

October 2009

# Ministry Update

## Duane & Carin Guthrie

### Greetings from Bolivia

We recently passed the five month mark here in Cochabamba and we can tell you that it simply does not seem possible. Most of our time has been spent learning language and we are pleased to report that it is coming along very well. Fewer Bolivians look at us strangely each and every day, a source of great encouragement for us. Thanks to our beloved colleague Ivan Gutierrez we have also had the opportunity to spend time with a couple of STM teams from Canada, one of which we were able to assist in getting to La Paz for a few days. This was very exciting for us as this will be our destination next year to engage in urban community development and integral mission work alongside the Baptist Churches in El Alto.

There is no other way to say it; these two cities are simply stunning. El Alto is a big bustling city that is growing at a stunning rate creating many challenging situations for its residents. La Paz, also large, is one of the most unique places one can find anywhere. It is as if God took a giant



La Paz, Bolivia

ice cream scoop to the flat lands of the Altiplano to create a bowl, and then decided to pop a city into it.

Since our last update we have had the pleasure of welcoming Jim and Diane McBeth to Bolivia where they will be serving as Latin American Team Leader and in Community Development respectively. This completes a busy year for Team Bolivia in which every Canadian member is new to the country. Needless to say, our Bolivian colleagues, Emigdio Veizaga and Ivan Gutierrez, have been extremely busy and abundantly generous in helping us all settle in. Along with our staff changes, we welcomed to Cochabamba in July the Whittle family who has volunteered for one year to teach ESL to Bolivian Baptist Union staff and assist the team at Casa de La Amistad, the ministry to children whose parents are incarcerated in the prisons here in the city. Brian and Norma have two children, Matthew and Sarah, that have become good friends to our kids...we are blessed to have them here.



## A Land of Contrast



Walk the streets of any city in Bolivia and it won't be long before the contrast that defines this country will become evident. Streets lined with homes that may very well have been scooped from the pages of "Better Homes and Gardens" exist alongside garbage bins thoroughly picked over by the city's poor. Parks of beauty that are literally the homes to many, carved out of the

foliage that surrounds the space. Avenues where the very young and the very old wash windows or beg for change or are simply passed out in the thin stretch of land between the roads. The first impression of Cochabamba for example, is one of excitement. Buildings are going up everywhere, new stores and shops with an ever increasing supply of goods keep coming into

the city. It is easy to get caught up in the euphoria of an economic boom. Unfortunately, this boom is leaving far too many behind. For the urban poor, this increase in prosperity is of no comfort. There is an existence scratched out daily. For the working poor, the vast majority of this wonderful country, life is only one illness or accident away from disaster. It is for these that we have come.

*"It is always exciting to see what God is doing in and through STM participants."*



## Short Term Ministry

One of the highlights for us so far has been the STM teams that have journeyed to Bolivia. In September the team welcomed Blythwood Road Baptist and the Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec. STM is where we were first introduced to CBM when we joined our home church on a trip to Nairobi. Alongside our partner, the African Christian Church and Schools, our team of 19 was profoundly moved in the time we spent in

Kenya. A few months after returning to Canada and a divinely appointed meeting with our own Gordon King, Director of The Sharing Way, we stepped out and applied to CBM.

It is always exciting to see what God is doing in and through STM participants. We are looking forward to a time when we will have the opportunity to work alongside other Canadians in projects throughout this country.

For those of you who are interested in Short Term Ministry please feel free to check out CBM's website [www.cbmin.org](http://www.cbmin.org) and click on the get involved tab where many STM opportunities are posted.

STM has played an important role in the development of our understanding of mission both global and local. Perhaps one day we will have the chance to enjoy a bowl of quinoa soup together in El Alto.

## Partners in Mission

To our *Partners in Mission* we wish to send out our very heartfelt appreciation for your prayers and most generous support of our family here in Bolivia. Simply put... **We could not do this without you!**



If you are interested in becoming our *Partner in Mission*, please feel free to contact Eileen Moore-Crispin at Canadian Baptist Ministries. 905.821.3533

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For more immediate updates...  
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