

Opinion

Ordinary Days By Lauren Denton

Already, not yet

Back in 2012, I bought a pack of index cards and started writing a line or two about what we did each day. I now have a little box on my bedside table that holds 366 index cards (there were a couple leap years in there), and each card has the month and day at the top and space for each year's entry.



Denton

Every night before I write up our day, I scan through the previous years to see what we did on that day last year or three years ago or six years ago. Whether it was a potty training bootcamp weekend, an unexpected snow day, the pistachio shell dilemma of 2013 (don't ask) or a trip to the hospital for skin glue, it's always fun to look back on the years and all we've done.

A few days ago, I pulled the card for March 6 and read this: "Headed to Monroeville for literary festival!"

That weekend looms large in my mind for two reasons: One was that I'd been asked to be a presenter at the Monroeville Literary Festival, which was a big honor for me. The other reason is that it was the last time I remember being able to hug and chat and mingle freely.

We knew about coronavirus by that point (my card from March 2 said "everyone watching coronavirus"), but no restrictions had been set. No one wore masks, we hadn't heard the term "social distancing" yet, and store shelves were still nicely stocked with toilet paper and Clorox wipes. I do remember one author at the festival mentioning the fact that maybe we shouldn't get too close, but we sort of laughed and hugged anyway. Other than that, it was a wonderful weekend with people of all ages gathered together in celebration and community.

The very next week, everything went downhill, as you probably remember. A mere two days after the festival, on March 8, I wrote "Coronavirus fears everywhere."

March 11: "Trump address, travel bans and lots of handwashing and social distancing."

March 12: "Fears ramped way up. Did some extra grocery shopping."

Then on March 13: "All K-12 schools closed for two-and-a-half weeks." And we all know how long those two-and-a-half weeks actually lasted!

It's so strange to look back on those entries from the early days of COVID-19,

back when we had no idea what we were up against. It's even stranger to consider that we've been at this a full year when at the beginning, we optimistically thought life would only be interrupted for a few weeks!

We're now well into 2021, the year that's supposed to fix things, but it's not fixed yet. COVID-19 is still here. We

long for the end of the pandemic, while still coming up against it at every turn.

In "Mary Consoles Eve," one of my favorite Advent songs by Rain for Roots, there's a line that says, "Almost, not yet, already." It's something we hear at our church a lot, the idea of God's kingdom being already but not yet. His kingdom is here; it is working, but it's not yet fully in place or complete. He's making all things new, but they're not new yet. It's something we as believers are familiar with — this tension between what we know is coming and what we are experiencing in our lives now. We live in an in-between time.

In a similar way, living with this COVID-19 pandemic feels like living in an in-between time. We're in the already of 2021 and the beginning of vaccinations, but we're still in the not yet of continuing to wrestle with restrictions to keep us safe and longing for the freedom to be in full community again. And we don't know when that freedom will come.

But because we know what's coming — all things being made new — we wait. We live. We love our families and our friends as well as we can. We value technology in ways we didn't before because it allows us to feel close to people we can't be with yet. We learn new ways to have fun and experience life. We wait, sometimes patiently, sometimes not so much, for the time when the wrestling will stop and the tension will fade.

"He comes to make his blessings flow, as far and wide as the curse is found."

When I'm not writing about my family and our various shenanigans, I write novels and go to the grocery store. My novels are in stores and online. You can reach me by email at lauren@laurenkdenton.com, visit my website, laurenkdenton.com, or find me on Instagram @LaurenKDentonBooks, Twitter @LaurenKDenton, or on Facebook ~LaurenKDentonAuthor.



NEW PIETRA SERENA DINNERWARE BY

VIETRI
Bromberg's

MOUNTAIN BROOK • 205-871-3276

THE SUMMIT • 205-969-1776

WWW.BROMBERGS.COM

WE HAVE MOVED

Sikes
Children's Shoes

Jack n' Jill
Infant & Children's Wear

NEW LOCATION COMING SOON!
VISIT OUR TEMPORARY POP-UP SHOP
2707 Mamie L Foster / 18th Place S.
Downtown Homewood



205-879-7681 or 205-879-3433
Instagram: sikesshoesandjacknjillshop
Web: sikesshoes.com

'I DO'
in your future?

Let us help spread the news! Email ischnader@starnespublishing.com to submit your announcement.