

Jason, Norah, Erynn, Jordan & Derrick Skipper

Your Missionaries to Bolivia, Tennessee, Georgia & the World!

Sept 05, 2016

Greetings from NW Georgia, where it's been so hot that I think that we're all going to melt. ;-) Fall is supposedly right around the corner, so relief is in sight... although moving to the North Pole would be tempting right now.

It's Been a Great Year at Journey

When coming to Rome last year, we absolutely 100% felt that God was moving us here. How could we deny it? Our meeting Pastors Doug & Debbie was miraculous, and an answer to our prayers. Every single door opened, as other doors were closing around us. We could see how each step that we had taken up to that point had been perfect preparation. Although it pained us to leave Tennessee, everyone around us felt the same way, even our church that we were leaving there. We all knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that God was doing something...



And that He did. It's been an amazing year here in Rome. There's too much to write about specifically, but I can outline some of the things that have happened since we've arrived last June (2015).

English: The English side of the church is just on fire. We've seen a year of amazing growth and progress in the church. We hit the ground running. Together with the leadership team, a lot of prayer, dreaming, planning, hard work and God's blessing, things have really taken off over the last year. The average Sunday attendance has more than doubled, the Children's Ministry is booming with a new children's area. The Youth Group has grown from ten to over 40 at times. We've started multiple ministries, including Celebrate Recovery with inmates from the Work Release program at the Floyd County Jail, and with women in a women's recovery center next door to the church. We now have a Food Pantry working out of the church that distributes food to low-income families every Thursday.

Family in the Ministry: Our entire family has been extremely involved. Erynn is on the main worship team, and often leads. She is also the Youth & Hispanic worship leader. Jordan runs everything tech (*sound, lighting, video*) with the Elementary and Youth ministries (*Derrick helps him too*). Norah is involved in prayer, women's ministry, celebrate recovery, food pantry, pastoral care, etc. I've also been in just about everything-worship, sound, media, teaching, preaching, construction, etc. Our job title is "Associate/Hispanic Pastors, and all other things". ;-)



Spanish: On the Spanish side of things, we have seen incredible progress too. It started slowly, but things have sped up greatly. This summer 15 Hispanics+ have given their lives to the Lord. Two new small groups have opened that function throughout the week, and both are booming. The Spanish service also continues every Sunday. Over the past few months God has sent us several key families that have injected youth, passion and excitement into the ministry.

Unexpected News

With all of these amazing things happening, not everything has been perfect. As great as it's been here at Journey, **we won't be staying**. As you may know, we came here needing to raise our first year's salary. The church wasn't in a position to be able to take us on financially, but the hope was that at the end of that year (*ending June 2016*), they would be able to do so. Long story short, they're not.

Our immediate response was desperation! What are we going to do? Where do we go from here? How are we going to live?

Digging Deep - Finding God's Plan

It was a tough situation to process, but over the past few months we have dug deep, rooted ourselves in prayer and found our bearings once again. We have realized clearly that although things haven't worked out here as we had hoped, ALL of this has been God's work. He has been preparing us for what He has TRULY called us to do. This past year has been invaluable to us as people, as a family and as leaders.

Although that initial news came like a dagger to our soul, It has become more than obvious that God has had EVERYTHING under control. I certainly wouldn't have drawn up the plan like this, but I guess that's why I'm not in control and God is.

