

Thursday, May 11th - Thursday, June 15th - We left this evening at about 6:00 p.m. to go to the States. After the long flight, the stressful layover in LA, and reliving the same day twice (because we cross the international date line), we arrived in Denver on Thursday evening at about 7:30 pm. We were greeted with smiles, hugs and a few tears by my parents, my sister and her husband. It sure was good to finally see them. We stayed in Denver 4 days (Eric spoke 5 times in those 4 days) - three times at Columbine and twice at Bear Valley chapel. We got to be with my mother on mother's day, so that was special.

On **Tuesday** morning, **May 16th**, we headed to Oklahoma for Evan's wedding (Eric's brother). We were greeted at the airport by one of our best friends, Ben Bruner. We visited with him while we waited for the Brandells to arrive. They were a little late getting away from Duncan. but they did eventually get there and were excited to see us. We spent two weeks in Oklahoma. We travelled to Tulsa for a long weekend so Eric could give the presentation and preach at 29th and Yale. We spent the rest of the time with our family in Duncan getting ready for the wedding. Eric also spoke in Duncan at Eastside twice and Chisholm Trail once. We were encouraged by both of those congregations and their interest in the work in Vanuatu. We were so glad to spend time with Christians in both of those congregations. In addition, we got to spend some time with the Elk Avenue congregation (where Eric's parents attend). In between speaking engagements, we got to spend some quality time with Eric's family. His aunt and uncle came up from Houston (along with his two cousins) and we had a great time with them too. The wedding was beautiful and we really enjoyed getting to spend time with Evan and Jennifer before the wedding. We love them and are so proud of the young Christian man and woman they have become. After a short two weeks with the Brandell family in Duncan, we went back to Colorado.

We flew back to Denver on **Tuesday, May 30th** spent a few days there. On **Wednesday, May 31st**, we visited with the Christians at the Cherry Vista congregation. Eric did the presentation. They were all really excited about the work that is going on in Vanuatu. Then on **Sunday, June 4th** we worshipped with the congregation at Columbine. We love that congregation so much. They have been such an encouragement to us during our time back in the States. Sunday evening we went to Bear Valley for their first night of Bible Discovery Days and then headed to Southfork for a week of rest and relaxation. We read, watched movies, worked puzzles, helped mom and dad with work on the house, went to town a few times to shop, went shooting, and went to a few lakes so the guys could fish. It was a nice, relaxing week. We enjoyed it. We went to the Wednesday night Bible study at the Southfork church of Christ. Then on Sunday morning, **June 11th** we left Southfork and headed to Rye so Eric could give our presentation and preach to the church there. We were so encouraged by that congregation. They were running about 20 people when we were there last. This Sunday they had 90 people! Wow, what a growth. We were encouraged to see them reaching out to the community there and studying the Bible with so many new people. Sunday evening Eric preached at Cherry Vista, so we got to visit with everyone there again. We really enjoy them. The rest of the week we tried to pack, see some friends, and make some last minute trips to the store.

We left Denver on Thursday. June 15th. It was hard to say goodbye, but we were eager to get back to Vanuatu. We had missed the Christians there and the work we knew

would be waiting when we returned. We have so many exciting things coming up in July and August that we were excited to get back.

It was a great trip. We sure enjoyed seeing all of our friends and family members.

Although I thought it might be a little strange to come to the States after a year of living overseas, it wasn't. We love living in Vanuatu, and it is very different than the States. but both places feel comfortable now. So, it wasn't strange like I thought it might be.

We know it was a blessing to be able to spend some time with friends and family after being gone for a year and we are so appreciative of the opportunity. We loved being able to be there for Evan and Jen's wedding - we wouldn't have wanted to miss it. We had a great time and will have great memories to "hold us" until next time. :o)