

PLANES WITH PURPOSE

News from the Hammitt Family

April 2022

OUR TEAM IS GROWING!

In January, our ITM missionaries came from the various communities where they live and serve to gather in Cochabamba for our annual conference. It's exciting to see how the ministry has grown, even since we arrived in Bolivia less than three years ago! It was just ten years ago that ITM was started with only a couple of families. The Lord is continuing to bring new families and individuals to ITM to serve Him in Bolivia.

At our conference we were joined by several members of Misión Etnos (Ethnos 360 Bolivia). Over the past several months the leaders of our two organizations have been talking and praying about how we can partner together to be more effective in the work that God has called us to. Misión Etnos has a training center in Santa Cruz, where they prepare missionaries to go into unreached areas, understand the culture and worldview of the people, and develop a plan of discipleship that is tailored to that specific worldview.

Several missionaries who have graduated from Etnos have decided to

join our ITM missionaries in San Lorenzo to teach at the *Centro Biblico Misionero*. They will be helping to develop a new curriculum tailored to the worldview of the students who attend the CBM. This will be a challenge, since we have students from at least four different culture and language groups!

Please pray for the team in San Lorenzo as they face this challenge! We are trusting the Lord to continue to work through the CBM as we teach and train disciples to be sent out to remote communities in Bolivia.



THE ONE THAT ROLLED AWAY

On February 3, I answered my phone and received the news that no pilot wants to hear. An emergency locator transmitter (ELT) was sending an SOS signal in the area where my friend DJ had been flying. ELTs only begin transmitting under two conditions: when manually activated by the pilot, or when triggered by high g-loads, as in a crash. We began gathering as much information as possible and preparing for a search and rescue.



Thankfully, within a few hours DJ was able to find a cellular signal and

contact his wife. He had gotten out of the plane before it rolled away and tumbled down a hillside, activating the ELT. He was unharmed, but the airplane was totaled.

Although the airplane was essentially destroyed, there were still many components that could be salvaged. However, getting those parts out would not be easy. Reaching the plane would require driving 14-16 hours on rough roads through the mountains, then hiking for three hours between 11,000 and 13,000 feet above sea level.

So, along with a team of aircraft mechanics and volunteers, Aaron went in February to help recover the airplane. It was a long and tiring trip, but we were happy that we could help DJ in that way. You can read more about the trip and see some photos at <http://blog.planeswithpurpose.com>.



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A New Place to Call Home

For quite some time we have been looking for a new house. Our current home has lots of indoor space and is in a convenient location, but since we moved here in August 2019 there have been two things we have struggled with. First, because of the noise level on our street, it is rare to get a good night's sleep. Second, we really miss having a yard to enjoy, and where Aliza can run around and play.

So we are happy to report that the Lord has provided a new home for us. It is in a quieter location, set back from the street, and has a large yard. There are some tradeoffs—mainly being further from the airport and the conveniences of the city—but we are excited about the change! We really think we will enjoy the new space, and are looking forward to having a better place to host people. In fact, Tara is already planning to host a bridal shower there in May!



We are thankful for our SUV, which safely and reliably took Aaron over the mountains and some rough roads!



We visited La Paz to renew Ian and Ella's passports, and did some sightseeing while we were there.



Aliza recently started preschool! She has enjoyed making new friends and learning more Spanish.



One of the interesting things about La Paz is the cable car network that gets you around the city.

We are thankful. . .

- ✧ that we were able to get Ian and Ella's passports renewed quickly and easily. Things rarely go that smoothly here!
- ✧ for our new house—especially that it has a nice yard!

Please pray with us. . .

- ✧ for continued wisdom regarding our airplane in the USA: whether we should sell it or keep praying for the Bolivian law to change.
- ✧ for the repairs of our airplane in Cochabamba. Progress has been hindered by problems with some of the parts we received.
- ✧ for our move at the end of April and beginning of May.

"IT'S NOT ABOUT THE AIRPLANES"

This phrase, or some variant of it, is one that I have often heard over the past several years. It is spoken as a reminder to missionary pilots and mechanics—who generally have an affinity towards airplanes ranging from mild interest to fanaticism—that there is a greater purpose to our work. And this is very true. I have even thought about changing the name of our newsletter to make it less aviation-centric. But as they say, talk is cheap. It is one thing to say those words; it's another thing to live them out.

These past few months have been a real test of faith and perseverance. As you know if you've been following along with us, the airplane that I had been flying (and loving it, I might add), went down for repairs in September. So when we returned to Bolivia at the end of last year, the airplane was waiting for me in pieces in the hangar. So instead of getting in the pilot's seat, I sat down in my office chair to order parts and work on other administrative tasks. We have another mechanic working full-time on the airplane, so there is little hands-on work for me to do until all of the parts arrive.

I recently read a devotional by John Piper called *Talk to Your Tears*. It was an interesting take on Psalm 125:5–6: "Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him." Piper points out that even in seasons of tears there are often simple jobs (like sowing) that have to be done. We must be faithful in that work, even in the midst of grief, when we don't feel like doing it. If we persevere, working through our tears, we will be rewarded when the harvest comes. There are multiple levels of life application here! May the Lord help us to persevere in the sowing (in faith, life, and ministry), that we may enjoy the fruits of the harvest that is coming.

