



# THE BONHAM LINE

October 2023

## TL;DR Version (see articles for more details)

- We are excited about various opportunities for women's ministry on a local and regional level.
- Our family attended the MTW Americas Area Retreat to rest, refresh, and reconnect with our coworkers.
- A podcast interview, prayer requests and LOTS OF PICTURES! See photo captions for more updates.

## Equipping to Equip

This fall is a busy one for our family as we have several trips and projects underway. Recently, Nikki has been working to find resources to equip and train women who have been asking for help in either starting or revamping the women's and children's ministries in their local churches. This job commonly falls on the shoulders of the planter's or pastor's wife, but his wife often feels unprepared and unequipped for such a task, and therefore completely overwhelmed. Because Nikki has a background in Christian Education, she frequently receives requests from other pastors and planter's wives in Latin America to come alongside them in these areas. She's been looking for a solid, biblical resource that provides foundational principles for starting these ministries and that could be contextualized for Colombia and adapted for a workshop-style training... but without having to reinvent the wheel or write it from scratch. That's a tall order!

But the Lord continues to provide. In September, Nikki had the opportunity to travel to Chattanooga for 3 quick days to attend a training conference for



*Nikki with the women's ministry trainers.  
We are thankful for the Lord's provision!*

women in ministry that was offered by our denomination (the PCA). She spent time with other trainers going through the material with an eye towards contextualizing it for Colombia, and it looks like this might be just the resource we need. Our hope is that Nikki will be able to use the material and curriculum as a tool for equipping women in ministry locally here in Rionegro, as well as in our wider church-planting networks in Colombia. We are thankful for what seems to be the Lord's provision, and we are excited to see where the Lord will lead in this project. Please pray for His guidance and wisdom in our next steps.

## 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.

## PARTNER WITH US

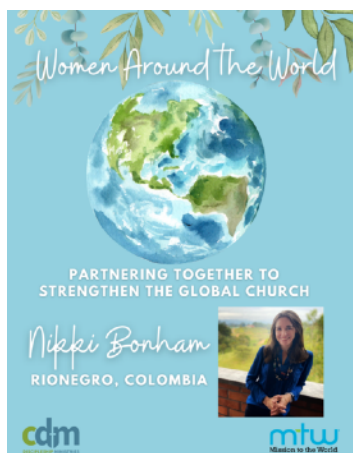
Mission to the World  
PO Box 744165  
Atlanta, GA 30374-4165  
Memo: Bonham 10788  
**or online at:**  
[give.TheBonhamLine.org](https://give.TheBonhamLine.org)

## MORE INFO

[www.TheBonhamLine.org](https://www.TheBonhamLine.org)  
[www.MTW.org](https://www.MTW.org)  
+1-601-691-1001  
+57-320-590-2017 (Whatsapp)

## The “EnCourage” Podcast

Did you know that our denomination (the PCA) has a women’s podcast? The EnCourage Podcast is currently airing its 13th season, “Women Around the World.” They are featuring various MTW women on the podcast and on the EnCourage Blog for the next few weeks.



Nikki was interviewed for an episode that aired at the end of September, in which she shared about the emotional struggle through various forms of loss during our family’s time on the field. For a little more insight into what that has been like for our family, we encourage you to tune in. You can listen to it on the webpage by clicking here, or wherever you listen to podcasts.

## Reunited!

Every 4 years (or 5, due to the pandemic), all of our missionaries in the Americas get together for a conference week to rest, reconnect, and listen to excellent teaching (in English!). We were so excited to spend time with many coworkers we haven’t seen since 2018. But the icing on the Area Retreat cake was that our PAC (Pastoral Associate Couple) was able to attend with us! Our PAC serves us in many ways, but their primary goal and mission is to provide intentional pastoral care for our team. They pray with us and for us, counsel us, encourage us, and sometimes gently give us much-needed constructive criticism. Our team’s PAC is a couple we all know well and who have already filled this role in our lives for years. In fact, you might recognize them... Nathaniel and Alicia Gutierrez, aka “The Goots,” who served alongside us on the field until late 2018, serve as our team’s PAC.

