



Christmas 2015

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Dear Friends,

Warm greetings from the Langeraks. Well, we did lead the St Olaf Study-Travel group to India as we predicted in our last letter. Here we are decked out with proper headgear at the Sikh's Golden Temple in Amritsar. India is fascinating but traveling in it is an adventure; our theme was India's Religious Pluralism, so we used many modes of transportation—plane, train, bus, horse-drawn carts, bicycle rickshaws, and boats—to visit important religious sites.



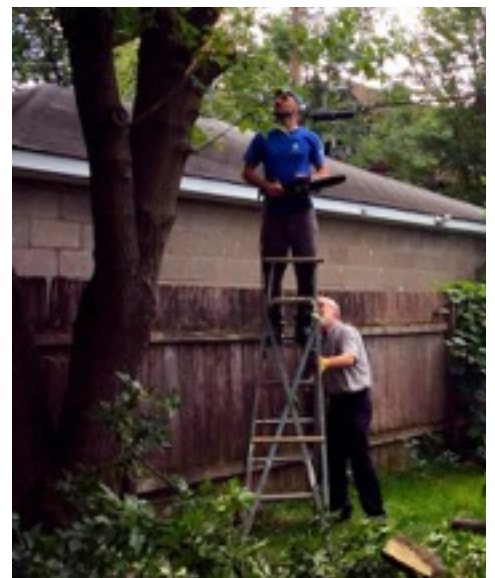
Appropriately, the buses careening at each other and passing within inches enlivened our prayer life. We had a large (31) and delightful group of interested and interesting travelers, though we also were glad to be on our own for an extension in southern India. We were in Cochin on February 8 when the hotel staff completely surprised us with song and cake and roses for Lois's birthday (they had checked her passport).

Speaking of birthdays, Matt turned 40 last August when this photo of him, Becca, Vivian, and Felix was taken as we were doting on our grandkids. They are renting out their former house while enjoying their new one, which is close to Minnehaha creek with its wonderful walking and biking paths. The old house still draws attention, however, as when part of a tree fell down, requiring Matt to aim the chain saw while

Ed tries to keep things in balance.



The big news for Emily and her Matt (Horstman) is that they got married last July on a hot afternoon at the Red Barn Farm,



near Northfield. So now we have two fine sons, both named Matt. Matt L and Matt H's brother, Fritz, Becca, and Fritz's wife, Meredith, all participated in the ceremony (so did Felix inadvertently). The photo shows them as they continue their journey toward a bright horizon. Emily's new in-laws, Allen and Nan, are a very engaging couple, and they have some almost eerie similarities to us. He's a retired humanities college professor with a white beard, who has recently published a book, and both mothers are retired professionals. Both couples independently bought a Camry Hybrid the same year and the same color, and gave to Emily and Matt the same book by Marcus Borg before they even met (and neither couple knows whether either of them has read it and both are too polite to ask). The bottom photo shows the H clan on the left and the L clan on the right.



Both of the young couples reroofed their garages this summer, and Ed



was glad to help, though he insisted that folks avoid looking too closely at how the shingles lined up. Here he is with Emily and his new son Matt.

We are scheduled to lead another St Olaf Study-Travel group to Italy next April. This likely will be the last group we lead. We have really enjoyed the trips and the people who have traveled with us, but we are feeling older so, if and when we travel again, we will be the sheep rather than the shepherds, and someone else will count the bodies on the bus.

With what is going on in the world, it seems naïve to wish for peace and good will; even the title of Ed's recent book—*Civil Disagreement*—(you knew he

would sneak in) seems wildly



that

optimistic. But we continue to hope and with that also send you our best wishes.

Ed and Lois