

EL CHAIRO BOLIVIANO

The Bolivian Stew

SUNDAY, MARCH 27, 2011

Monthly Events

January



- A Month at the ELCA Churchwide Office
- Church and Sponsor Visits
- Celebrated Justin's 30th Birthday on January 13th! (He's old now!)

February



- 50s Fundraiser Night
- Began the New Trimester at ISEAT
- Attended the Directive Board Meeting-ISEAT
- Sunday School Professors' Meeting

March

- World Prayer Night
- Began Aymara Class
- Sunday School Professors' Meeting



PLAZA MURILLO

LA PAZ, BOLIVIA

PASTOR JUSTIN KARI ELLER

Named after Pedro Domingo Murillo, a Bolivian revolutionary, the plaza is where many tourists and Bolivians alike gather to feed the pigeons, read the newspaper and talk politics, attend a catholic mass and visit historical buildings, such as the Presidential Palace.

IT'S A NEW DAY!

Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43: 18-19



Returning to Bolivia, Justin and I noticed many differences in only the month and a half we were visiting with family and friends and working in Chicago. We came back to a very different place than what we left. Sugar was scarce and the toll both to the main highway had been burned. In order to keep working, the toll booth workers had set up nylon tents! Why

was there no sugar and why were the toll booths burned? The people, in reaction to the 83% drastic hike in gas prices took action and also took to the streets. Sugar and toll booths aren't the only things that are changing in Bolivia, though. April 7, 8 and 9th, the IELB will be holding its national assembly where new officials will be elected. This assembly happens once every four years and we are all anxiously awaiting to see what will happen. As these past four years for the IELB give way to the next four years, we give thanks to God for the ministries done, trusting in the "new thing" God has in store for us, the IELB elected officials and members, and the people here in Bolivia.

A Month at the ELCA Churchwide Office in Chicago, IL

This past January, Justin and I spent time at the ELCA central office in Chicago, IL. While there, we had many meetings about our work in Bolivia and started new projects. In addition to doing what we've been doing for past two years, we are incorporating these new projects into our work as missionaries. My project will include working alongside national Lutheran churches throughout Meso and Latin America to facilitate the production of contextualized Christian education materials. I will be working with two other people to facilitate the development of these materials in order to provide resources and connections for our Lutheran companion churches. Justin's project involves the creation of an online Lutheran year in Spanish. He will be working with professors and church leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean to develop a hybrid model of online education that will be used to support our companion churches in their understanding of Lutheran identity.



From left to right: the Reverend Justin Eller, the Reverend Raquel Rodríguez, Kari Eller and Paulina Nisbet-Dasse



From left to right: Pastor Justin Eller, Pastor Maritza Castañeta and Father Carmello during the World Prayer Night

"Evening and morning, and at noon, I will pray and cry aloud; and He shall hear my voice." Psalm 55:17



This year, in an effort to balance out our lives, Justin and I are also taking yoga! Even though it is REALLY early in the morning (700-8:30am), we are definitely enjoying it and have even made new friends as a result.

Noche de oración mundial (World Prayer Night)

An ecumenical event, catholic, methodist, lutheran and pentecostal brothers and sisters gathered together to pray for the realities of the people in Chile, with whom they've had correspondence this year. Together, we talked about the "bread" or the "gifts" that we can share with one another to make our world a better place and of course, we spent quite a bit of time praying.



VISITED ST. MARK LUTHERAN, WORTH, IL

Our Bolivia Presentation

After the service, I presented to the congregation about our mission and ministry in Bolivia as well as information about the IELB and country facts and figures.



Justin preached

"Baptism is the beginning of living one's faith, not just what we say but who and how we are in the world. Through our baptism we participate in God's mission as we are sent out to serve the world. Jesus's baptism led him into mission in ministry and ultimately to the cross. The good news is that Jesus calls us, equips us and sends us out to be his hands and feet in the world."

Children's Sermon

During the children's sermon each child remembered that he/she is a blessed child of God and talked about their own baptisms.



