



Greetings from Cochabamba, Bolivia!



We arrived on September 19, bags intact after a smooth trip from Toronto. Cochabamba is a beautiful city with very warm and welcoming people who have shown us much grace as we use our Spanish. Today, Sept 21 is the first official day of spring (and Valentine's Day!) which reminds us of how far from Canada we are!

As we settle in, we are diligently looking for a suitable place to live while meeting our church partners and beginning the visa residency process which will make acquiring things like internet and a vehicle easier. We are very thankful for the smooth transition so far and plan to remind each other of this as we get deeper into the bureaucracy that comes with getting things done!

As we maneuver throughout this city of 800,000 people with about as many cars on old streets with our trusty colleague, Ivan, at the wheel, I wonder how we will ever manage driving here. In addition to the congestion and aggressive drivers, there are regular street closures due to blockades (the people's opportunity to communicate with the government of the day). Seeing where you need to go and getting there will require a good sense of direction. Thankfully a massive, white statue of Jesus (Cristo) on a hill overlooking the city provides the perfect landmark for figuring out where you are at any given time.

Español!

We are very thankful for the months given to us to focus on language study at the Spanish Language Institute in San Jose Costa Rica. We completed 2 trimesters of study that we feel have given us a good base to work from. We have had

dedicated teachers and many wonderful fellow students to walk along side us as we managed the challenges of language learning together. We are optimistic that we will be able to become competent Spanish speakers one day!



ILE Grammar class colleagues

Our time in Canada

We enjoyed 5 wonderful weeks back in Canada (Aug. 11-Sept.17) with our families in Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia. We also attended OASIS, the annual gathering of the Atlantic Baptist Convention and connected with many friends and supporters. A highlight for us both was the opportunity to speak at our home church, The Journey Church in Moncton, NB. We had a special time remembering this journey in global ministry we have been on together over these past 8 years.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-Ve_KORWFwk&feature=em-subst_digest

We have also had several days with colleagues in our Mississauga office before our departure to Bolivia. We left Canada, encouraged and energised!

Priorities Fall 2014

Eleven months after our departure from Rwanda, we are finally in Bolivia for the longer term as CBM team leaders in Latin America. This means that we will help to navigate relationships between partner churches in Latin America and Canada, support the work that we are already engaged in

together, as well as look for additional opportunities for partnerships, to the benefit of both the Latin Church and our Canadian constituency.

CBM works through and by invitation of the local church. We know that working with the church sometimes brings with it particular challenges but we believe that is God's preferred approach to affect lasting changes in people and communities. God's plan for the church is for it to be relevant to the community, even with all its messiness.

Our commitment is long term and requires accompaniment. We have seen that partnerships do well when Canadians are on the ground helping both Canadians and national people to navigate the challenges and privileges we have as partners in mission.

We plan to live initially in Bolivia where CBM and the Baptist Churches in Canada have a history of more than 100 years. That history is a tremendous privilege and at the same time will possibly be a challenge to navigate as we affect changes.

From our base in Bolivia we will also support:

- The partnership in Cuba which has a solid church and church leader base, and we think tremendous potential to affect the Cuban church and Canadian churches partnered with them, over the next few years as Cuba opens its economy and society.
- Argentina and Costa Rica where CBM is supporting theological training with an emphasis on lay leaders
- In El Salvador where we have had a long history, but have a minimal investment at present.
- We will also be investigating new opportunities for partnerships in other LA countries. In spite of the numerous North American churches working in LA, there are still many communities with little understanding of how the gospel can be relevant to their challenges in life and many churches looking for opportunities to engage their communities.

Prayer

We appreciate your prayers for us and the work:

- Language learning must continue to bring us to a "professional" level required to effectively communicate with our partners.
- Setting up a home base – done in short time and in safe area
- For new Canadian staff to come to Bolivia (yes, this could be you!),
- For committed Bolivian staff
- Good cultural guides for us both as we desire to develop healthy relationships in a foreign language and different cultures.

- For all our Latin American Partners as they seek to be relevant representatives of Jesus in their context.

Bless you for supporting us through this time as we have been preparing to take on new roles.

Thank you especially for praying for us as we.....



....head into uncharted waters....

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, and not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish.....God chose what is weak.....God chose what is low.....He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus. 1 Cor 1:26-28

Bendiciones

Bruno soucy.bruno@gmail.com

Kathleen soucy.kathleen@gmail.com

Become a Partner in Mission with us:

If you are not supporting us, we would love to see you participate financially in this work. On line:

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or call 905.821.3533 to make a donation. For other information, please email Barb Keys, Partners in Mission Coordinator at bkeys@cbmin.org.

For **US donations**, make cheques to Water Stone Foundation (86767 85086 SOUBK in the memo line)"
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cbmin.org


Canadian Baptist Ministries

7185 Millcreek Drive
Mississauga · Ontario
L5N 5R4 · Canada

TEL: +1.905.821.3533

FAX: +1.905.826.3441

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through word & deed*