

# songs of the season



Dear Family and Friends—

Yep ... it's official. Twenty-twenty has been a very strange year. As much as I love even-numbered years, the trials and tribulations of this year will soon be behind us ... and I think that will be a good thing. And, if you're like me, you've had to make some sacrifices this year. Two writers conferences I was set to attend were canceled ... so no trips to North Carolina and Arizona. And I didn't make my annual sojourn south this summer. C'est la guerre ...

As horrible as the COVID-19 pandemic has been, the one thing that has been a gift is the amount of time with which it has blessed me. I feel good knowing I put the gift of time to good use. First ... I was able to finish my fourth CD of original music and released it on June 07. "Aurillian Tales" features four songs with singing and five instrumental tunes. If you haven't heard it yet or didn't get a copy of the CD, you can listen to it here—

<https://nancyjoiewilkie.hearnow.com/>

Second ... as I write this note to you, I can report that I have yet another CD off at the manufacturer ... something titled "Songs Of The Sun." Before you get all excited and say ... "What? More original tunes from Nancy?" ... I must confess there is no new music on this disc. Rather, it is a CD with thirteen of my favorite compositions, several from each of my four CDs. If any of these songs were hits, you could call the collection "my greatest hits." But, alas ... I have no greatest hits ... only favorites!

Third ... as for my writing ... while there was no new book released, there was a short story ("Deconstructing Dad") published in the January 2020 issue of "Pen-In-Hand" ... published by the Maryland Writers Association.

[http://www.mindsights.net/361Q\\_deconstructing\\_dad\\_january\\_2020.pdf](http://www.mindsights.net/361Q_deconstructing_dad_january_2020.pdf)

And last ... during my week-long stay in Englewood, Florida this past January, I was finally able to start work on the first of four new "novelettes." For those of you who've never heard the term "novelette" ... and I hadn't either ... it is longer than a short story, but shorter than a "novella" ... that is to say, it's between 9,500 and 17,500 words in length. I am happy to report that I completed writing all four novelettes. Those four stories, along with one I wrote twenty-plus years ago, make up my second collection of stories titled "Faraway and Forever." I am currently editing these stories, incorporating the comments made by my editor, Rebecca. With any luck, I will have the collection out to my beta readers in January, and off to the publisher at some point in the spring. Assuming it is accepted, the book will be released in late 2022 or early 2023. Wish me luck!

The other thing that has occupied much of my time this year has been work for Salem United Methodist Church. I had already been responsible for maintaining the church Web site since March 2018. But with the loss of the fellow member who had been doing all of the audio/visual work in January and the need to switch to virtual services thanks to the COVID pandemic, I found myself taking care of live sound and engineering the live stream so folks could attend the service via Zoom, Facebook, and YouTube. Check out the Web site ... [www.salemunitedmethodist.org](http://www.salemunitedmethodist.org) .... to see what is happening.

This has also been a year of significant anniversaries for me. If you know me well, you know I have a thing about numbers and dates. And for some weird reason, I feel the passage of time in a very real way. At any rate, bear with me as I tick off some of the anniversaries.

Looking back twenty years, it was the year I moved into my home ... February 28 to be exact. Until living here, I had never lived anywhere longer than five years. After growing up in a military family and moving seven times by the time I was thirteen ... twenty years in one place is most definitely significant.

The other major thing that happened in November of 2000 was being laid off by the biotechnology company I had worked for twenty-one plus years. At the time, it was a major loss. But when I think about the events that have happened since then and the things I've learned ... it was quite likely a blessing in disguise.

And speaking of significant losses, it was fifteen years ago that my Dad went to see Jesus. I bring this up only because, once again, the challenges that I have had to face since then have necessitated learning all sorts of new things, mostly things dealing with finances, investments, and legal stuff ... all good things to know.

And last ... hard to believe that in September it had been ten years since I left NIAID and retired. I have to say that the seven years I worked in that institute, managed by the now well-renowned Anthony Fauci, allowed me to learn about vaccine development, production, and distribution. I have watched the events of the last nine months with a knowing eye. I was blessed to have worked at such an amazing place.

As I look ahead to the New Year, I shan't be going to Florida in January, but I do hope to attend a writers conference at Wake Forest University in April. And, hopefully, I will be playing music with friends again ... and there will be trips to Bethany Beach, DE. February will have me being turning 65 years old and August will have my mother turning ninety!

I do hope you will continue to pray for all of those with COVID-19, all of our family members with cancer, all of our friends with debilitating anomalies, all of our family and friends unable to return to their pre-COVID-19 lifestyles, and prayers for our country in hopes we will get back on track.

Have a great year regardless! May the GOOD LORD bless each and every one of you!