

the veleber family

todd, brooke, brock, jake & cole

2012 update SOJOURNERS



Dear Friends & Family -

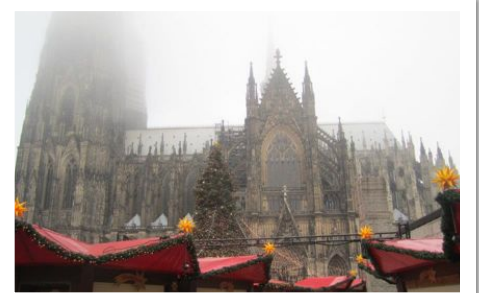
Happy New Year! We have returned to a bit of "normalcy" at least as far as our daily routines and travel is concerned. And I have returned to the student ministry at Wildwood, after a two month sabbatical. Many of you followed our missions endeavors and supported us through prayer and finances and we are incredibly grateful. I'm doubtful we'll be able to share all that God did in and through us, but we will do our best to try!



Over Thanksgiving, I was able to return to Germany with a mission team that I've travelled over with twice over the last few years. We definitely logged the miles through Western and Southern Germany... taking the Gospel to Munich, Hohenfels, Cham, Nürnberg, Seigen-Geisweid, Brühl, Cologne, Seigburg, Rudesheim, Mainz & Frankfurt.

Our concerts were well received and most had good attendance despite most Germans aversion to the Church. I had the opportunity to share the Gospel (and was very grateful to have a translator) at each of our venues and encourage those in attendance to connect with the local pastor or missionary that were there. Some of the highlights were being able to lead in worship at the US Army Hohenfels Base and for a noon service in the historic Cologne

Dome (which was spared bombing during WWII). Join me in praying that the seeds that were planted through the music, the Gospel message and the relationships we formed in Germany will continue to grow!



A big part of this sabbatical was having some quality and quantity time with family. It was great just to "be home" together and enjoy each other - growing in our love for each other and in our love for Christ. We were able to travel and see family and friends both in Birmingham and in Jacksonville over the holidays. And Brock and I were able to take our father/son getaway that was planned for last year until an injury sidelined him for a few months. He chose to go to the Florida Keys, so we loaded up and made the long drive. But all the time together was not only fun, but strategic as he enters his teenage years.

In December, we were able to take our first family mission trip overseas. So with passports in hand, we boarded the plane en route to Managua, Nicaragua. For the last seven years, I have led construction, camp and even a medical teams to Nicaragua. I have grown to love Mike & Sue Buzbee and consider it a privilege to partner with Open Hearts Ministry year after year on mission.



The opportunities we had to minister in Nicaragua were overwhelming. We hit the ground running and really never looked back. We visited many of the communities (Los Cedros, Las Brasilles & Las Parcelas) where our church teams have ministered and labored before... continuing to develop and nurture the relationships we have there.



Whether it was visiting orphans at Remar, hanging with the boys at Casa Robles (Rescue Home), handing out rice/beans and treats in the neighborhoods or working out at the Ruby Ranch - our eyes were opened to see our blessings more clearly and also understanding with greater importance living out the Great Commission both individually and corporately as a family.



One day we headed in to La Chureca - the city dump in Managua. The sights, smells and sounds of the dump are overwhelming. Our boys got to see life in La Chureca and also got out to visit the Christian school the Buzbees run there for the Christmas party. It was heartbreaking and eye-opening all at the same time. But God's love is working powerfully there - calling the residents to a hope that can only be found in Him alone.

Probably the biggest highlight of our Nicaragua mission was getting to visit Nelson David, our sponsored child through World Vision. We have been praying for him and corresponding with him for years and now we have finally met face to face. Our boys brought a Christmas present for him and had a blast spending the day with him and his mother and sister. We were able to see World Vision at work and also experience a bit of life in his community. Join me in praying that God will continue to work in Nelson's life and that the Gospel would continue to go out in power throughout Nicaragua!



We truly can't thank you enough for partnering with our family by supporting us financially, by giving so sacrificially, and through your prayer support. I am truly grateful to the Session and faith-family here at Wildwood Church for not only giving me the privilege to serve here, but also to take this sabbatical. And I'm most appreciative of the amazing student ministry staff that didn't miss a beat while I was gone.

One final thing - If you want to read the daily blog posts and see more pictures from the mission - you can find Brooke or myself on Facebook or online at toddveleber.blogspot.com.

Made for Mission!

Todd, Brooke, Brock, Jake & Cole

