Tyler with the girls. It was so fun to watch them interact with everything in such excitement.

Our church also held their annual VBS. This year I helped teach the Bible class for the youngest group of kids. We also had five of my siblings stay with us for the week as Mom wasn't able to bring them and none of them have a driver's license just yet. Needless to say, our house was quite full and I quickly had to learn how to double everything I was cooking!

July is a difficult month to remember. Mom declined pretty rapidly and was delivered into the arms of her Saviour on July 29th in the early hours of the morning, after an evening full of a steady stream of visitors coming to sing, read the Word, pray, and just be with her.

We were able to spend that first week without Mama with my family. We are so grateful to everyone who stopped by and brought food or took a moment to write an encouraging note via card or text.

I find the words in scripture to be so true that we grieve not as those which have no hope. While it is hard to process that I will never see Mama on earth again, I am confident that I will see her again in the life to come.

I praise God for sending His Son to reconcile us back to a relationship with Him so we can cling to Him and His promises when this life is hard. He truly is my Rock, my Anchor, and my Shelter in the time of storm.

August came quickly, and in the days and weeks following Mama's passing we had to try and help our girls navigate the difficulty of grief while still trying to figure it out ourselves. We realized the best thing we could do was point them to the Comforter and pray for them to find Him. The Lord saw fit to answer those prayers and our two oldest girls





accepted Christ as their Saviour on August 20th! They quickly asked if they could join in for the baptismal service at our church! Daddy led them to salvation and was able to baptize them as well—treasured memories.

We also celebrated Serenity's 6th birthday this month. She is our quiet, delicate flower. She is growing in self-control and diligence a lot this year as well as in stature!

In September I got the privilege of helping my sister search for a horse! I had horses all through my teen years and it has been a delight to get back into that

after so many years. After a little bit of looking she found the horse of her dreams! I would have preferred something a little less reactive and dramatic for her first horse but we settled on an arrangement of me giving her pointers on every visit and her having to take things a little slower than if we had gotten a more bombproof horse.

In the middle of all this we took a quick trip up to Kansas for a friend's wedding. My sister Faith asked to join so she came along as well. It was very nice to have an extra person to help take the girls potty, play with/watch them while we talked, etc.

Family Camp came at the very beginning of October this year.

Again, we had my siblings stay with us for the week. This time we all ate at the dining hall though! I don't know if I could have kept up with all the activities and meals for that many in this season of life.



This month Cherish also gave us a scare when she got hurt on the trampoline and wouldn't put weight on her foot. We gave it a week and it wasn't getting any better so we took her for an x-ray. Turns out she may have a knack for acting as the x-ray showed nothing wrong and that Saturday at my family's house she could suddenly run and play with her aunts and uncles. Children certainly will keep you on your toes. At the end of this month was Benjamin's birthday. It came and went pretty quietly this year.



I am so grateful that God saw fit to have us live this crazy life together! Benjamin has been a huge blessing in my life. His humility and willingness to talk through issues have been an example to me all through our married life. He has been quite busy this year with various personal and work projects but is always willing to listen when I tell him I need some quality time.

November kicked off trip prep for our FEW Conference trip to Virginia. I felt like I was in a good rhythm of prep and normal life this year. I finally am figuring out the right recipes to make and making better use of my freezer so that I'm not trying to do everything last minute. Benj rigged together a

pulley system so we could get food to the back seat without me having to do acrobatics. Haven thoroughly enjoyed being the distributor of all the goodies!



Verity were able to hike the whole way. I was awed by the grandeur of God's creation in a new way when I saw some of those splendid views. It was certainly a new experience that we all enjoyed!

The week after we got back we had planned to be at the Cahill's for a Thanksgiving family get together. Plans changed quickly when we heard that a child over there was having stomach issues. (With so many little people in our home, we try to limit our exposure to those things

because of the major mess factor.) My family was having friends over for Thanksgiving and we ended up joining them. No one else at the Cahill's got sick over the next two days so we headed there next! Overall, it was a wonderful Thanksgiving week spent with friends and family.

From those festivities we rolled right into another exciting adventure! Benj and I had a week to pack for our cruise! We had talked about booking something in July as a birthday/anniversary getaway but decided to postpone it due to mom's health. After talking with family members about availability to watch the kids, we settled on December 8th–13th.



This year we headed out a day earlier so we could spend a day at Shenandoah National Park. The weather was much more chilly up on those mountains so we bundled up with all our winter gear and got started. We picked relatively easy trails that were around 2 miles or less and all the children except



We had a wonderful time away and especially enjoyed the quiet moments with a good book, lovely weather, and a beautiful view! Our enjoyment was enhanced by knowing that our children were also having a grand time at Uncle Brian and Aunt Amy's house with their 9 cousins plus some farm animals and plenty of activities!

We are so grateful for their willingness to take on our 5 children with their full home and schedule!

Since coming home, we have settled back into a routine. We look forward to what the Lord brings our way in 2026!

Whew, after writing all that, I feel justified in feeling like 2025 has been a whirlwind. Have a blessed New Year!

Love,

The Cahills

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2025 Memorable Quotes

Haven: My footsies are making me dance!

Haven, after getting chips in her soup bowl: I don't need your help. I can dance them around!

Serenity put on Haven's cupcake glasses.

Haven: No, you look ree-diculous When I wear them I don't look ree-diculous.

Serenity: Mommy, when Cherish goes to heaven she's going to be an angel because she has wings! (*Shoulder blades*)

Haven: I'm going to give you my blue stuffie for your birthday.

Benjamin: Don't tell me what you're going to give me!

Haven: I promise I won't tell you if you tell me I don't know.

