

Gordon Christmas Letter

Jay, Liz, Andy & Emily 2014



We hope this letter finds you doing well and getting ready for the Christmas season! We use this as a time to catch up with family and friends, so here's what's happening.

Jay and Liz made the move from Arkansas back to Alabama in September. Jay serves The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham as the Adult and Small Groups Minister. Certainly many close friends in Arkansas are missed greatly!

This move was delayed four to six weeks while Jay lingered in Arkansas to help the church there recover from an explosion. In the middle of Bible school week, a large air conditioning unit exploded in an equipment room on top of the building. The force blew three walls off of the room and lifting the roof. Fortunately it occurred at night and no one was injured. Most of the church facility was without power for 37 days. The damage was over \$500,000.

As part of God's providence, Liz had a new job awaiting her in Birmingham. She is now e3 Medical Manager working at the E3 Partners Medical Office, which coordinates medical mission trips. Liz continues to lead church-planting mission trips, mainly to Ecuador, but will be in Spain and Panama during 2015 as well. In August, Jay and Liz led a group from Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock to Cayambe, Ecuador, very near the equator and near some inactive volcanoes as you see in the picture. God blessed in many ways and stretched us spiritually as well.

Andy finished his degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Alabama in May and started to work for SKF in Philadelphia in late June. SKF is a Swedish company that started out in ball bearings and now does many other industrial applications. Jay had the opportunity to visit in November along with Andrew, a college friend of Andy's. The three took in an Eagles game and enjoyed the market there.

Emily is doing well and loving college life at Troy University in Troy, Alabama. She is part of an Ultimate Frisbee team and plays in various places often. "Ultimate" is more like football than golf, and is played as a team. This summer, Emily wanted to go shooting with her dad's 9mm pistol. After some warm up shots, he challenged her to a contest. Emily went first. All ten rounds hit the black circle of the target. Jay immediately waved the white flag knowing his shots would not be so accurate.

During Jay's interview process, in almost every case a trip to Alabama had already been planned. In April Jay led a Sunday School Conference (and to take in a Braves Game on opening weekend). In June he officiated a wedding for the daughter of Jay's former ministry assistant at Westwood. Again, in August, Jay was back in Alabama to speak again.

Although a year late, the family rewarded Emily's high school graduation with a trip to Hawaii. A trip to Italy was in the works until fees were discovered using free air miles that would still cost \$672 a person to fly AA's partner airline. Hawaii was only \$10 per person. The family enjoyed time on both Maui and Oahu with snorkeling being the most frequent adventure. The sign you see to the right was noticed AFTER a few hours of snorkeling in that area. Oh, well.

Sending Christmas cards & letters is one of our 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