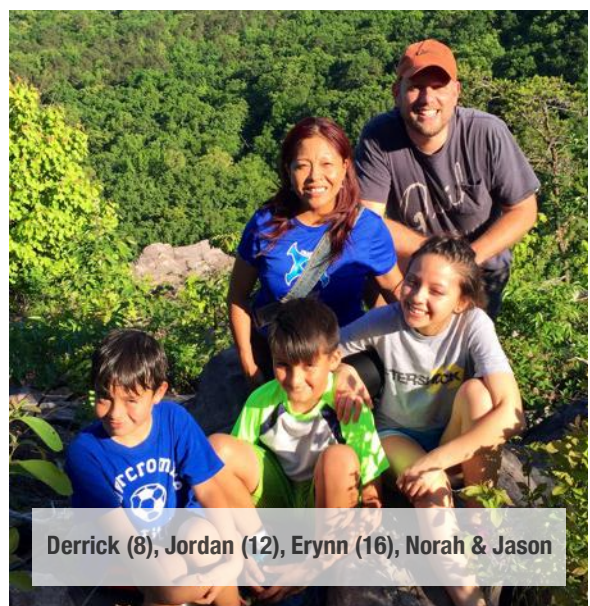
So What Now? That Crazy Calling of God's...

God brought us back to the USA several years ago with a very specific vision - to see His love, grace and power touch the lives of multitudes of those who are far from Him.

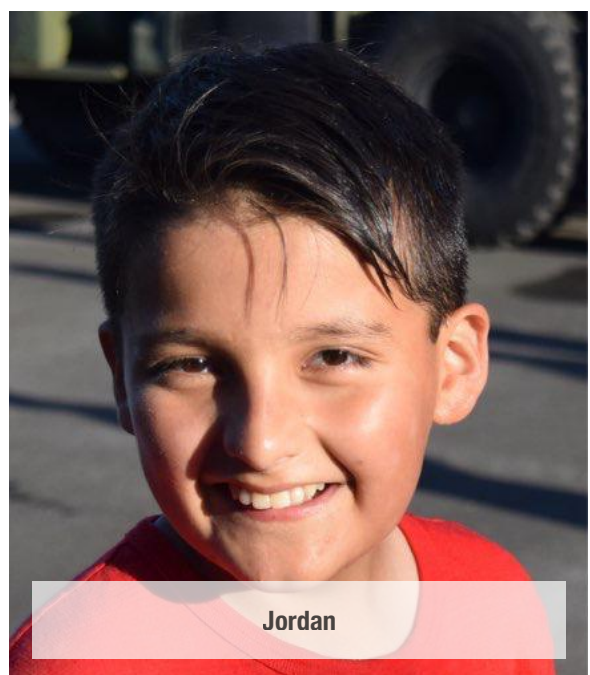
The dream was not only to launch ONE life-giving church, but to multiply that church around the US and the world. We envisioned planting a church that would be the central point of our ministry, and from there sending people out to plant around the USA and the world, including helping the Bolivian church in planting new churches & ministries there.



Norah & Veronica Skuya (Hispanic Leader)



Derrick (8), Jordan (12), Erynn (16), Norah & Jason



Jordan

Getting Down to it... We're Going to Plant Another Church!!!

I could write 20 pages about all of the discussions we've had, the prayer times, the confirmations, the opened and closed doors, why planting a church instead of pastoring and reviving another one, etc., but I won't. (*You're welcome!*) The point is that we HAVE DECIDED to do what God has called us from the beginning to do... plant another church!!! We've done it many times throughout the course of our 18 years of marriage, and although it's a huge undertaking, we're ready to do it again!

PLANTING NEW CHURCHES
IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE
EVANGELISTIC
METHODOLOGY
KNOWN UNDER HEAVEN.

Setting Ourselves Up For Success - The Plan

Networking: First, we will be working with an organization called ARC (*The Association of Related Churches* - www.arcchurches.com). This church planting organization is one of the largest in the United States, and is having incredible success. They are not a denomination, but an organization that works with like-minded people who dream of planting churches in the USA. They are planting on average a church every five days, with an average launch day attendance of 240 people! They offer training, coaching and will also match any gifts that we can raise up to \$70,000! We will travel to Birmingham, Alabama, on September 12-13 for training.

