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Email from Mom, 18 April 2011

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To: Phillip Larsen <phillip.larsen@myldsmail.net>

Cc: John Larsen <john@larsen-family.us>

Hello, Dear Elder Phillip Larsen!

I love your letters. I love reading your testimony each week, and feeling the Spirit. The last email I wrote to you was from UT, from Papa's computer, and now I'm home again. It was a wonderful visit, and it's also nice to be home. I find transitions hard. Cheryl Potter said it's because of the "J" in my personality type, you know the Myers-Briggs personality test. It was hard for me to leave to go to UT (on the morning I left, I was ready to just stay home if I could have), and it was hard to come back, too, though not as hard. I don't know why that is, but it's interesting.

I got to eat out with Oma and Papa every day, except for the Sunday I was there, when I spent the afternoon/evening with Doug and Gwen and family, and the Monday at Lori's house for dinner and FHE. I visited and talked with people, and I already told you, I think, about interviewing Oma and Papa. I also talked with Leslie quite a bit the day before I left, about genealogy and what to do next, and got a memory stick from her with some genealogy on it. And I had lunch with Stanford and Robin and their kids and Savannah's boyfriend, and got a memory stick from Stanford with all kinds of genealogy on it that he has done. (Now I just need to learn what to do with memory sticks! Also make time to spend on genealogy.) And the evening before I left to come home I went to visit Grandma one more time and talked with her for about two hours. It was so nice, such a good time. Very different from the vacations we have taken there, because it was not family reunion time and I didn't do things like go to Lagoon. There were a couple of things I would have liked to do, but wasn't able to, but I made a list of things for next time. I notice Oma and Papa are slowing down quite a bit, and don't have the energy they used to have. That is part of this mortal life, but it's a bit hard to see. I don't know if yoga and going to the gym will help me to be a bit more active for more years, but it's worth a try!

Dad gave you the news in his email, so I won't repeat it. I did take Sis. Blanchette's two oldest girls to school this morning, and I'll pick up Emerson in a couple of hours, so Sis. Blanchette doesn't have to drive. She can hardly fit behind the wheel of a car, and she is so short that if she moves the seat back she can't reach the pedals. I'm hoping to make sure she gets help for stuff even now, and not wait for the babies to be born, even though she is someone who likes to serve more than to be served.

For Mother's Day, we were thinking of buying one of the international phone cards like what you have, then just using it to call you. But we would need to know a phone number, and the time to call. You are an hour ahead of us, so we'll have to be sure we know what time to call. Our church this year is 9-12, so we'll be home all afternoon. I'm excited to talk to you! I will make a list of questions to ask, and practice my Portuguese, so I can at least say "hello" to you!

Bro. Henkel and Bro. Burgess came last night to Home Teach us. It's the first time they have come together. It was nice to have them visit. They asked about you, and I read parts of your latest letter to them. Also, Sis. Fox-McNeil asked about you at church, and was very concerned when I told her about the allergic reaction you had. She asked if you had stepped on the bug, or what? I told her I didn't know. She also asked if you would be likely to have this happen again, and again, I didn't know. She said next time the reaction could be faster, and I told her you could take some Benedryl, and she indicated that would be good. So, be sure to take good care of yourself, and watch out for bugs and such!

In Brazil do they call the mid-day meal lunch? Is it the largest meal of the day? And do the members have a missionary calendar for feeding the missionaries the way we do here? I just wondered how you knew where to eat at lunchtime. I'm glad you're able to get to know the members that way, and glad they're feeding you. Even if you can't post lots of pictures, please take lots, even of things like what you eat, your companion, your apartment, and any interesting thing you come across. Of course, don't let the picture-taking get in the way of missionary work! But I would love to "see" your mission at some point.

I've been assigned to speak in church on Sunday (which is Easter). I teased Bro. Hawkins that he maybe didn't have to go to the ends of the Earth to get a speaker, but he went 2500 miles away! (Dad texted me about the talk, and Bro. Hawkins emailed me with the assignment when I was in UT.) I appreciate what you said about learning more about the atonement, to increase your desire to share the gospel. My topic is John 11:25. I'm loving how my own testimony increases with more study, so I'm getting far more out of my talk preparation than the people who hear my talk could ever get. The gospel is such a blessing to us! It's right and it's true, and thank you for your testimony, Phillip, and for serving a mission!

I miss you, and I love you, and I pray for you every day.

Love,
Mom

P.S. Have you had any chance to use the Plan of Salvation puzzle we sent you? Just

wondering. Love you!