Praise Hymn Choir

The Praise Hymn Choir sang us a beautiful song "Go Ye and Tell" about sharing the message of God and extending our hands to others throughout the world in mission. Check out their video under the **Home Assignment 2011** tab on the website.

We Moved! Right before Thanksgiving, we were blessed to find a new home with outdoor space. The flowers you see to the right are from our front patio. It is amazing what a little sunshine can do for the soul.



NORTH CAROLINA

Other Church Visits

St. John's Lutheran Church

Temple Talks

St. John's has three services: two traditional and one contemporary. We spoke at each service and were also interviewed by a congregational member for an article in the local paper.



Wittenberg Lutheran Church

Presentation

Invited by the ladies' group of the church, we spoke to about 25-30 people about what it's like to live in Bolivia and do ministry in a non-western culture.



OTHER ACTIVITIES

Aymara Class

After two weeks of class, two hours a day, Justin and I are able to say things like what's below. We still have a long way to go, but are definitely making progress!

Kunjamasktasa kullakanaka jiltanaka?
Nayan sutijax Kariwa. Nayax pä tunk
paquallquni maranitwa. Nayan ñiik'utajax
ch'umphiwa. Nayan nayrajax ch'uxñawa.
Nayax Salisbury markankiritwa.
Jikisiñkama.

How are you sisters and brothers? My
name is Kari. I am 28 years old. I have
brown hair. I have green eyes. I am from
Salisbury. See you later.



50's Fundraising Quiz Night

1. Who was the singer or band whose first recorded song was "That's Alright, Mama?"
2. 1958. "U.S. in Space." What was the name of America's first satellite in outer space?



A Special Dinner

Pastor David and Diana Keck are sponsors who invited us to dinner while we were at home.

Who knew Pastor Justin could hula-hoop so well? At the 50's night he actually kept it going for about a song and a half. Check out his video under the **Our Videos** tab of the website!



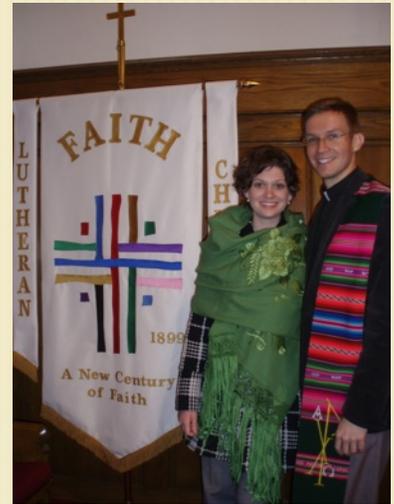
NORTH CAROLINA & ILLINOIS

Other Church Visits

Faith Lutheran Church

Sermon

Justin talked about how we can all be "mission minded" and how to lift up the three expressions of the ELCA.



Luther Memorial Lutheran Church

Sermon

"God's call is risky, not always knowing what's ahead. The Rev. Dr. MLK Jr. reassures us, "Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase just to take the first step."



Our Work at the Instituto Superior Ecuménico Andino de Teología (ISEAT)

English Social Hour



Seeing a need for my students to practice their English outside of class, I began what I call the “English Social Hour.” It is free for anyone interested and has so far been very successful as we gather weekly to share tea and talk about a variety of themes.



Making church history come alive!

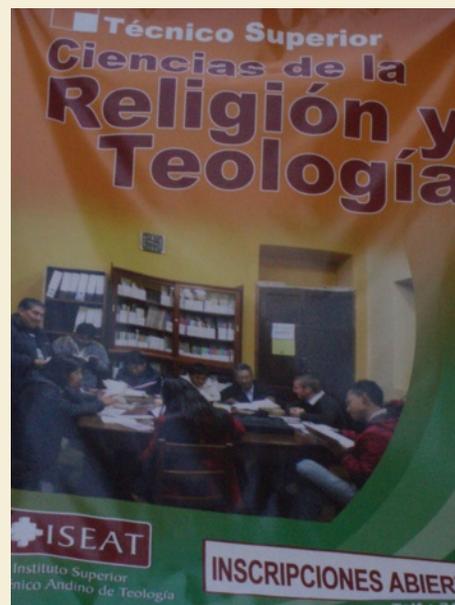
Justin’s Church History I class spans 16 centuries. They discuss everything from the ancient christian church to the development of monasticism and the papacy up to the beginning of the

Protestant Reformation and the conquest of the Americas.



