

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

To you...our family and friends,

This season brings to mind so many memories...some of deep joy and happiness...others of somber sorrow. In these days of change and uncertainty, we thrill in the certainty of the hope we have in Jesus, the God who never changes.

Many of you have been praying for and tracking our family for years. You have witnessed the change in our lives that time and events, both in Africa and America, have brought to our family. The enclosed picture attests the physical change...a little bigger, a little wider and a little older. We trust that it would be a reminder to you of God's faithfulness to us as a family and an answer to many of your specific prayers.

Ring the bell! The big news is that we are going to be grandparents!! Talk about change! Grandma Grace and Grandpa Bill...Wow, that sounds weird...new...wonderful! Drew and Janna are expecting in March!!

Talking about BIG NEWS! This past Thanksgiving weekend, Ryan proposed to Melissa Hackitt from Arizona. We love her! They are both on cloud nine! They met last year in New Zealand at Capernwray Bible School. Ryan will continue his major in international studies at the oldest state university in the nation, UNC-Chapel Hill.

Kara is flourishing at Montreat College. The Lord has provided her a wonderful set of friends. She is majoring in elementary education and would love to teach missionary kids one day.

Kyle, a Jr. in high school is in the middle of the North Carolina state high school football playoffs. By the time you get this letter they may be the NC State Champs. Kyle is deadly. At defensive end, he, in a demonstrable way smother's quarterbacks. He is good at it too! It has been beautiful to see him grow in the Lord reaching out to his unsaved friends. Watching him balance his academics, church, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, social life and walk with the Lord has been so encouraging. You all can only imagine how wonderful it is to be able to see Kyle at this stage. We missed it so much with our other kids being away at boarding school!

Grace is Kyle's greatest fan. She assists in the provision of the meals for the players on game days. She yells the loudest at the games. This interaction with the team and all the parents has proved to be a great bridge for building relationships and ministering the love of Jesus Christ. She has also been challenged as she prepares and speaks to women's groups around the country.

Bill, in his role as a mission conference speaker and recruiter for SIM, has had opportunities to speak to the Greenbay Packers, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at UNC Chapel Hill, and in many churches and campuses around the country. Bill will be heading to the Ethiopia/Sudan border in January to minister to Sudanese refugees who have fled persecution and war to find safe haven in UN camps in Ethiopia. Sudanese church leaders will gather together for a time of spiritual nourishment and encouragement in the Word of God. As we think of harvest in these challenging days, what a great opportunity for you to pray that God would use us and have many to respond to the great need for missionaries to accomplish the task. Thanks for continuing to stand with us so that we can fill this vital role.

Grace's Dad and Mom are right now over at Pearl Harbor. It is the first time Dad (Gordon Gustafson) has returned since he was on the Tennessee the morning of December 7, 1941. What memories have come! They were both so thrilled to be able to go. But you know, I never once heard them talk about all the reasons I would love to go to Hawaii- sun, sand & surf. They just could not wait to return to testify to God's faithfulness during those days and through the years. Dad wrote a tract, speaks at sixteen different functions and will lay a wreath in honor of those who died on his ship at the monument for the Arizona, which was right next to his. What a heritage my parents have given me of walking with the view that "this world really is NOT my home... I am just a passin' through." Their treasures are in heaven and to that end they have lived their lives.

It is in the context of the chilling travesty that has rocked our country and brought grief to so many, that we wish to emphasize what has been the driving force and thrill of our lives and ministry, the emancipating truth that Jesus Christ was born, died for the sin of all humanity and rose from the dead to give resurrection life to all who would believe and receive Him alone.

Together with you, serving the Prince of Peace,