

Adel-gram...too!

1996

A second generation's Christmas greetings

Dear Loved Ones,

1996...Whew! What an exciting and eventful year it has been for our family! It's kind of funny, but every time something new or interesting would happen throughout the year, Damon would say something like, "That should be fun for you to write about in the Christmas letter." Well, so much had happened that by October Damon was saying, "How are you ever going to fit everything into the Adel-gram!?" I'm going to do my best to be brief, yet informative, but you may very well be holding in your hands a virtual novella!

I'll begin with the most important and life-changing event: the addition of Annaleigh Mae to our family! I had to chuckle a bit at the irony of last year's *Adel-gram...Too!* as I wrote about my desire to have a child. Little did I know that Annaleigh was alive and kicking even then (actually, the kicking didn't start for another few months). We found out that I was pregnant in mid-January, so I guess you can say this was "The Year of Annaleigh" as many of our decisions and things that I'll proceed to tell you of were a direct result of our little bundle-to-be.

Our first major decision was to move from our cramped one-bedroom apartment to more spacious quarters...our first house! It's not by any means a mansion, but after living in a college dorm for three years and our tiny apartment for two, it sure seems like it! It has three bedrooms, two baths, a beautiful front porch, and three dormer windows. There are trees all around, and it's nestled into a quiet little neighborhood in Summerville. Damon says that I'm dramatizing a little bit, but I can't help it. I love this house! We have found in the last few months that being homeowners is both a responsibility and a blessing.

Damon thought it might be best to quit the reserve police force and get a paying part-time job (we had heard through the grapevine that having a baby is a costly expenditure). He went to work at the inside garden department of Home Depot, a home improvement warehouse. He also tried his hand at selling ads for a local newspaper, but we decided that trying to hold down three jobs was for the birds. He is still plugging away at his full-time position as office manager at Low Country Physical Rehabilitation. We both look forward to the day when just one salary will be sufficient. Damon would like Annaleigh to know him as more than the crazy guy who comes in at 11:00 p.m., tosses her in the air a few times, kisses her cheek and proceeds to collapse into the bed.

Much of Damon's job-juggling was and is to make possible my dream of being a stay-at-home-mommy. It was really strange to not go back to school this year to resume my teaching position, and I miss my students; but I know I would miss Annaleigh more. Damon really loves the fact that I am at home and in many ways it makes life much simpler for all of us.

Well, Annaleigh, who arrived on September 6, weighing 6lbs and 12oz, is three and a half months old now. She is a model baby who has slept through the night since she was three weeks old and hardly ever fusses. I guess you could say that she is very "low maintenance." She can hold her head up, smile, laugh and babble endlessly. Sometimes it even sounds like she is trying to sing! Needless to say, she is a joy, and we both thank God for her daily.

One change that was not influenced by Annaleigh was our church. In May, the Lord directed us to Grace Alliance Church. It was a difficult move emotionally after five years at Goose Creek Church of God, but God has blessed us tremendously. We have a wonderful new church family, while still maintaining precious friendships at our old church. Damon is working with the men's ministry, and I'm singing in the choir. We are still unsure as to whether we are supposed to work with the youth or not. The church presently does not have a youth program, but the Lord has not given us peace in the matter yet.

Being a new parent has caused me to reflect back to the very first Christmas when Christ was born. Now I can truly relate to Mary's joy at first seeing her beautiful baby boy. I can imagine Joseph's proud face as he cradled his new son in his arms. They too probably felt helpless when He cried for seemingly no reason at all. I wonder if Mary also woke up in the middle of the night just to check if He was still breathing. Damon and I can truly share in the feelings once experienced by the parents of Jesus but with one very significant difference...Annaleigh is not a Savior. She will never perform a miracle. She will probably not be beaten and ridiculed by a group of angry rioters. She will not die on a cross or leave an empty tomb. As much joy, pride and triumph that her birth brought our family, Jesus' birth still means so much more. I encourage you this season to take a fresh look at its Reason and truly celebrate the most meaningful birth of all.

We wish you all the merriest of Christmases,

The Adalgren family
Damon, Kellie &
Annaleigh (and Baxter too!)