



**A YEAR...**  
...TO REMEMBER OR FORGET, IT WAS LIKE NO OTHER.



**A WEDDING**  
JACOB AND ELISE TIED THE KNOT IN MINNEAPOLIS.



**A GRANDCHILD**  
THE NEXT GENERATION WAS INTRODUCED TO THE WATTMAN FAMILY.

# WATTMAN “WANDERINGS”



**Family Gatherings, 2020 style:** Times of togetherness were reduced in number and scope, and often only virtual. We gathered at Dronen’s for fall pumpkin carving (left, couples clockwise from bottom left): **Byron and Theo, Jacob and Elise, Alex and Anna, Mike and Annie, Rick and Judy.** The West Coast Wattmans met regularly on Zoom: (right, left to right, top to bottom) **Doris and Margaret; Judy and Rick; Brian; Anna and Alex; Ethan, Marian, and Emma; Rob and Christiane; Megan; and Jacob and Elise.**

## Color Me COVID

So far none of us has been sickened with the virus. By God’s grace, with vigilant hygiene and social distancing, our family has avoided the devastating effects of the global pandemic. We know some who have suffered, and we continue our cautious measures. We learned to **wander less, and wonder more**, and appreciate staying closer to home, **sheltering and working in place** when called upon.

To begin 2020 (the pandemic still in the future) **Judy** again spent time in California with her mom, **Theo**. Even as restrictions were imminent, she hightailed it to **Houston, TX**, to visit a former colleague.

Back home safely, we began to deal with the lockdown and shortages. **Rick’s** work at **Apple** changed when the stores closed. They kept all their employees but pivoted quickly to “retail online.” (Later, he

With the arrival of John Roderick Bauer, on November 28, at 8:36 am, Rick and Judy officially became “Opa and Oma.”



transitioned to “at home” tech support, providing phone assistance to customers.) Judy’s **college** scrambled to figure out how to train future nurses remotely, confronting her with increasing dependence on **technology**, and reduced human contact while **teaching at home**. Her college accreditation trip was converted to virtual, requiring remote interviews and inspections of the program. With more time at home, Rick became infatuated with **sourdough bread** and other culinary pursuits, and looks to *continue expanding* the habit.

This summer we took only short trips. We strove to use our **kayaks** at least once a week. Nearby **Bush Lake** is ideal and a mere five minutes away. It worked pretty well, all the way into mid-November! We shared almost-every-Friday trips with the **McCarthys** (good friends from church) and periodically with **Anna, Alex, and Elise**.

When **COVID** restrictions hit, and the race riots spread, Elise found her employment in the entertainment industry quickly dried up. She had met **Jacob Shuda** in the process, however, and the two became fast friends, and got engaged in December 2019. This summer they escaped war-torn Chicago to **Eau Claire, WI**. Their marriage plans were shaped by current realities. They had a civil ceremony in **Minneapolis** on **November 18**, with a small group of friends. We enjoy their proximity, as the mere two-hour drive makes even day trips possible.

Anna and Alex continue to bless us with frequent involvement in our lives. We often share meals, kayak outings, game nights, and other activities. Even during pregnancy, they joined us for a camping trip in August, to **Temperance River State Park**, along the north shore of **Lake Superior**. We walked to waterfalls, stretched out under the stars, and swam in the (very cold) lake. Since the arrival of **John Roderick**, we have become completely smitten and eager for any opportunity to be with him (AND with his mom and dad, of course) especially if we can take the night shift to give his parents some rest.

**CHALLENGES:** During the lockdown, Judy’s hawk at Richardson Nature Center was euthanized, a loss she felt deeply as she wasn’t able to “say goodbye.” Her Guatemala trip was cancelled, as was participation in a community band. “Virtual drumming circle” isn’t the same as face-to-face, nor is conducting book club over Zoom.

Rick got his **Medicare** card this year, and reports that he is beginning to feel his age. Although he got a new bike for exercise, he has only ridden it a few times, and now that winter is here, won’t ride again until 2021. He has discovered that the “19” of COVID-19 really is about weight gain!

The pandemic; race riots; election wrangling; discord within the Church; all have taken an **emotional toll** on us, as with everyone, so we cling to our faith and **hope in God’s promise** to “*make all things new,*” and that one day, all this will be over. Until then, we love Him, and you, to the best of our ability. We pray you have a **Merry Christmas** and that you will also have a blessed **New Year!**

## 2020 in a Flash



**2020 in a Flash:** (top to bottom) Rick explored the wonders of sourdough [4/27]; getting away to hike at Nerstrand Big Woods [5/9]; kayaking on Bush Lake, with the Bauers and McCarthys [6/19]; camping with the Bauers [8/17]; renewed backgammon competition [11/26].