



THE BONHAM LINE

December 2023

TL;DR Version (see articles for more details)

- Merry Christmas from the Bonhams!
- Updates from our November Travels
- Christmas in Rionegro + LOTS OF PICTURES!

**As you consider year-end giving,
please consider our ministry
here in Rionegro, Colombia!**

Merry Christmas!

Before we jump into our “normal” newsletter updates, we want to take a moment to wish you a merry, joyous, and Christ-filled Christmas. We pray that wherever you find yourself this Christmas season, the knowledge and beauty of God’s “Never Stopping, Never Giving Up, Unbreaking, Always and Forever Love” (as the *Jesus Storybook Bible* calls it) fills your heart as you reflect on the unfathomable way that our holy and perfect God pursues his people. Merry Christmas from Rionegro!



ABOUT US

Nate & Nikki Bonham have been serving in South America with Mission to the World since 2012 in the area of church planting. With their three children, they are based out of Medellin (Rionegro), Colombia.

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Planes, Trains, and Automobiles

Well, we didn't actually take any trains, but all of the extra time in planes and automobiles more than makes up for it! In November, our family spent a significant amount of time on the roads and in the skies. We dropped the kids off in the US to spend some time with both sides of our families while we traveled to Malaysia for an MTW leadership conference. Our time there with our coworkers from across the globe was encouraging and challenging, and we were thankful for the opportunity for some dedicated time to think through various ministry components and strategies.



Highly jet-lagged but happy to be on the ground and walking through the streets of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

While we were away, the kids were able to split time between Nate's family and Nikki's family in Chattanooga and Mississippi, respectively. They spent lots of time with grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins, and attended an event in honor of their grandfather who passed away in January. Even though we couldn't make it to Mississippi with them, we were thankful that they were able to go.

After we returned from Malaysia, we spent a few days in Chattanooga recovering from jet lag and celebrating Thanksgiving with Nate's side of the family before flying back to Colombia. Nothing beats an American Thanksgiving meal!



The boys at an event honoring their late grandfather. The Home Builders Association of Mississippi unveiled a plaque in his memory.

A Rionegro Christmas

Our big Christmas party at the church was on Friday, December 15, and it was a hit! This was our third year to gather together for silly games, kid-friendly crafts, lots of Colombian holiday food, and a special time of worship and singing.



Nate sharing a Christmas devotional during our 3rd annual Christmas party at Iglesia El Redentor.

There's not enough room here to share it all here. See the captions of the photos below for more updates from this past month or two of ministry.

Prayer Requests:

- **Christmas Events:** We are coming up on Christmas weekend, and we are praying that it will be full and merry! Christmas Eve is the bigger day of celebrations here in Colombia (rather than Christmas Day), so we will be hosting a dinner for all of those in the congregation who, like us, don't have local extended family to share the holiday with. We aren't sure how big our crowd will be yet, but we are praying that it will be a sweet time of fellowship with those who join us. Please pray that we will be able to share Christ well this Christmas! On the 25th, we will share a (hopefully) low-key and relaxing day with just our immediate family.
- **The Bonham Boys:** Thank you for praying consistently for our kids. We just finished up the first term of our homeschool year and we will jump into term 2 after Christmas. Please pray for their hearts and minds as they grow into young men, for our wisdom as parents to guide and shepherd them well during these teen years, and for their discernment as they navigate friendships in a different way now that they are all getting older. And specifically, pray that the Lord would continue drawing them to Himself, and that they would delight in His rule over their hearts and lives.
- **Church Planting Growing Pains:** We ask again for continued prayers for El Redentor and its leaders. As the "honeymoon" stage of a new church wears off, we begin to see more of the struggles that come alongside a new community learning how to live alongside one another. Pray for us as we navigate some difficult situations, help others work through conflict, counsel, and seek to glorify and lift high the name of the Lord in the midst of the hard places. Pray that we can see clearly, process wisely, and respond and lead lovingly, truthfully, and graciously. Pray also that we can lean into the discipleship opportunities that arise through these situations. And pray that our hearts can joyfully rest in the Lord in the midst of these situations.
- **Church Leadership:** Please join us in praying that the Lord would raise up wise, committed local leadership in Iglesia El Redentor, as well as a potential Colombian pastor. We pray that the Lord would be preparing strong, godly, servant-hearted men to take on the role of shepherding and serving this congregation as pastors, elders, and deacons.



Merry Christmas from our local team here in the Rionegro and Medellin area! The Bonhams, McCalls, Bersaches, and Robertsons.



The boys in the photo booth at the church Christmas party.



Sunday mornings at El Redentor. It's hard to tell in this photo, but we are decorated for Christmas!



Nate teaching the children's message on Sunday morning. In this one, he was using Lego guys to illustrate one of Paul's experiences in the book of Acts. Join us in praying that the Lord would work mightily in these little hearts!



A game at the Christmas party unexpectedly involved a group of guys having make a web of ropes to pass Nate across a "river." Somehow the details of that game didn't get explained to him beforehand!



Nate leading one of the children's games at the Christmas party.



Nate and his City to City "Incubator" group graduating from their 2-year church-planting program.



Another fun Christmas celebration with a group of local pastors and their families from various denominations who are in ministry across our region.



I had to take some updated headshots of the cards recently for an ID card. I am overwhelmed on a daily basis by how fast it all goes. They're so old!



This picture is deceiving with how we are all standing. I am still taller by about a half an inch. Barrett is currently the tallest of the 3 boys, but its a close race!



Barrett and Noah just finished Term 1 of 8th grade... Which meant end-of-term exams. We finished late because we'd had several weeks off of school for traveling in November, but now we are officially on break! As you can see, they were thrilled to be taking exams.

Thankful.



With Nate's mom and stepdad in Chattanooga.



We recreate this same photo every few years in Chattanooga since our boys were tiny guys. The original Bonham Brothers (Nate and his brothers) with the Bonham Brothers 2.0.



This is how we spent most of November. In an airplane. Over 60 hours in airplane seats (and not even including airport time!) At least it was good company!



One of my favorite things about Colombia. Beautiful things pop up everywhere. I didn't plant these, but they're growing along my fence. I love it.



We had one afternoon "off" from meeting in Malaysia and we went to visit a famous Hindu temple inside a cave. It was very interesting to say the least!



The rainbow-colored steps in the background lead to the cave, the temple, and a huge tourist area.



We had a long layover in Istanbul and took advantage of the chance to see some sights. This is in front of one of the Blue Mosque.



The streets of Istanbul at night. We have decided that we LOVE Turkish food! We hope to go back for more than just a layover someday.



Nate baptizing Antonia, one of the newest covenant members of El Redentor. We are thankful to have had TWO adorable new additions to our church family in the past few months. The Bonhams sure do love babies! We hope there are about a thousand more in our future.



One of our neighbors here at the new house has about 70 hens and sells us eggs and arepas each week. Sometimes she makes some extra items to sell to the neighbors too, and we area always up for buying whatever she cooks up in her kitchen. This is natilla and cuajada.



Bear has recently acquired an electric guitar, and in Chattanooga Nate's brother brought his over as well, so there were multiple amped up jam sessions!



Fall in Chattanooga.



The Homebuilders Association of Mississippi and our family (and the boys) at the event in honor of Nikki's dad.



Bruno (our fearless pup) protecting the homestead from the invading beasts on the other side of the fence.

