



Christmas Joy TO ALL!

Hello,

As we look over our Christmas card list, we're reminded how very blessed we are with so many wonderful friends and family members. You are often in our thoughts and prayers. We're healthy and happy, and we hope this holiday season finds you that way as well.

In January Shawn moved to Dallas. He graduated from school there in December 2008, so it wasn't a big move. He moved into a house that a friend purchased. A couple of other guys share the house as well. He's still lead wait-staff at Pappadeaux while he pursues an evangelistic ministry.

In January Rae and Chris took over some of the leadership of the children's ministry at church. Rae's handling the administrative side—scheduling volunteers, planning programs, and making sure the lines of communication are open. Chris is in charge of making sure that we have all of the equipment we need and that it's in good working order. We are still teaching the class of kids age three through kindergarten, and we love it. Even the occasional *Duck, Duck, Goose* injury can't stop Chris from playing with the kids.

We were excited when our pastor's book came out in April. Pastor Tom was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia in November 2005. He's healthy now. The book is about what God taught him through the experience and his opinion of why God allows hard things to happen to those who love and serve Him. Rae was able to help Pastor Tom put his words on paper—a tremendous blessing. The church self-publishes the books and gives copies away free. The 500 copies we had printed in April lasted until May, when we had another 1,000 printed. Those ran out in October, and we had another 1,000 printed. The Lord is using that book in ways we never imagined. (Let us know if you'd like a copy. We'd be glad to send one to you.)

Of course, that was nothing compared to our excitement when Shawn surprised us with a visit in April. He stopped in again in August while he was on his way to be an attendant in a friend's wedding. As of right now the plan is for him to come home for several days at Christmas. We're really looking forward to hugging that young man.

In May Rae celebrated her fifth anniversary with The Pampered Chef. Business is good, and she really enjoys all of the people she's meeting. She's still doing some publication design and a bit of secretarial temping.

In August Chris finished enclosing the porch. It will be a little while before it's the extra space we envision, but we're really enjoying the energy savings it provides. He also helped to put a new roof on the church annex. He's still working hard at Ford Meter Box. Business seems to be holding steady right now, but we're hoping that things will pick up even more in the spring.

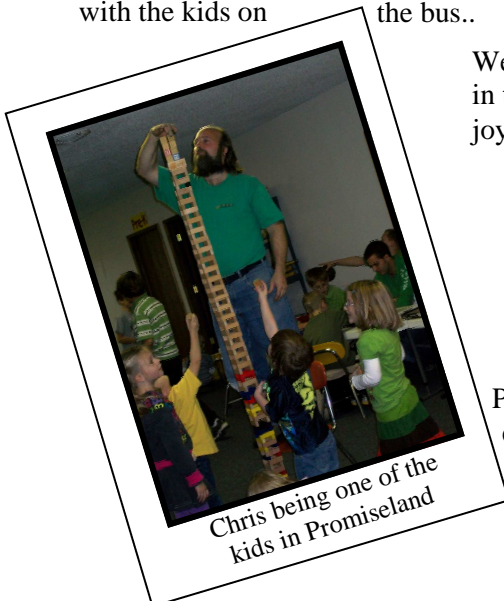
In September we had a chance to go with a local Christian radio station to the Creation Museum. It was a day trip and was interesting and a lot of fun. Of course, one of the best parts of the trip was meeting new people and playing with the kids on the bus..

Well, that catches you up with most of what's been happening in the Bates bungalow. We hope your coming year is filled with joy and blessings.

With love,

Chris & Rae

P.S. Chris still doesn't like computers, but we do have an email address (randcbates@earthlink.net) and Rae's on Facebook as Rae Black Bates. We'd love to hear from you.



Chris being one of the kids in Promiseland



Rae with one of the kids when Promiseland went to the zoo.