One of the best parts about the Area Retreat is that MTW provides an excellent conference for



*Reunited at last! They may not physically and geographically serve alongside us, but the Goots still walk beside us every step of the way.*

missionary kids as well. These kids live a strange life — they don’t feel like Americans, but they don’t feel like Colombians either; they struggle with how they fit in this crazy lifestyle their family leads. MTW provides a separate conference just for them with a dedicated speaker, amazing youth leaders, and professional counselors to help them navigate the hard parts of their reality. They spent the week with other kids who live in the same Missionary Kid context, and it was so good for their hearts!

Our team also held a “mini-retreat” following the conference, led by the Goots, where we focused on understanding biblical rest and our need to trust that this is the Lord’s work and not our own. As missionaries, the work is never done, and it is hard not to fall into the trap of unhealthy patterns, rhythms, and expectations. It was a convicting reminder that when we work in our own strength, our ministries, health, and families pay the price. **Please pray that we will listen to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and seek to develop healthy and life-giving rhythms in our family and ministries in full dependence on our all-powerful, self-sufficient Lord!**

May we remember that HE is the one who gives strength and growth and life to all we do. To Him be the glory!



## Prayer Requests:

- **Upcoming Travel:** We have had more travel than normal lately, and we aren't quite finished yet! Nate and Nikki will attend some MTW Leadership meetings in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in November, and the boys will enjoy some "Grandma Camp" with both sides of the family while we are traveling (Chattanooga and Mississippi). Pray that we will finish up this season well and be able to get back to our normal routines soon!
- **Our boys' hearts:** During those travels, please pray specifically for the boys' time in Mississippi. This will be their first visit back to Mississippi since the passing of their aunt (Nikki's sister, Lacey) and their grandfather (Nikki's dad, John Travis). It will be a big step in processing grief, loss, and the reality of how things have changed. Pray for their hearts! Grief from afar is messy.
- **Church Planting Growing Pains:** This month we will celebrate 2 years since the church had its first Sunday Morning Service. The Lord has been good and faithful! As the "honeymoon" stage of the 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.
- **Church Leadership:** Connected to the previous request, we long to see the Lord raise up wise, committed local leadership in Iglesia El Redentor. As a new church plant, we have provisional leadership from our denomination until we can identify and equip wise, godly men whom the Lord is calling to serve as elders in our congregation, as well as a potential Colombian pastor. Please pray that the Lord would be working mightily in the hearts of the members of our congregation and that we would be able to identify these future leaders.



*In Chattanooga, Nikki got to spend time with BOTH of our moms! Nate's mom (left) lives there, and Nikki's mom (right) drove over from Mississippi to spend time with her in between trainings. Those 3 days weren't long enough, but it was fun for all 3 of us to be together!*



*Any guesses what this is?  
This box contains the hard copy of Nate's Doctoral Thesis! Nikki took it to Chattanooga with her since it is easier to mail from there. Now we wait for feedback, more rounds of edits, a defense, and Lord-willing, a graduation date in the spring. May the Lord use this project for His glory and the blessing of His church!*





*We've had some hard and heavy days in Rionegro and the church due to a huge explosion in the city center from an illegal fireworks operation. Our church lost a friend in the blast— a young man who was well-connected with many families of the church. We attended the memorial service, where huge crowds gathered to grieve the loss of this godly young man.*



*While Nikki was in Chattanooga, the missions team at First Pres informed her that our family is the recipient of the 2023 Peirson Trust Award! We are so thankful for the creative ways this church always supports and encourages us and all of their missionaries. They snapped a photo when they handed her the news. Thank you, FPC! We are honored!*



*A couple cool Colombian bugs, because why not? We find all sorts of critters in our house!*



*Homeschooling with a view. We are steadily getting settled in the new place and absolutely loving the countryside. Our water is inconsistent and there are major problems with our energy and voltage, but who cares with that view?*





*The large-group sessions at the MTW Americas Area Retreat. There were around 250 of us in total, I think, including kids and staff. We are thankful to be counted among this group!*



*Nate and Goot*



*Some of the Colombia missionaries enjoying game night at our mini-retreat. This is such a fun crew!*



*Nikki's dad's birthday was during the retreat. She celebrated him by wearing his favorite Hawaiian shirt, which he wore every single time they went to the beach. Nikki packed the shirt in her suitcase after his funeral, and she was proud to sport an XL bright orange Hawaiian shirt covered with pineapples on the beach in his honor. The tradition lives on!*

*John would have been 64 on October 11th.  
We miss him every day!*



*Alicia and Nikki*



*Saying goodbye at the end of the mini-retreat.*