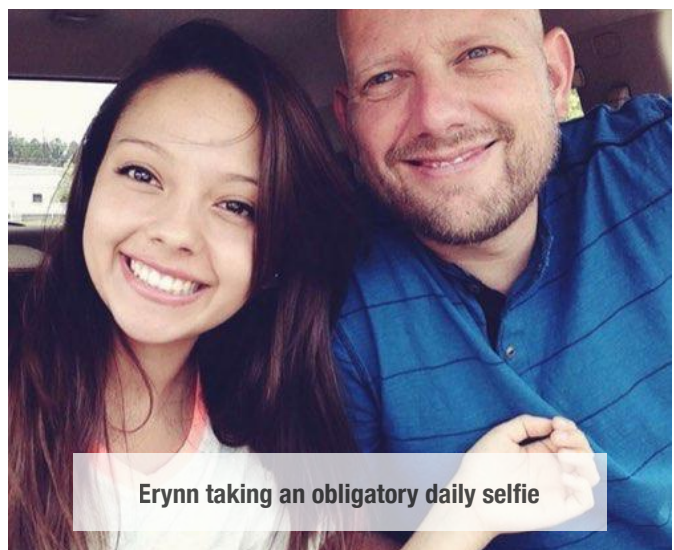
Place: After much prayer, analysis and traveling, we have centered our attention on Dalton, Georgia. It is about an hour North of Rome, and 20 miles SE of Chattanooga, TN. Nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, is often referred to as "The Carpet Capital of the World". It's a perfect mix between English and Spanish, with 47% being Hispanic. There is also a serious lack of high-impact churches in the area.



Finances and Timeline: This may be the toughest part, but we are determined. We once again are going to need to raise most of our salary AND startup funds for the new church. Ideally, we will be moving to Dalton after our training in September. Norah will be getting a full-time job, and I will be fundraising as well as setting up everything legally for the church and putting together a team. We are looking at actually launching into services in early fall 2017. For a full idea of what the timeline looks like, see [ARCTimeline.pdf](#).



With the boys at the Skate Park



Erynn taking an obligatory daily selfie

Join The Team

As we prepare to move to Dalton for this new spiritual venture, we can't help but stand in awe at all that God has done over the years through ALL who form part of this ministry. The thousands upon thousands of transformed lives that we have seen in Bolivia & the USA until now are just the beginning. THE BEST IS YET TO COME.

The mission that Jesus gave us 2000 years ago is all about teamwork. That team consists of the Church as a whole doing their part in reaching the world for Him. That team consists of those who PRAY, those who GIVE and those who GO.



PRAY: Pray for us. We need it. As a family, our marriage, our kids, financially, the huge changes that we are facing once again. Pray for wisdom and providence. That God would guide us every step of the way!

GIVE: This is a huge financial undertaking, and we can't do it alone. We just can't do it without those who give. Thankfully, we're not supposed to. JUST AS God HAS CALLED US TO GO, HE HAS CALLED MANY TO GIVE. Be a part of the team - Give. Visit the giving page on our website, <https://hohnet.com/give/> to see how.

GO: We need to put together a full team before actually launching. (*Worship, Children's Ministry, Ushers, Greeters, Youth, etc.*) We will hopefully find many of those there in Dalton and the surrounding cities/communities... but if you feel God's calling on your life to come with us... pray about it deeply and LET'S TALK!

Conclusion - Bearing Fruit



Throughout our ministry we have had so many amazing highs, and quite a few really low lows. There are moments where we get frustrated, but when we look back, we can see literally thousands upon thousand of lives that have and continue to be changed because of the work and sacrifices that we (our TEAM - PRAY, GIVE GO) have put into missions abroad and here in the USA. Trust us that your sacrifice in prayers and financially are bearing fruit! (*The Sucre church is exploding right now! I'll share more about them in upcoming letters. Also, the Hispanic ministry that we are leaving behind here in Rome is growing like never before. The coolest thing is that we aren't even leading it now. We have already left Daniel & Veronica Skuya over the ministry, and they are literally RUNNING forward with it. It's amazing!*)

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this LONG letter. We pray that you are as excited about this as we are! Please keep us in your prayers as we move forward! May God bless you and your family RICHLY!

Love,

JASON, NORA, ERYNN, JORDAN + DEBRICK