

Dec 2015

"Speak up for the people who have no voice, for the rights of all the down-and-outers. Speak out for justice! Stand up for the poor and destitute!"
Proverbs 31:8-9 (MSG)

2015 Highlights

New team members!

We have new Global Field Staff, Tim and Kallie Hutton who are working with our church partners to support CBM programming in Bolivia. They bring a fresh perspective and energy and are a welcomed addition to our "team".

Soucy Travels

While in **El Salvador** this October, we saw some strategic development that has its foundations in the work of the local church. While engaging local communities, churches are helping build proper drainage alongside roads to prevent flooding, working to bring proper toilets into all homes, and also to build homes for the most vulnerable. We are getting closer to actually increasing our presence and participation in church-based initiatives ...



Community development project in Usulután El Salvador

In **Cuba** we spent time with a church where 50% of its members are living with some kind of developmental or physical challenge. Many of these people have been

disconnected from their community because Cuba doesn't have systems in place nor the resources to support them. This church, *Luz del Mundo* (Light of the World) has become just that in their community. People have been drawn to this church that is caring for others. After participating in a CBM funded Project Management program, they competed with their peers to receive partial funding for a community livestock project where all members participate in the work and all members participate in the benefits...



Luz del Mundo livestock project

A church that cares for its community - may seem quite basic. Isn't this what the church is supposed to do? However in much of Latin America, traditionally the Christian church has been more focused on keeping members separate from the world and focused within its own walls. There are some common threads in El Salvador, Cuba and Bolivia in how the church is developing and we at CBM are committed to strengthening these networks.

What that looks like includes supporting active discipleship – helping the church to understand what it means to be a church that has impact in its community, and our responsibilities as Christ followers to our families, our work and our communities.



Seminary students in Matanzas Cuba

We are providing and encouraging accompaniment – people willing to walk alongside the church helping them to partner with their community and helping to identify initiatives that respond to real community needs, that the church can manage themselves.

Family

In 2015 our family numbers increased with the addition of grandchildren;

Caleb born to Laura and Jonathan Vokey on Jan. 8 in Moose Jaw, SK and **Ira** born to Caroline and Jonathan Selig on August 4 in Saint John, NB.

This coming year on Sept 3, 2016, our son Ben will marry a lovely young woman, Elissa Stoddard in her home town, Orillia, ON. We are feeling blessed.

Looking ahead to 2016

We look forward to strengthening our partnerships and impact of Canadian investment in Bolivia, Cuba and El Salvador. We are thankful for some small gains in Spanish and know that time is a friend to language learning! We look forward to hosting 8 Canadian churches that are investing in trips to Bolivia and 5 to Cuba, to learn, to serve, to be blessed and to be a blessing to others.

2016 also marks 10 years since we became global field staff with CBM. Many of you have been with us since

the beginning and we are so thankful for your very real presence.

It's Christmas!

Christmas is almost here! We have our decorations up and are waiting for family to arrive for Christmas. While far from our children and their families, we are thankful to know they will be with other friends and family to celebrate Christmas this year. At the same time, we can't help but turn our thoughts to families living as refugees in many areas of the world, living as IDPs in the Middle East and all who live with the daily threat of violence.

The message of Christmas was "Peace on earth! "What have we have done? Despite this and in spite of us, the power of Christmas remains today: God has come to us, born as a man, traveling the roads to teach, heal and deliver until his death and resurrection! Our God is a living God and He is powerful to heal the broken hearted, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord and is ready to give blessings to all who come to him. (Luke 4: 18-19)

Best wishes for Christmas and a New Year full of His grace.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Colossians 3:15

Bendiciones

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