Directive Board Meeting

Justin and I both attended the annual meeting of “socios” of ISEAT to be witnesses to their elections of the “junta directiva.” The photo you see is of the newly elected board.



Justin and his New Testament class are featured in the banner you see here, which is promoted outside of ISEAT.



Let me introduce you to one of my students, Juana. Juana is an Aymara anthropologist at a major university in La Paz. In this picture, I am helping them to put together sentences using puzzle pieces in a language game.

ENGLISH 1- ISEAT- FIRST TRIMESTER

6 Basic Questions We've Worked On

1. What's your name?
2. Where are you from?
3. How old are you?
4. What's your phone number?
5. What do you like to do?
6. How are you?

This trimester, I am back to teaching English I and I have 10 students, 6 of which are only coming to ISEAT to take my English class. So far, we



have done a lot of group work and by answering these questions have really gotten to know each other quite well. This past Tuesday, the students also did their very first skits!

Sunday School Professors' Meetings

F ebruary 26, 2011 and March 26, 2011, IELB Sunday school professors from the District of La Paz met at ISEAT to share what Sunday school is like where they worship and the role the children play in each of their congregations.

Together, we talked about our strengths and challenges as a church and supported one another with ideas and words of advice. Because every congregation in La Paz is very different and every congregation struggles in its own way to understand what it means to be Lutheran, our group meets every month at least one time, to write Sunday school lessons based on the lectionary that have a Lutheran connection. We do this because although some of the congregations use candles and others don't or because some congregations believe that dancing is a gift from God and others believe it to be a sin, the Gospel is what unites us all. The history of the IELB would take much more time and space to explain than what I could dedicate to this newsletter, but it suffices to say that the Lutheran church was formed not always by Lutheran missionaries and therefore, Lutheran identity is an essential part of these lessons and crucial to our understanding of what it means to be Christian, Lutheran,



From left to right: Edith M. Chipana Ajata (Emmanuel Lutheran Church), Me, Paola M. Llanque Mamani (El Buen Pastor Lutheran Church), Soledad Condori and Leticia Castro *not pictured* (El Sembrador Lutheran Church), Paulina Callari Cari (Luz y Vida Lutheran Church)

Bolivian and indigenous. The idea is for these lessons to follow the lectionary as the lectionary follows a three year cycle (A, B and C) and for a book of Sunday school lessons to be published at the end of every year. After three years, we will then have a basis for Sunday school for the next three years and can then incorporate different elements into the lessons,

continually adding to and updating them, but not having to create them from scratch. Below you will find an overview of what Sunday school is currently like in many of the Lutheran churches in the District of La Paz. You can also click on the **Sunday School Resources** tab of the website to download your own copy in Spanish of our lessons month-by-month for free!

Sunday School Overview in the La Paz District- Part 1

El Buen Pastor Lutheran Church

- 7+ children, 4-12 years old (in the past many more children attended)
- Children generally present a passage from the Bible and/or sing during the worship service to show what they've learned in Sunday school.
- At present, Sunday school is held in the dining room or other parts of the temple because the classrooms are rented out in order for the congregation to earn money. Sunday school material is being used from biblical societies not necessarily Lutheran. (They really like the idea of producing Lutheran material and are working on their space concern.)
- The congregation holds its worship service in Spanish, however, congregational members speak both Spanish and Aymara.

Sunday School Overview in the La Paz District- Part 2

Santísima Trinidad Lutheran Church

- Two groups of children: Group 1: 8+/- children, 4-8 years old and Group 2: 15+/- children, 9-14 years old
- There are three professors and the lessons depend a lot on the professor's style. Typical lessons for Sunday school involve things such as: games, activities, expositions and stories.
- During the worship service, children may repeat a biblical passage, sing and sometimes they read part of the lectionary or direct the worship service.
- The congregation holds its worship service in Spanish, however, congregational members speak both Spanish and Aymara.

