

<< Letter #1: from Josh & Emily Kines >>

Supporters, Friends, and Family,

I write this letter to share with you some significant changes on the horizon for the Kines family. After much prayer and discussion as a family and as a ministry team, we have concluded that the Lord is calling us back stateside to pursue church planting with MNA (Mission to North America). We know the news of this change will take some by surprise and many of you will have questions concerning the nature of this change. In order to do our best to provide clarity as to the reasons for this change we want to share with you why we believe the Lord is calling us back home, the factors *not* involved in our decision to come home, and the current state of the ministry here in Arequipa, including a timeline for departure.

First, we want to share with you why we believe the Lord is calling us in this direction of ministry:

1. As a family, we still have a very strong heart for missions and a desire to see the Gospel go to the nations. The challenge for me has always been whether or not my specific gifts were particularly suited for cross-cultural missions.
2. Emily and I were and are convinced that my gifts and calling have always been to pastor a local church. We sought much counsel from many of our friends, veteran missionaries, and the leadership of MTW concerning the potential use of my gifts on the mission field. With their counsel and a strong sense of the Lord's leading, we committed to move forward in our call to cross-cultural missions.
3. We have faced many challenges over the past four years in the pursuit of this call, including an uncanny amount of sickness and some set backs in the language learning process due to sickness. However, through all of this the Lord has significantly impacted our lives for the better. We have grown as individuals, as a married couple, as a family, and as a team.
4. What we have been able to see through our time here is that the Lord is calling us to serve the church at home and, by God's grace, help it see its responsibility to the church throughout the world. We are confident the Lord has used these past several years to confirm our passion to see the Gospel go to the ends of the earth, while securing in us our calling to the church at home.

Ultimately, we know that the Lord makes no mistakes and that His call on our lives these past four years has been to prepare us for this next stage. I have always learned better by getting my hands dirty and the Lord has graciously used this time to allow me to do just that. It is with great sadness that we leave the field and our family/team here and, therefore, important to us that you know what is *not* taking place in this process.

1. There is nothing about this new calling that has anything to do with team conflict or challenges. We asked you to pray for our team from day one and God has answered our prayers. As a team, we have never been closer and many tears have been shed in the process of making this decision together as

- a team. CrossCollaboration is and forever will be our family. The Bonhams and the Gutierrezes have loved us, challenged us, rebuked us, and served us in ways I imagine we will only know the significance of in glory.
2. This transition is not a result of sickness or struggle on the field. Emily and I will always look back with fondness on our time in Latin America. We believe our family has been strengthened during this time and that we have experienced some of our most significant periods of spiritual growth since arriving on the field because of these challenges.
 3. We do not believe we missed the Lord's call on our lives when we came here to serve in cross-cultural missions. We have seen the Lord's hand in every part of our lives over the past several years and are grateful for the opportunity to have been able to serve Him in this calling over the past four years.

We would like you to know where we are going from here. We have begun discussions with Mission to North America (the home missions/church planting wing of our denomination) about church planting in the States and, Lord willing, will attend their assessment center in November. Emily and I are praying the Lord will begin opening doors for church planting opportunities in the States, and we are excited to see Him already answering those prayers with several opportunities already beginning to take shape. Therefore, it is our plan to return to the States this November so that we can begin pursuing these leads full time.

Though the timing of this departure might seem a little sudden, the team believes it is a natural time of transition for the ministry here. The Lord has opened up some amazing opportunities for ministry that have given our team the direction it needs to move forward. Emily and I believe we have been able to help lay a good foundation for ministry and delaying our departure would simply be a distraction.

Words cannot express our deep gratitude for your support and encouragement over the past several years. Apart from your financial support, you have prayed for us and checked in on us with calls and emails. We have felt truly loved and supported every step of the way and we are very grateful to you. As we begin this next chapter of our calling we humbly ask that you prayerfully consider continuing your support as we transition to MNA. As things progress in this process we will be in contact with each of you.

In Christ,

Josh, Emily, Anne Elise, Ava, Jak, Matthew, Carter, and #6 in route