

Jack & Janine Swanson's "CHILE CONNECTION" March through July 2009



Iglesia Cristiana "Jesús es El Camino"
("Jesus is The Way" Christian Church)

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Beginning with thanks....

Many of you now use our monthly Prayer Letter as a guide in praying weekly for God's work here in Chile. Please consider fasting one meal that day as well. Your prayers have always been the most important, effective support that you can provide for us and we thank you for them. They, together with your steady financial help, have seen us through "thick & thin". During these past five months in our Prayer Letters we have given thanks for God's responses and requested your prayers for:

- The initiation and development of the church's new home group structure
- Specific marriages in the church and marriages, in general
- Holy Week presentations and for the church retreat on Easter Sunday
- Baptisms of new believers
- Initiation of two new English Club efforts—one in a local public school and the other for adults
- New Sunday school classes
- That Jesus would be our church body's undisputed head and leader
- Spiritual growth and identity of church members
- Our and others' health during this cold & flu season (we are in winter now)
- Outreaches through and with interns Cecily & Michelle, and our son Jayme, while here

Thank you for making our Prayer Letters known in your church as well so that people know how they can pray for us. We have some photos with short explanations to share with you that relate to these and other developments:

IN MARCH...

Janine & Jack attended a three-day conference for Christian Church pastors and missionaries and for representatives of Chilean Christian schools. Its focus was kingdom work as it relates to the 21st century in Chile. The conference was well organized and worthwhile, perhaps less for the material covered and more for relationships from the past that we were able to renew and other news ones we started up. Networking and contacts, in general, are important for us in God's continued development of our ministry and in his effectiveness through us.

Also in March our leaders in the church committed to and began preparing for the start-up of home groups, which the church entered into going into the month of April.

The groups are important to the future of the church in more ways than one—especially in their emphasis on real weekly relationship with one another. While the groups are good, we need to do a better job of developing leaders within them and of reinforcing the great evangelistic opportunities that the groups represent in reaching and developing relationships with non-Christians.

APRIL...

brought Easter week and more. The home groups began, the church did a Good Friday evening presentation in our local plaza and gathered on Easter-day at Richard's & Paula's new house on the north side of Santiago. Three members were baptized the weekend after Easter, and two "English Club" initiatives were kicked off in our neighborhood—one at our local public school and the other at a restaurant on our main street four blocks from the mission property. Roughly twenty to twenty-five regularly participate in each of these two activities.

IN MAY...

the new school and church year seemed to settle in, along with daily routines and "real life" problems and challenges that almost seem more distant during the summer, because of a trip to the beach and more relaxed schedules, etc. Two main challenges facing Chileans today are linked to family (marriages, children, etc.) and to the economy. Members of our church are no exception, as some of our families are experiencing separation & brokenness, some have had to seek new jobs, and all pay more for staple items (bread, other foods, and utilities).

Against this backdrop, Jack and Oscar preach Jesus, pray, and encourage, as home group relationships serve to buoy up one another.

CHILE CULTURE POINT- The typical Chilean worker works a nine-hour day that does not include time given for lunch—that in addition to the time it takes for them to go to and from work on public transportation. Our worker, Juan, for example, begins work at 8:30 a.m. and finishes at 6:30 p.m. He and Carlos have one hour for lunch and we all eat together (a <u>great</u> time, by the way!). It takes him over one hour to get to work (a 20 to 25 minute trip by car) and over one and one half hours to get home, due to the number of people traveling at those times. He and Carlos often don't stop working right at 6:30 either, so a typical hour for Juan means 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.
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JUNE...

saw the ushering in of winter (June 21 to Sept. 21) and the arrival of Michelle (a university student from Kentucky) and our son, Jayme. Jayme had a good first year of college, and although we see him at least once a year, it's especially nice to have these two months with him. We met Michelle (here on a two-month internship) at a Nat'l Missionary Convention. She joins Cecily, who arrived in January to begin an extended one-year cross-cultural experience. Building relationship with Chilean families is a main internship focus. It's both the most challenging (together with

being immersed in Spanish) and most rewarding aspects of their time in Chile. On Sunday mornings, Cecily works with young children and Michelle has been focusing on helping build relationships with the teens through dynamics and games that also have teachings built in. We also all work on English Club activities together.

Jayme, Michelle, Cecily, and Jack traveled at the end of June to Arica in northern Chile to see the church there and experience a different side of Chilean culture. It was great to see Luis and Katie again, too. They are expecting the birth of their first baby (a girl), due the first week of October. Her name is Niah (KNEE-ah) Adelle Amonacid.

IN JULY...

The church leaders finished needed modifications to our proposed corporate statutes. The papers have been sent to the attorney, who will review wording, etc. Given his approval, we signers go to a notary in Santiago and the signed document is sent on to the government for acceptance. A legal notice is published and we become officially legal and recognized as a church. *PTL!!*

Also in July is the two-week winter vacation for students. This year, Jorge has again organized a type of soccer tournament, being held at our local plaza. Called "baby soccer", it is played on the plaza's tennis court. Six teams have been participating and awards are presented to the winners and runners-up. Although basically none of the players are Christian, they respect Jorge and appreciate the interest he has taken with them. Brief devotions are given before each evening of play. Perhaps, though, the major value comes with what these children and youth *typically* do with their time. Be it experimenting with and consuming drugs or with having sex with others or in fighting, these same kids know nothing of a life of purpose, or of a God that satisfies, or of real gratitude. That's what makes these activities so worth while.

Another Christian outreach new to our area this vacation is sponsored by MOU-- Misión Operación Urbana (Urban Mission in Operation). It is an interdenominational, week-long evangelistic outreach carried out by young people in certain sectors of Santiago. Cecily, Michelle, and Roberto from the church are participating. They sleep and eat at Jayme's former Chilean school, receive training and go from there twice a day to selected locations in and near our community. Just over seventy young people are part of this year's MOU at this location. We hope to "field" more from our church next year.

Lastly, we are looking to baptize Sara, a teenager in the church, the last Wednesday of this month during home group. She has finished preparatory classes and would like for her family to be there. She is the only member of her family participating with us in the church.

CONSTRUCTION PROGRESS...

is nearing another stage of completion. Numbering the four houses in order from the street toward the rear of our ministry property, houses 1 & 2 make up the duplex closest to the street and houses 3 & 4, the other duplex. The rear duplex will be the first to be finished and ready for children. A caretaker family (now, the family of Jorge and Lorena—members of the church) has been living in house 3. We hope to also completely finish house 4 within the next two months, including Juan's construction of the kitchen cabinets and installation of furniture.

Juan and Carlos will then finish house 2 (projected before the end of December), leaving us with three of the four houses ready (aside from appliances) for children. Janine will also soon be searching for a qualified Chilean to come on board to help her finish needed policies, work on other final details to become operational, and seek those that will live at the property and work directly with the children. As that process is going on and children are received, house 1 will be completed in the first months of 2010.

You supporters have been so very faithful with prayers and finances to bring the ministry property to this point of completion and operation. What a journey it's been and we are so grateful. To think that Juan has now worked for us for nine and one half years and Carlos for four is equally incredible.

With gratitude and in service alongside you,

Jack and Janine



At Richard's and Paula's



Oscar, Fernando, Miguel, Bastian, & Jack



On Arica trip with Michelle (left) & Cecily



Final night of MOU. Over 100 went forward!



Winners of a tournament, but "prisoners" in life. "Cooking with Janine"--a once-per-month English Club favorite.