Luz y Vida Lutheran Church

- The congregation does not gather every Sunday, but when they do, 15-40 children, 4-12 years old attend Sunday School. There are three Sunday school professors that take turns in teaching Sunday school and directing the worship service (one professor for Sunday school/Sunday). The children attend Sunday school as one group.
- They learn hymns and biblical passages in Sunday school.
- Some children stay during worship service and others play outside.
- The congregation is trilingual: Spanish, Aymara and Quechua.

El Sembrador Lutheran Church

- 8-12 children, 4-13 years old
- Typical activities for Sunday school are: games, theater and teaching the children small lessons.
- It was expressed that the Sunday school lacks a base and that is something they want to work on.
- The congregation holds its worship service in Spanish.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

- 10+/- children, 8-13 years old
- Typical activities for Sunday school include: prayer, games, theater, drawing and activities.
- The children are very curious and ask many questions.
- The congregation holds its worship service in Spanish.

Beth-El Lutheran Church

- The youth, once they are old enough, are invited to teach Sunday school. They are chosen through a nomination process and elected for a two year period. There are four Sunday school groups and two professors for each group. The professors take turns teaching by trimester.
 - Las joyitas (0-8 years old) 7-8 children attend
 - Las estrellitas (8-12 years old) 10+ children attend
 - Los prejuveniles (12-15 years old) 10+ youth attend
 - Los jóvenes (15+ years old) 10+ youth attend
- The lessons are taught by themes using a professors' guide. Typical lessons include: activities, games, theater, prayer, drawing and/or reading.
- It was expressed that at times the groups have Sunday school lessons together when a professor doesn't show up and that often makes it hard. Also, it was mentioned that it takes a lot of time to prepare for lessons.



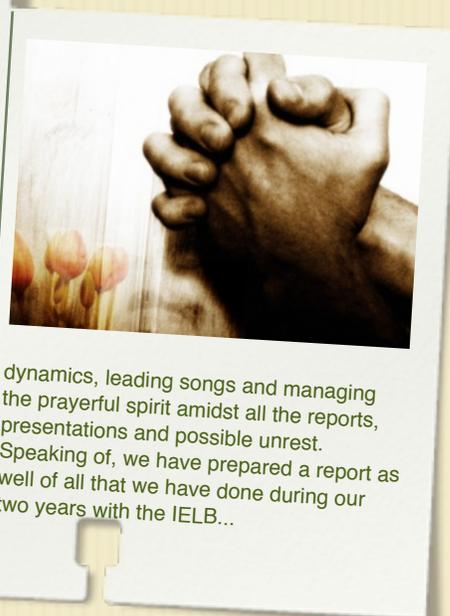
[HTTP://KARIELLER.WEEBLY.COM](http://karieller.weebly.com)

This month, I've added new features to the website and updated sections. (Justin's also updated his blog.) Take a look at: [Home Assignment 2011](#) and the [Our Videos](#), [Justin's Blog](#) and [Sunday School Resources](#) tabs. Also, I hope you enjoy the new format of the newsletter and as always, I look forward to hearing from you when you get the chance!

Love, Kari

Excerpt taken from Justin's Blog

...Also we have been preparing for the National Assembly of the Bolivian Lutheran Church to be held at the beginning (7, 8, and 9th) of April near La Paz. At this assembly that takes place every four years, the entire church administration is up for election. With that said, come April 10th, there may be an entirely new group of people in the central office of the IELB. Our journey with Jesus to the cross this year includes our unsteady journey to this assembly. Any time there is the potential for change there is the potential for conflict. The church really is no different. In our case here with the IELB, the whole world is awaiting the results of this assembly. We have been asked to be a "spiritual presence" at the assembly: facilitating



dynamics, leading songs and managing the prayerful spirit amidst all the reports, presentations and possible unrest. Speaking of, we have prepared a report as well of all that we have done during our two years with the IELB...

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The Bolivian Stew

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