



~ Walking alongside street families in Santa Cruz, Bolivia ~

October 2021

I struggle to know how to paint a picture of everything that is happening at El Jordan over the last months of silence. Some words that come to mind? Thanksgiving, frustration, stretching, a never-ending spiritual fight, facelifts, baby steps, and more....

FRUSTRATION: Paperwork for El Jordan has consumed time and energy... we are still working through fulfilling all the obligations required by Bolivia law for employers... After 7 months of working specifically on this, we still are finding things that we need to do or do again... I keep thinking we are almost “*out of the woods*” and on our way towards “*routine*” but... NOT YET... Please pray for specifically Alexandra (in charge of the books at El Jordan)... Just to open up a bank account specifically for El Jordan has taken me at least 15 or 20 trips to the bank.... Without exaggerating! (and it’s still not completely done!) Sigh. These obligations increase our budget by about 50% and is time consuming, not only to set up but to complete the monthly requirements. I’ve always struggled with *paperwork vs people* (falling heavily on the people side) so this all weighs heavily on my spirit.

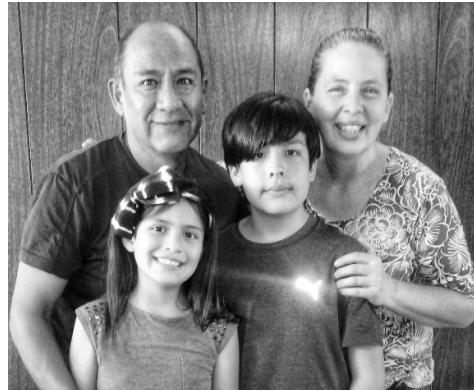
However, we thank the LORD, we can still Trust in Him, even when we can’t see what He is doing!

THANK GOD FOR THIS COVID SEASON: The pandemic naturally “obsoleted” many El Jordan activities, giving us the choice whether to bring them back or not... The “*x-ing out*” of activities gives us more time to dedicate to PEOPLE. In spite of being a ministry dedicated to PEOPLE, a lot of time was spent on secondary things. The Covid season also gave the team many more opportunities to work side by side, and move ahead together.

God is in Control!

STRETCHED: Changes don't come without being stretched. Having Keiden and Marlee studying at home virtually for a year and a half was personally stretching... During that same time, trying to walk with El Jordan through its many changes, was challenging at minimum. So many things had to be put on the back burner (*including letter writing!*) because it honestly felt like absolutely nothing more could fit on my plate.

Keiden and Marlee now go to school 4 days out of 5... but we just are getting out of a 14 day quarantine because of a positive COVID case within the school.... So we continue to hold our plans in open hands, hanging on to God's promise that HIS mercies are new every morning...



For me, I have never felt as "far away" as now... We have always been blessed with family and friends coming down to visit us, giving us a boost of energy, joy, help and a dash of spoiling... and it is something we have been missing...

Where would we be without our Heavenly Father?

NEVER-ENDING SPIRITUAL FIGHT: Our El Jordan team, as we more intentionally walk closely with our El Jordan families, we feel the heaviness and joy of being involved in the front lines of battle. The enemy seeks to steal, destroy and kill... We are ambassadors with a message of hope, transformation and life.

God is at work. We are grateful to be a part of what He is doing. But at times we feel battered in the battle.



Our team with their families:
our workers' retreat
at our property.

Please pray specifically for our team: *we have a sweet couple struggling with miscarriages, two of our ladies trying to find diagnosis for their ailments, another worker with degenerative health problems, others with serious issues in their extended family, plus a lot of*

other struggles mixed in there... Pray that each one will find God's grace sufficient in a tangible way today.

FACELIFT: (I might have a few more wrinkles, but it wasn't me who got a facelift!) The extra time that came with Covid restrictions and extra funds that God provided, gave us the opportunity to maintain and give a "facelift" to the workshops and our ladies' center. At the workshops, our soccer field (used for the boys and to rent out in order to be more self-sufficient) got a whole new look, the whole place got a beautiful paint job, our school rooms for the boys are amazing, and more... It is beyond what we ever imagined! On the women's side we have been working on painting, changing screens, fixing up the kitchen, making different nooks and crannies more *"warm and inviting"*...

