



Welcome to 2026,

We are excited to see all God will do in the year ahead. We had a wonderful Christmas with some of our children and grandchildren here. There is nothing sweeter than the sights and sounds of children at Christmastime. Our house was very full at times, and we loved it. Grandbaby #12 (a girl) is due on April 21<sup>st</sup> to our daughter, Jillian, her husband, Karsten, and their daughter, Ella. The girls will be 19 months apart. 😊

January is usually very cold here, especially during the two weeks of the National Western Stock Show. But this January was mostly warm and sunny, we're talking 60's and 70's for the temperatures. It is fooling our trees, bulbs, and perennials. They all think it is spring heading into summer... We are probably in for a rude awakening someday soon. It's just not January in Colorado without some subzero temps.

We are back out and about with club visits all over Colorado. We really do appreciate your prayers for us as we travel over the mountains and back again. There has been some snow in the mountains, but not much on the plains. We could use some good snowy weather, as long as we get to stay inside. Our cars continue to serve us well. One has 406,000 miles on it! Yes, that number is correct, and we appreciate how God holds it together and keeps the tires inflated.

There has been an increase in attendance at many Awana clubs this year. Praise the Lord! That means more children being disciplined for Christ. We are seeing parents getting more involved with their children's spiritual upbringing. It is said that parents are responsible for their children's discipleship, and this is true. But some of them need discipleship themselves. The church needs to come alongside parents and give them the discipleship they need so they CAN disciple their children.

Awana is really a family ministry, not just a children's ministry. Sixty percent or more of the kids who attend Awana come from unchurched, or

non-Christian homes. That can mean no one at home is teaching them anything about God, Jesus, or the Bible. And we wonder why this world is the way it is...

The church and Awana have a unique opportunity to reach entire families with the Gospel and help them on the road to lifelong discipleship. Awana now reaches 10,673,705 children every week, and that number grows every day. That number is astounding, yet there are more than 2 billion children under 18 worldwide. That is a big gap and means we have so much more work to do.

With all that is happening in the world, we can't help but think that the time of Christ's return is soon. After all, God destroyed the earth before when "every intent of man's heart was only evil continually". Some days it seems like the evil of man's heart is the predominant thing in society. And yet... God has his people on this earth for "such a time as this". We can give people hope through the Gospel and God's Word!

The high school curriculum for this year is entitled "Identity". It is all about young people seeing themselves as God sees them, the Imago Dei, created in His image. We are so grateful for the opportunity to tell children that they are created in God's image and that He has a plan for them. Thank you for all you do to help us fulfill the ministry God has called us to.

We look forward to seeing some of you in 2026!

In Christ alone, Joseph and Jill Cook

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