

Gordon Christmas Letter

Jay, Liz, Andy & Emily
Authored by Jay

2017



We hope this letter finds you doing well and enjoying the Christmas season! Christmas is a time in which we think about all our blessings, and friends are one of those blessings.

College Football Championship Game in Tampa - The year started off with an opportunity to go to the National Championship Game in Tampa. I entered the lottery at CollegeFootballPlayoff.com and won a chance to buy four tickets at face value of \$450. We sold two for \$775 allowing Andy and I to enjoy a cheap trip. Too bad Bama lost to Clemson! This year Andy's name came up. Hopefully Bama makes it!

Big Bend National Park & E3 Conference - In early February, Liz and I traveled to Texas for the E3 Partners International Conference and following that we traveled on to Big Bend National Park which had been on my list for a while. I wanted to help Trump inspect the border and confirmed for him that a wall is not likely needed there, as the bluff on the Mexican side is about 2,000 feet. It's a beautiful place. Liz didn't particularly enjoy hiking in the sandstorm. I have video to prove that.



Farther West - Arches, Bryce Canyon, Capitol Reef, and Zion National Parks - In June, we traveled to Phoenix for the Southern Baptist

Convention. Liz's aunt and uncle live there, so we took Liz's mom with us for a visit. We went out a few days early to loop through Southern Utah to see some other national parks that were on my list. Of them all, I think I enjoyed Bryce Canyon the most. It was also funny to run into a guy who said, "Hey, you go to Brook Hills don't you?" It was a couple from church. (See left photo of Delicate Arch)

Emily and Daniel: Promotions for Both - They've been married for over a year, and both enjoyed advancement opportunities this year. Daniel is now an adjuster with Allstate Insurance here in Birmingham. Emily is still hosting at Perry's Steak House, but now mainly serves as the office administrator. We enjoy their \$15, three-inch-thick pork chop on Fridays at times. On Perry's anniversary, it was 79 cents for the first 100 customers. Emily and Daniel enjoy their two dogs, Albie & Ellie. Daniel's hobby is disc golf. Maybe one day I'll give that a try. (Right: last year's wedding and the pups.)



Andy and Siena: Andy Moves to Charleston, SC - Last summer, Andy proposed to Siena and they have plans to get married at the McLeod Plantation in Charleston this June. In August, Andy accepted a job, still with SKF, as the Process Development Manager at their precision ball bearing plant in Charleston, which means he moved away from Siena in Philadelphia. Liz and I spent Thanksgiving weekend with Andy and his new Husky, Kody. We



toured the McLeod Plantation and Andy's plant, both of which were amazing.

Mission Trips to Ecuador - Liz continues to lead mission trips to Ecuador, and this year agreed to become the E3 Strategy Director for Ecuador. In September, I got to go with Liz to Guaranda, Ecuador. We were able to meet our Compassion child who lives in that city. The work there was good as E3 is moving to a strategy of working through people's relational maps (referred to using the Greek word "Oikos") rather than a door-to-door type of evangelism in order to plant churches by starting groups in homes. Liz also continues to serve in ESL Ministry at church. (See 2 mission pics.)



Small Groups Ministry at The Church at Brook Hills - I continue to serve as Adult and Small Groups Minister. Liz and I are involved in two small groups--an on-campus group on Sunday mornings for Parents of Teens, and a group in our home for any age adults on Sunday nights. During the summer, both groups led a neighborhood Bible club for kids we call "Rock the Block". We are truly blessed to do life with great folks in these two groups.

You Have Blessed Our Lives! - Sending Christmas cards & letters is one of our favorite Christmas traditions. You are among the friends who mean so 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 as we pray for one another through good times and bad!

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