We see this as God's mercy being poured out on us and our people.... Allowing us to have clean, bright, welcoming places where those who are tired and burdened can come and feel His love.

BABY STEPS: At times, it feels like we aren't getting far. *"Before"* Covid we had a program and a plan... It seemed we moved along with well-oiled gears (of course there are ALWAYS bumps along the way!)... People had their responsibilities and volunteers helped fill in the gaps... *"Then"* there was Covid, a great reminder to hold our plans in open hands before the Lord. *"The mind of man plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps."* Proverbs 16:9

"Now" we are moving ahead with the same mission statement but finding ways to zero in more clearly on our focus group (*people on or on the brink of the streets – drugs, delinquency, prostitution – who WANT TO change*).

We are working more intentionally with a smaller group. We narrowed our group of ladies down from about 50 to 15 in order to intentionally walk beside

them more closely, praying, studying and struggling through the Truths of God's Word...

Patricia, an amazing lady who used to work with us, leads 3 weekly, neighborhood Bible Studies to encourage and minister to our



ladies who are a part of the “El Jordan Family” but who aren’t our “students”. Please pray for God to shower His blessings, wisdom and guidance over Patricia... In one neighborhood, a local church has been helping with the children (sometimes well over 20!) that come with their moms (between 10 and 16!) and are praying about the possibility of starting a new congregation!

Narrowing our focus has allowed us to spend quality time developing relationships and trust with new (to us!) street ladies who God has brought to



us, one way or another. (*Seeing God’s tapestry weaving never ceases to amaze and encourage me!!!!*) We have a beautiful group of 5 street ladies who are in the middle of their second “module” (learning cakes!). 2 other ladies are starting their first module. Pray for them!

God, is making our path straight, step by step.

THE REALITY OF OUR PEOPLE: Most of our families live day by day, at best week by week... Lockdown hit our families hard. God showed up and through many generous donations, we were able to distribute a LOT of food and material help to over 100 families related in some way to El Jordan. (*We also have more closely come alongside of Ebenezer Boys’ Home who lost their “dad” during Covid.*)

Bolivia’s reality now, is that people who have “regular” jobs have more or less gone back to normal – maybe with lower pay, but with pay, while people who live day to day are finding more competition and a lot less sales. The bottom has dropped out of the economy, mostly affecting those at the bottom.... And those are the people we work with....

“Reality” is resting heavily on our people. Survival is TOUGH: trying to help their kids with “online” schooling while still finding some way to feed them. One consequence of the “survival mode” is that health is put on the back burner... We now have several families dealing with grim complications in their parents (*need for dialysis, huge open ulcers, etc*)... Another thing that we are seeing are the girls selling their belongings to cover their needs. They have been left with debts and 0 “buffer”.

El Jordan normally doesn't just "hand out" things, but 5 months of lockdown was an exception. Lockdown is long over, but we continue to see many desperate needs. We don't want the material to override the spiritual.... but nor can we turn a blind eye to physical needs... Jesus was a beautiful example of weaving the two together...

Please pray for El Jordan as we seek to use our time and resources wisely, offer help that "helps!" and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's guidance.

* * *

Some stories:

For "Christmas in July" (Friendship on the Streets), we chose specific girls on the streets we wanted to reach out to. We also went with Gabriela, one of our students, to an area of the city with lots of prostitutes, an area new to us.

A girl was sitting all alone, looking at her phone. If it hadn't been for Gabriela, we would have driven by without even noticing her... I went alone, as not to intimidate her... Just then, a car stopped at the curb, and the girl got up and put her head through the window.... I walk by, thinking how Satan loves to wreck everything... The deal didn't go through...and she sits down again. As I backtrack, distrust fills her eyes.... I squatted beside her, handing her some pretty cupcakes and a card with a picture of Jesus hugging a girl... I found out her name is Milenka.... I wrote my name and number on the back, and told her to give me a call if she wanted to come to El Jordan....

