

Dear Family & Friends,

To say this has been an eventful year would be a huge understatement! After a long nine months apart, Ryan returned to Minnesota for the summer after his first year of graduate school at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. At the same time, Katy was finishing her third and final year of her undergraduate degree, and graduated in May from the University of Minnesota – College of Biological Sciences with a B.S. in microbiology.

The summer was a mix of relaxation, wedding preparations, and absolute insanity. Midway through the summer, we took a trip to Las Vegas with family and friends to celebrate Katy's 21st birthday. It isn't very often that you see someone as excited to be carded as Katy was during that trip.

The rest of the summer was a buzz in preparation for our wedding in August. Dresses were fitted, flowers were ordered, tuxes were rented, and practically everyone involved managed to emerge with their sanity intact. On August 12th, we were married at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Maplewood, the church in which Ryan's parents were married several decades before. We were surrounded by friends and family who shared with us one of the happiest days of our lives. Katy says that the day went by so fast that things were almost a blur, but thanks to the marvels of technology we literally have thousands of pictures to remind us of all the details of our joyous celebration (Ryan still hasn't seen them all).

Following the wedding, we had a wonderful honeymoon in Daytona Beach, Florida. Our hotel room was right on the beach! As we found out, Florida is rather hot and humid during August, however we were fortunate enough to slip in nicely between hurricanes hitting the region. Given the number of them that have occurred this year, that was a rather impressive feat!

After returning from Florida, we shortly departed for Illinois so Ryan can continue with his graduate education in computer science. This year we are renting a town house in Champaign and are always happy to have visitors. Katy has started working as a microbiology research scientist at Kim Laboratories (<http://www.kimlaboratories.com>). Her position has afforded her the opportunity to work with microscopic creatures most of us look to go our entire lives without encountering. Kim Labs is a startup company; they will launch their first product early next year.

This year has brought us many blessings! Thank you all who have shared it with us, either in spirit or in person! Merry Christmas & God bless!

Love,
Katy & Ryan Morlok