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◆◆◆◆ Are you aware of how often your heavenly Father surprises and delights you? While driving home from Pere Marquette Lodge the other night, God blessed us with a beautiful full moon as we headed home along the Mississippi River. After church several Friday nights ago, I walked out to hear nighthawks screeching in delight as they feasted on insects that had been attracted to a well-lit flagpole. Several weekends ago just at dusk as we were riding horses through a lovely field, whippoorwills began calling to one another. The weekend prior to that, we counted twenty bats swooping in pursuit of insects high above our heads. As we walked out of the grocery store the other evening, we were greeted with a glorious chorus from a company of birds perched within their favorite trees. A couple of nights ago, Jon called all of us outside to see a magnificent sunset. One night after a much-needed rain in the country, it became apparent that the frogs were out in great numbers praising God for His gift of rain, so I took the children out with a flashlight. To our delight, everywhere we shined the light we saw frogs singing◆on top of our van, on the mirrors of our van, on our license plate, on our trees, on our hostas◆. It was such an incredible testimony to God◆s goodness and His creatures◆ response of thankfulness to His great blessings.

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As our heavenly Father delights in surprising us, so we, too, take great pleasure in surprising and delighting our own children. Therefore, each and every day we do things to delight them, and often during the week we surprise them with unexpected blessings, as well. Even as we have gotten older and less energetic, we are ever mindful that our children are still young, energetic, and full of life, so we work hard at constantly surprising them and delighting them◆even when we physically do not feel like doing another thing.

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As we were heading down the highway around 10:30 one night after a wedding reception, preceded by a day full of graduation parities, Jon delightfully surprised us by suggesting that we go home, get the dogs, stop by the Cheesecake Factory for some carry out treats, and head on down to the country because the summer night was too beautiful to miss. Needless to say, we all applauded the idea, even the dogs, and to the delight of one and all, we enjoyed a marvelous trip.

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After a long day of lawns and landscaping and then an evening wedding this last week, we still took a drive to see the condos that are being built at Gaslight Square, drove around the Central West End, stopped in to check out a new restaurant on Lindell, drove through the Delmar Loop, picked up pizza (on the way home◆not off of Delmar because it looks too rough for our family), and then went home to watch a movie and play games.

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On moonlit nights in the country, we almost always take the children on walks down our country road or take them four-wheeling up to the highest hill to see the moon shining upon the forest.

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One night before we were ready to head back to St. Louis, Jon had remembered that the children had wanted to go horseback riding, so we caught the horses and enjoyed a delightful ride.

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One night after dinner at O.T. Hodges, a ride on the MetroLink, and a Cardinals baseball game, we realized right before bed that a storm was brewing; so we took the children out on our front porch and sat down to watch the storm. It was so incredibly beautiful to watch the trees gracefully sway to and fro and feel the cool, gentle breeze pat our faces as the rain approached. Then sheets of rain began scampering down our street as if they were skipping out in a field of clover. It was lovely!

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After a holiday weekend of nineteen guests, even after getting up at 6:00 a.m. to take some of the young people horseback riding, we went four-wheeling with neighbors all day and then had them over to dinner.

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Cutting lawns and landscaping in the hot sun all day is very tiring, but we often plan evening outings for picnic dinners, trips to Ted Drewes for ice cream, a walk at our favorite park in South St. Louis, or a late night treat at our favorite outdoor patio.

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As your heavenly Father delights in blessing you, be sure to point out His daily blessings to your children so they develop eyes to see and ears to hear, and then emulate His love by surprising and delighting your own children.

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