We met quite a few more girls that day... but it was Milenka who called a few days later to see if she could come to El Jordan.... My heart breaks for this young girl... she has spent many of her 17 years on the streets, and suffered more than many will in a lifetime... The distrust from our first meeting melted when I went to pick her up for the first time... I love her eyes and smile... She would love to go back to school...



Unfortunately, every time Milenka was supposed to come to El Jordan, something seemed to happen.... When I went to look for her, I found out she

had serious problems where she lived, and left... She has been seen wandering in the streets.... So sad....

Could you pray for Milenka?

* * *

We often share donations with the 13 very special boys from “Ebenezer Home” but we also have had opportunities to go as a group from El Jordan (one dressed as a clown) to celebrate birthdays... Being with these boys and Maria, the neighbor lady who is in charge of them now, bless us and bring us joy. Our Father, who is the Father to orphans, has not abandoned them.



The other day, I wrote about an incident in El Jordan’s WhatsApp News group (it is a great way to keep more up to date with our prayer requests and news!).

October 14/21: *“Yesterday morning, Maria and Karina were praying.... They are the ones who look after the boys at Ebenezer... the home that was founded by Marco Nogales, who passed away at the beginning of quarantine last year.... They didn’t have any potatoes.... nor onions.... They had run out of vegetables and didn’t have the possibility to buy more... and they prayed....*

Yesterday morning, this is what God provided for our families.... 🙏



LOTS OF VEGETABLES... including potatoes and onions!!!

When we get donations, we sometimes phone and ask Maria if they need anything... but this time, (without knowing their need!) we just packaged up and delivered a lot of vegetables to the home: lots of potatoes and onions, squash, cabbage, parsley, celery, carrots, sweet potatoes, beets and more....

God answers prayer... and He looks after the orphan and the needy.... Praise Him!

(The rest of the veggies we packaged up and shared with close to 100 families related to El Jordan...)"



(If you would like to join our WhatsApp News Group, you need to download the free WhatsApp app and send me an e-mail with your phone number and area code).

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Public education in Santa Cruz is mainly online. The lack of discipline, order, supervision, food and internet in the boys' homes made it a priority for us to get the workshops up and running again after "covid".

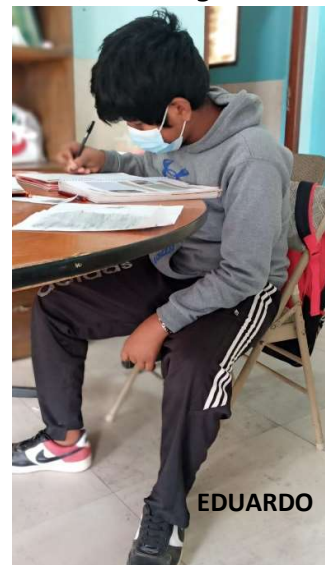
We started helping only a few boys and gradually have increased that to nice group of boys.



Our worker, Abi, wrote about Julio Cesar after receiving a well-deserved 100% *"His smile reflects happiness, perseverance, satisfaction, saying to himself "I can do it when I give it my all" 🤝 and more.... It wasn't an easy week for Julio Cesar, he was behind in so many subjects but he showed his desire to "rise above" when he finished all of his homework in record time. ✨ God is good to allow us to be beside him and part of this moment of joy... This smile was after he received another 100 this week. Our boy wants to fly high! 🤝🤝"*

Eduardo says: *I like coming to the Workshops because here, I can do my homework, so much more than what I can do in my house because there I get distracted and don't do my homework. At the workshops, they teach me how to do my homework and I really like the devotionals.*

Marco and his team have often wanted to have the boys for longer hours at the shops (they normally only



have 4 hours at the shops and 4 hours at school every day) and God has allowed us precious time with the boys through Covid! The boys come for breakfast in the morning and stay until 5 in the afternoon... (Eduardo loves to come early to help get breakfast ready just so he can get one extra bread!)



