



December 2021

"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us."

John 1:14

Julie Lutz, LCMS in Papua New Guinea



Peace-filled greetings, dear family and friends,

I love opening email these days to see so many annual letters coming from you. This year the reports of travels and special times with family are more prominent than last year when so many activities were curtailed. Month by month... so much fun! Not to be outdone, here is My 2021 in like manner:

Julie's 2021 Highlights

- January - Anton working from Port Moresby. The house is empty.
- February - March -
- April - First COVID vaccination May -
- June - July - Second COVID vaccination
- August - Vacation with family September -
- October - Working remotely from SIL, Ukarumpa, for 5 weeks
- November - December - Christmas with family



With Lora and Lois, now in high school, in the Christmas meri blouse they gave to me! We're almost triplets!

That's it -- The notable events of my 2021! Fortunately, contentment, peace, fulfilling relationships, and meaningful service don't come only from the Special Events and Travel.



<-- Screenshot from our Lutz chats



By God's grace, our family has been well. Paul and Rebecca are in Stroudsburg, PA, USA. David and Tabby, in Papua New Guinea. Anton in PNG. Laura and Nathan Hall are in Fryburg, ME, USA.





I've had a line from Robert Browning running through my head lately -- "God is in his heavens and all is right with the world." It sounds like something I'd like to believe; clever and catchy. But ... No, not all is right with the world. The troubles of 2020 didn't evaporate with 2021, nor will they magically disappear for 2022. The hopes we had for greater unity, fewer natural disasters, less injustice, a life little impacted by COVID, more kindness, peace, and joy -- those hopes didn't materialize. We have all stood close to loss and grief this year, our friends' grief if not our own. No, not all is right.

We in Papua New Guinea are no different. Not all is right. Among other woes, Sorcery Accusation Related Violence persists. The lads in the picture above lost their father who was murdered after being accused of sorcery. Our efforts haven't banished the belief or atrocities. Yet I have hope that change is coming. Others are stepping up as part of the growing community which says, "No! Not Now, Not Ever."

And as for the first portion of the Browning line, "God is in His heaven ..." no, that is not entirely correct, either. Heaven is not God's perch from which he callously observes the wreckage of our world, refusing to intervene. No. God came to dwell among us -- Jesus came to live with us in our atrocities, grief, and forlorn hopes. It is God's love, descending from heaven in the Babe Jesus, that we celebrate at Christmas.

Around here, the message of God saving us in Christ is heard in preaching, witnessed in baptisms, and sent out through the pastors and evangelists of the Gutnius Lutheran Church, pictured below. Yet we, dear friends in Christ, wherever we are, we, too, in our words and lives of love are witnesses to God in us and amongst us.



May God bless us each in this coming year.

I am grateful to you who filled in my skeleton year with warm connections and supported my service in Papua New Guinea with your prayers and gifts. Thank you! It wasn't an empty year. God is in His heaven, and much is right with the world.

Peace and joy in Jesus,

Julie Lutz

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The missionary service of Julie Lutz can be supported with a monthly, quarterly, or yearly giving plan or with a one-time gift. Visit lcms.org/lutz or call LCMS Mission Advancement at (888) 843-5267.

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