

Christmas 2009

To our friends and family,

What is the greatest blessing we can experience? After all the presents have been opened, put to everyday use, broken, put away, lost (especially if you gave Buddy golf balls) or forgotten, what seems to remain are the moments when we gave of ourselves. The greatest validation we can have in this world is to be used by God. Isn't it interesting that God is seeking people he can use?

The Christmas narrative reminds us that God used ordinary people in extraordinary ways. It is our *daily prayer* that we will be used by God Himself to make this a different world. As we reflect on another year it our hope that God has answered that prayer.

We continually thank the Lord for the blessing He brought into our lives by providing **this place of ministry**. Our work as District Superintendent provides many challenges, but there is joy and contentment in the realization that as we live out God's will in our lives He will provide the strength and wisdom needed. We are surrounded by a marvelous team of district leaders and wonderful pastors who are serving God and their congregations and are increasingly committed to reaching out to their communities.

We have the wonderful privilege of living at the foot of beautiful Table Rock on the grounds of our district conference and retreat center. A short golf cart ride takes us to the office where we work together. We also continue to enjoy spending time together as we travel to the churches and to district events.

May 2009 saw us once again head for **Hilton Head Island**, where, as a family, we have now spent 12 one-week vacations. Beginning with one condo in 1997, then expanding to two, we now have plans to use three condos in 2010. It is truly a special week for all of us, filled with lots of sun, sand, and attention focused on grandkids at this point in our lives.

In late July, we hosted a **Rampey family reunion** here at Table Rock with approximately 100 aunts, uncles, cousins, and second, third, and fourth generation grandkids attending the 3½ day event. What a fantastic time we had!

August 2009 marked **40 years of marriage** for us. We celebrated with a two-week trip to the Pacific Northwest and a cruise to Alaska. It was a marvelous time of reflection upon God's blessings, rediscovery of why we fell in love and married, and renewal of our commitment to one another for "as long we both shall live." At this stage in our lives that is significantly reassuring. Here is a favorite picture from the trip.



We are enjoying our growing family immensely these days. It appears that the rate of growth has slowed a bit with just one grandchild added this year and no new announcements. A week after the family picture was taken at Hilton Head Island (see back of letter), our ninth grandchild, Abigail, was born to Matt and Michelle.

Marian and Lance Vischer and their three children—Mallory (age 8), Max (age 6) and Miles (age 2)—live in Liberty, SC, just 35 minutes from us. Lance enjoys his teaching career at Greenville Tech (full-time) and Furman University (adjunct). Marian, in addition to homeschooling, teaches one day a week at the enrichment program Classical Conversations, while the children are engaged in their classes there. It is a joy to see them thriving in their areas of interest. They are quite a crew and we enjoy getting to be around them so frequently.

Matt and Michelle, Will (age 4) and Abigail (age 7 months) moved to Denver, CO, in October. We had the joy of visiting them in their new and beautiful surroundings last week and returned home with thanksgiving for God's provision for a job for Matt (albeit a temporary one at this point), the worshipping community in which they are involved, and a fresh start. They are involved with "mini churches" that are being established in the Aurora area. Two groups have been started in just the past few months. This is under the direction of the Colorado District and Cherry Creek Wesleyan Church.

Aaron and Liz face the challenges and joys of parenting two young ones—Ike (almost 3) and Marlowe (18 months)—a task that demands full-time attention during the waking hours. Aaron continues his work as a Reconciliation Specialist with Conclusive Marketing while Liz devotes her days to the children. On December 19, they moved from Huntersville to Concord, NC (about 15 miles away), a move directly related to their participation in a ministry involving their church (Mecklenburg Community) and a parachurch organization, Apartment Life. (www.apartmentlife.org)

Emily, and Matthew Miller, along with Ethan (almost 4) and Cora Jane (age 1) were hired by Boys Farm (www.buildingboys.com) in October as houseparents to 5 teenage boys. This ministry is located in Newberry, SC (about two hours from us). They seem to very much at home and are already making a difference there. They and the children all seem to be adjusting well. Needless to say, we are delighted to have them so much closer to us (moving back to SC from Michigan).

Buddy's parents, **Marshall and Ruth Rampey**, just celebrated their 67th wedding anniversary. They continue to thrive in their local church (FWC/ALIVE), and Dad truly enjoys his ministry as Chaplain at the Greenville campus of Southern Wesleyan University. Their health continues to be a marvel and something for which we give God praise. It is especially nice to be close to them and see them as often as we do.



We wish for you and yours a blessed Christmas season and a wonderful New Year. We treasure our family relationships, our colleagues and our friends who continue to give generously of their prayers and encouragement. May 2010 be a year in which you experience God's blessing and discover ever-increasing ways in which to serve Him by serving others.

Blessings to you all,

Buddy and Joan



Pictured above (in family groups) from left to right: Aaron & Liz Rampey with Ike and Marlowe; Lance & Marian Vischer with Mallory, Max, Miles; Buddy and Joan; Matt & Michelle Rampey with Will (Abigail was born one week later!); Matthew & Emily Miller with Ethan and Cora Jane.

