

## Litch and Shelly Litchfield

The Litchfields served at Georgia-Cumberland Academy from 1982 until 1989. Pastor Litch was chaplain and taught Bible. Shelly taught Art, Drama, and Freshman Bible. The years at GCA were also very special because their family grew by four! They met Jody Ballard (class of 1988) through the Big Brother/Big Sister program and she became their foster daughter. Jody's sister Brenda (class of 1989) came to live with the Litchfields a year later. Shelly and Litch say that it was these two teenagers who convinced them to start a homemade family, and sons Ryan and Adam were born during these GCA years.



After GCA, they moved to Knoxville, TN where Litch pastored the Knoxville SDA Church for several years. From Knoxville, Litch and Shelly moved to Collegedale, TN, where they both worked at Collegedale Academy. Litch served as chaplain, while Shelly taught English and Bible.

Litch and Shelly retired in 2010 after serving 17 years at C.A. Their retirement has provided more time to minister to people in a variety of ways, both locally and around the world.

Cathy Connelly Stone presented the following tribute on behalf of the class of 1988:

*Litch and Shelly stand out for many GCA alumni from the era of the 1980s as two people who significantly influenced our lives.*

*When I met them in 1982, I had no idea how important they would be to my classmates and me and how much we would learn from them:*

*With Jesus in the vessel, you can smile at the storm, which is good because everyone is going to have storms in their lives. If you haven't had one yet, and aren't in a storm now, it's coming! Right, Litch?*

*Loving and serving God can be fun! It doesn't have to be boring or restrictive.*

*Service is important. It is a way for us to show God to others and draw closer to God at the same time. Litch and Shelly led us in outreach through share-a-loaf,*

*clown ministries, a big brother and sister program for community children, and the drama club.*

*You will see Jesus in others daily if you look, and you should let them know when you do. We saw Jesus in Litch and Shelly regularly.*

*A life of service means putting Jesus first, your self last, and others in between.*

*I learned from Litch that I should be a social worker. I was a struggling senior, lost and unsure of what I should do in life. When Litch had me shadow a social worker, I had no clue what a social worker even was. Litch just dropped me off at a social worker's office in Calhoun, and I fell in love with her job, and I never changed my mind. Twenty-six years later, I am doing the job Litch thought would suit me.*

*Shelly taught us Freshman Bible. She embodied the caring and fun-loving character of Christ. Pregnant with her first child, she looked like a lowercase letter b. One day near her son's delivery, she even faked going into labor. She seriously scared us and modeled how to pull off a great joke!*

*Litch and Shelly's life of service continues to affect others even during their retirement. Last year, my children were blessed when Litch presented their school's Week of Prayer. I thank God for the Litchfields and the blessings of their ministries.*