The boys just enjoyed a day at our property....

Swimming, playing sports and learning some things too!

Pray for these boys and our team of workers... that God would continue to work in each one.

* * *

When new girls come to El Jordan, I love to hear their stories. In the middle of the tapestry of hurt, wounds and pain, a golden thread God's mercy and love is woven right in the middle of it... That thread leads them to a place that shares His love and hope... and amazingly, we get to have a small part of His huge, incredible plan. We don't know if we will have them in our lives for a short or long time.... but while they are with us, we will share God's love and truth.

I want to give you a glimpse of one of their stories... We will call her "Jane". From the time she was born until she was 8 years old, she lived on the streets with her mom and siblings. Her father was a street person too, addicted to alcohol and sniffing glue, and is remembered for being violent. Where does a little girl run away to if she already lives on the streets? When "Jane" was only 4... and then again when she was 6, she ran away to another part of the streets – got picked up by the police and taken to a children's home... Each time she was there for about a year before someone came to pick her up...

One time when “Jane” was only 6, her mom threw her out with her dad (who was drunk)... Again, where do you go if you already live on the streets? Her dad looked for a place to keep drinking and when he was told he couldn't bring in a child, he took her outside and left her there... where she waited in the dark, cold night of La Paz until her father came out again... As “Jane” told me the story, she could see how God had protected her – a little 6 year old girl, in a bad part of town, sitting for hours outside a drinking place. She saw God's hand, allowing her father to get into a fight that brought his drinking to an end for that early morning... Her dad was drunk and didn't want to be with his daughter... He left her at another drinking place where he knew the woman who ran the place... but “Jane” escaped and for hours silently followed a ways behind her drunk dad... until he eventually wandered back to where his wife was... Both were surprised to see little “Jane”...

There was story after story of “Jane” being abandoned, betrayed and mistreated... enough to fill a book.

Now “Jane” is over 30... and she has been coming faithfully to El Jordan for the last several months. She wants to learn about Jesus... She wants to study the Bible. So, how did God woo her heart and bring her to El Jordan?

I love this. I do not know how it happened, but “Jane's” mom started to pray. She has gone to a church or two but then things make her uncomfortable and she leaves.... But she prays! And she talks to her children about God and encourages them to follow Him. Some of her kids are beginning to look for God, while others aren't interested – yet. This mom who spent so many years on the streets... somehow heard about God...and without understanding things very well, she started praying and witnessing to her family!

“Jane's” younger brother used to be very violent, addicted and on the streets. An ex-girlfriend came to El Jordan for a while – which is where the family heard about El Jordan. His mom's prayers started being answered in this young man's heart... and now he too, started praying for “Jane” and encouraging her that God could change her life. Much later, “Jane's” heart began to soften and now it has been several months since she has been to the streets...

Wow... Isn't God amazing?

Another little story... Right now “Jane” is living with 3 of her children, her mom and younger brothers... Economically, things have been rough... and they got to a point the other day of not having food in the house... At the same time, an

old friend called “Jane” inviting her to another city where there was a lot of “work” and they could earn lots of money... “Jane” was tempted... She didn’t know how else they could get money.... Both her mom and younger brother told her “No!” that they needed to pray, ask God and He would provide.

At the same time, she got a WhatsApp message from El Jordan asking for her to come by and pick up a “Blessing” that had arrived for her... (and all the other girls)... She had no idea what it was, but came with her younger brother... and it was two big bags of rice, sugar, flour, oil, noodles, quinoa, lentils, oats, beans and more....

God provides. God’s cares for the little sparrow. How much more does He love and care for precious ones like “Jane” and her family?

God is at work... in El Jordan and around the world.

Thank you for coming alongside of us through your prayers, gifts and notes of encouragement... They make a difference! We love and appreciate you!

Because He is Faithful,

Corina (for Marco, Keiden and Marlee)



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