

# Gordon Christmas Letter 2012

(Written by Jay) As a family we're sort of split up now with Andy in Tuscaloosa and us in Arkansas. We've made it back to Alabama a number of times and I even caught one football game at Alabama this year. We got to see two games in Fayetteville. Jax State, our alma mater, opened against Arkansas, and two weeks later, Alabama came out. Someone provided us with nice 45-yard line seats. After the 52-0 win, I had to stay pretty quiet at church! Emily particularly enjoyed the win because the kids at church have been giving her a hard time about being an Alabama fan.

I did hit one of those zero birthdays... this year was the big 5-0 for me. Liz threw me a fun party in Alabaster with our Home Group and a few others. Other than the Depends and walking cane, I got a top of the line Razorback cap. Thanks, Jason! At least the bag had a crimson "A" on it.

Emily has been homeschooling, but following the curriculum with Evangel Classical Christian School. She orally presented her senior thesis in early December and is glad to have that behind her. She will be going back to Alabaster for her final semester in January and will graduate from Evangel in May. Some good scholarship offers have come in for her. It's too bad that they are not for the schools she'd like to attend. Emily also had a great job this summer working for the Baptist association leading Bible Schools and other tasks.

We've been able to get together a few times this year. You'll notice a picture from a hike on Pinnacle Mountain in May and from a trip to Orange Beach in August. Also, Liz, Emily and I traveled to Cayambe, Ecuador in July for a mission trip through E3 Partners, a missions organization that Liz works with. It was officially a Student Choir trip, but there were no concerts, just evangelism and church planting--14 churches were planted and over 400 people came to faith in Christ.

Emily met a deer on Interstate 40 while coming back from Alabama. She went off the interstate, through a ditch, through a fence and some brush, across an access road and into a telephone pole which she broke, and landing upside down. I don't know how many angels God used for protecting her--just a sprained ankle--but I'll thank them all when I get to heaven. I forgave her for interrupting the Alabama--LSU game.

Andy is studying Mechanical Engineering at Alabama and should finish in May 2014. He does a little tutoring on the side and works some in Alabaster when possible. He moved into a new apartment this year and is looking forward to check one item off of his bucket list--a snowboarding trip to Colorado. His motorcycle got stolen in October, despite a good security system. I'm mad at the thieves, but as most parents would, feel better with Andy in a car rather than on a motorcycle.

Liz is still working with E3 and I'm working on going on volunteer staff in order to do a trip with every now and then. This year her trips were to Puyo, Cayambe, and Esmeraldes, Ecuador. In 2013 she plans to go to Guayaquil and Ibarra, Ecuador and Iquitos and Cajamarca, Peru. She is subbing a little bit at a church day care nearby. Since Emily was in Liz's car, Liz now has a Toyota Prius and is enjoying the 50 mpg.

I'm personally glad to see 2012 come to an end because it has been a very busy year at work. In addition to regular responsibilities, we spent the first of the year fundraising and the second half of the year in a building project to renovate and add-on to existing buildings. We had a successful campaign with 2.6 million dollars pledged and are on track to reach one million dollars given by Dec. 31. We move in Jan. 6.

We are enjoying Arkansas but sure miss our Home Group, church staff, and friends in Alabaster. We still have the house there and hope to sell it soon, but it has come in handy when not rented out.

Sending Christmas cards & letters is one of my favorite Christmas traditions. You are among friends who have been a big part of our lives and you mean much to us. Even though we might not get to spend time with you throughout the year, we value your friendship! We'd love to hear from you as well, so please stay in touch.

*May the joy of knowing Christ be yours this Christmas season!*

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 1 John 4:9-10

*Jay, Liz, Andy & Emily*

