

The Next Step...

*“In his heart a man plans his course,
but **the LORD** determines his steps.”*

Proverbs 16:9



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God has directed our family to a change in ministry here in Bolivia!

After much prayer, time in God’s Word, watching what He is doing in/around us, and seeking godly counsel, God has made it clear to our family that at the end of the CCS semester this June 2011, *while continuing under SIM*, we will step away from our current ministry as high school Bible teachers at CCS.

Once we acquire **MORE** Spanish/cultural/ministry training, beginning this September 2011, we will **begin a Spanish/Bolivian ministry in the area of leadership training, strengthening the local evangelical Bolivian churches here in Cochabamba, Bolivia!**

**We invite you to READ and PRAY over the “Next Steps” God has faithfully unfolded for our family as we partner with YOU- for the glory of God to the nations!
Thank YOU!**



In our last prayer letter, we invited you to pray with us for God to show how/where we could connect our kids club children and their families to an evangelical church. **PRAISE GOD** for his answer! **God led us to the SIM-related evangelical church, “Bella Vista”, which is just 5 blocks from our house!** After meeting with the leadership of Bella Vista, sharing what God has been doing in our kids club and the desire to see them connect to an evangelical church, God made it clear to this church and to our family that this was the NEXT STEP for our kids club!

us in the celebration as one of the first steps in connecting these children to the church! After the children finished decorating cookies and played some fun games with those from the church, we made the **BIG announcement** that Kids Club would now meet on Sundays!

PRAISE GOD! Every Sunday since this announcement, God has brought from 4-20 kids to our gate at 10am, to play for 15 minutes before walking up to church with us! Since January, we have slowly transitioned from first having the kids meet at our place to play to now having them walk directly up to church all on their own! Some still meet us at our



Pastor Freddy reading the Christmas Story

Throughout last December, “Bella Vista” worked and planned alongside our family for our Christmas kids club. The day of our Christmas kids club, where over 60 were present, 10 Bolivians from Bella Vista joined



Kids walking to church

house gate Sunday mornings so they can walk with us, but **it has been a great joy to see the other children walk into church all on their own!**

PRAISE GOD! Since God began this kids club ministry back in January 2005, he has been working mightily to make His name and His salvation known in our neighborhood! **Over 150 children and mothers have heard the Gospel and have received their own copy of His Word!**

Thank you for your partnership in **His Kingdom work** by your faithful prayers, generous financial giving, encouragement through emails, letters, phone calls and even your personally "adopting" (by prayer) many of these children over the years!

It has been an incredible delight to work alongside this very small church, Bella Vista! The week before classes started at CCS this January, Tami and I had the pastor and his wife over to our house. The four of us each took time to share and pray about the vision God has placed on our hearts to reach the lost around us, grow together in God's Word, and multiply ourselves for His glory!



Our Sunday School class

Sundays. We are currently teaching the children through the book of John. Our class meets outside, behind the church, under the canopy we had used for kids club, but now belongs to Bella Vista! We have a class of about 7-20, depending each Sunday, with Bolivian children ranging in age from 4-18 years old.

Austin also was asked by the pastor at Bella Vista to use his music talent in the worship team that has just begun at the



church. Austin was excited to do so, but the first Sunday he was to play, about a half hour before walking up to church, we went into Austin's room only to find him crying! He said he was too scared to play in church. After shooting an arrow prayer to God asking for wisdom, we began to share how one of our supporters back home, who plays the violin, told us how nervous she gets when she is asked to play in church, but she reminds herself that she is playing for our Heavenly Father! Then, the nerves subside as she plays for Jesus. Austin replied, "Really, she thinks that? And it helps her?" And we said, "Yes it does, Austin. God helps her just like he will help you as you play for him today!" God used this precious partner's testimony of trust and obedience to "spur on" Austin to be trusting and obedient to

Him as well. And Austin played beautifully and with a big smile on his face! **PRAISE GOD for the offering Austin presented to our Heavenly Father!**

And, what God did to multiply Austin's offering of trust and obedience was that during practice the hour before the service began, **Zaida, a 12 year old Bolivian girl from our kids club walked up to church on her own and asked Tami if she would help her accept Jesus as her Savior!** God is Almighty and for some incredible reason, He has determined to use HIS BODY (and that includes YOU, as our personal prayer and financial partners trust and obey God) to accomplish His will on earth!

Thank YOU!

This past December/January, the SIM Bolivia leadership formally approved our change in ministry from teaching Bible classes at CCS to the area of leadership training, strengthening the local evangelical Bolivian churches here in Cochabamba, Bolivia! We will remain serving under SIM.

Our sending church in Marshalltown, IA also excitedly supports this new God-directed ministry focus! We also just recently shared this change with the CCS staff and students. They were shocked and sad to hear that we are leaving CCS, but are very excited for God's next step for our family! We will miss the daily privilege of teaching/mentoring/discipling students and staff which God has given us these past 6 years at CCS! The hardest part of this decision continues to be leaving our students and the staff at CCS, whom we deeply love and care about!

We would like to share this change in ministry with you face to face! Knowing this desire of ours, SIM has given us approval for a short Home Assignment this June-August!

We look forward to being with you!

THANK YOU for your faithful prayers and financial support as we partner together for His glory to the nations!

Our TENTATIVE Home Assignment Schedule:
June 13th-August 29th 2011

- **June 13th** Leave for the states and be in Charlotte, NC to debrief at SIMUSA until later that week
- **June 17-28** In NY to be with Charlie's folks and share with supporting churches and partners
- **July 3-18** In IA to spend time with family and share with supporting churches and partners
- **July 18-August 13** Travel West to Utah and California to be with family, partners and a supporting church
- **August 11-28th** In IA & IN with partners, supporting churches and family
- **August 29** We return to Bolivia!
- **September** Tami & I begin several intense months of Spanish language/cultural & ministry training **before** beginning our new ministry. Austin & Caris begin school at CCS.

Please join us in prayer for this time home with YOU!

For more pictures, or to receive this & other updates electronically, please visit our website: www.thethorsens.com