

a course in world religions at the UW-Oshkosh and Latin through the UW-Extension. She sings in Chorale and in the Madrigal singers, co-leads Confirmation and Youth Group with her Dad, and volunteers at Mercy Hospital. Her goal is to become a pediatrician and a medical missionary.

Giovanni is a second-year student at Emory University in Atlanta, where he is getting a first-class liberal arts education. He is building on his strengths in creative writing, design, and an appetite for philosophy, history, and literature. He has friends from all over the world. One of his roommates hails from Modin, Israel. The other is Indian whose family resides in Jakarta, Indonesia. Giovanni is now home recovering from a grueling first semester.

16 minutes away from her place of work, Paola is now able to shepherd her congregation and track Anna and Betta at the same time with greater ease. She continues her ministry at Family Church with great joy and satisfaction. The congregation continues to grow in spirit and number in the new location which gives the church visibility in the community. This year the congregation has launched new ministries of service and outreach and plans to add a second worship service on Sunday morning. Mothering is the task that requires the most work but also brings the most joy: it is a great blessing to follow the growth of three children and watch them discover their gifts and meet challenges.

John is in the thick of a new pastorate rich with challenges and possibilities. He has been welcomed by those of First Church and the larger Oshkosh community. These first six months, he enjoyed watching First Church lay leaders run a successful stewardship campaign. He helped re-start a confirmation and youth group and re-launch United Methodist campus ministry at the UW-O. He rejoiced at the relocation to First of a boisterous Cub Scout Pack to complement the Boy Scout Troop already in residence, and of a Parent Connection parenting class, an outreach to families with a history of difficulty. John publishes in biblical studies and tries to find time to blog about ancient Hebrew poetry and related and not-so-related subjects.

May hope animate our lives and the reason for the season bring us renewed joy and energy. May we encourage the hopeless and reach out to those who long for the light but are afraid to approach it.

John

Paola

Giovanni

Elisabetta

Anna