

Pred etc.

A non-monthly Stevazine

April 2009

Your guide to the ministry of Stephen Predtechenskis and Hidalgo



Like a seed that sprouts spreading roots, in 2001 God planted a ministry through a small group of friends investing lives in a Hispanic apartment community 5 miles west of my home church (Northwest Bible). God created paths for these roots to go deeper, allowing us to see changes in the lives of children first, then entire families. God has continued expanding our opportunities such that we now use the apartment clubhouse as our ministry center, are planting a bilingual church on-site, and God has allowed me to become the ministry leader full-time.

*Please pray that we would be effective in developing **true followers, worshippers, and active ambassadors** for Jesus Christ among the families of the Hidalgo community.*

Spring 2009 Update



One of my highlights in the past year was improving my Spanish and understanding of Mexican culture while in Cuernavaca, Mexico for six weeks. Though the kids at Hidalgo are bilingual, most of the adults speak only Spanish. So the improvements I made through my Spanish studies have made a big difference in interacting with Hidalgo parents since my trip. I'm far from fluent—I need to return for more studies—pero puedo hablar mucho mejor (but I can speak much better). In addition to making big improvements in my Spanish skills, I truly enjoyed building a relationship with mis padres mexicanos (Mexican “parents”). Leonel, a former pro soccer player, played soccer with me in the street in front of their house (plus I got to play with the local kids on their “cancha”--court). Lety taught my missionary neighbors, myself, and some CAM interns how to make tamales. Additional experiences, like la Lucha Libre (think “Nacho Libre”-- Mexican wrestling), Mexican pyramids, and some other cultural outings have provided great conversation topics for adults in the Hidalgo community. Please pray that God will provide for a return to continue improving my Spanish (and to build on my friendship with Leonel and Lety.)



Top: Laura, Lety, Leonel (Stephen's Host Family in Mexico), Stephen, and Brent Downs (neighbor and CAM missionary).. Above right: Lety teaching how to make tamales (strawberry dessert tamales and cheese/green pepper tamales)

Real Tacos?!

What's a Mexican taco (vs. "Tex-Mex" or Taco Bell®)? Often two soft corn tortillas folded with meat, chopped onion, and cilantro. In Mexico, one favorite is **Tacos al Pastor** (see pic) with marinated meat sliced from a skewer and slices of pineapple on top.

Right: Making tacos al pastor at "La Gringa" taqueria in Cuernavaca



Top row: Trying pickled pig's feet; helping at a local church outreach; Cuernavaca's zocalo "town center".



2nd Row: signs (notice Hidalgo street sign on wall); students at entrance to La Universidad ("Uninter" -- my language school). 3rd Row: Downtown Cuernavaca; "Thanks for speaking Spanish" sign in Uninter's conversation practice garden.



God Answers Prayer

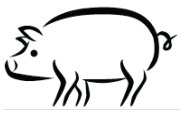
Here are a few recent highlights and answers to prayer:

- Successful Hidalgo **Leaders Retreat** in East Texas (15 leaders attended) with Team Bonding and Vision Forming
- Two groups came and **organized the Hidalgo library** -- plus we had an unplanned (but fantastic) "reorganization" of our food pantry/closet by members of one of the groups
- The Hidalgo Youth group had a great **SuperBowl Party 2009**
- **Thriving Kids Club** -- averaging 40-50 kids weekly in Pre-K to 12th grade.
- Over **115 kids** attended our Easter Celebration and **heard the Good News of the REAL Easter**. We met many parents as well. (And God provided someone besides me to plan it! A huge blessing!)



Since prayer works, let's keep praying!
See the back page for specifics.

Top to Bottom: Hidalgo Team Retreat; Youth at Hidalgo SuperBowl Party; K-6th Graders at Club Hidalgo (Kids' Club); Kids and Stephen at Easter Celebration



Hidalgo Invests THOUSANDS in Livestock

Wondering where to invest these days? Instead of worrying about bear or bull markets, we went straight to the farmer's market (sort of).

Our team of "stock" pickers: the Hidalgo K-6th graders

The Purchases: 4 chickens, 2 rabbits, 1 pig*, and 16 New Testaments

Investment Amount: \$96 (or 9.6 thousand pennies!)

Capital Source: As part of discipling the Hidalgo kids they were offered their first opportunity to learn about "giving" to God and others. Gospel for Asia has a program that allows you to purchase farm animals and other essentials for poor Asian families. The kids were given ziploc bags to save up their pennies, nickels, etc. with a letter explaining to parents** what we were doing.**

**** Parents got involved too. For example, one mom runs a small "restaurant" and got her patrons to give. Several other moms brought in donations as well.**



Kids with the giving jar

*** Although water buffaloes are also available thru Gospel for Asia (for \$460), our sources indicate everybody already has a water buffalo.**

SOURCE: Larry the Cucumber, "The Water Buffalo Song"

HIDALGO'S NEW LIBRARY

- Why?** 1) Better readers = better learners and better thinkers
- 2) The relationship-building impacts lives and potentially eternities!

Right: Hidalgo mom and kids. Most kids come alone, so come read with them!
(Saturdays 1:30-3:30 pm)



NewsFlash:

Stephen Goes Fulltime

(It's about time...)



Yes. It has finally happened! As of November 2008, I am a full-time missionary. And what does that mean? Instead of leading the Hidalgo ministry, raising support, AND working a couple days a week as a software trainer, I'll be focused on leading the Hidalgo ministry and support-raising. One huge benefit is more time

for building relationships with kids and adults in the Hidalgo community (one of our greatest needs and some of my most effective ministry).

An example of this need involves one of our more challenging kids. "Jay"* is a natural leader and a gifted athlete, but lives behind walls of anger. Though often acting up or skipping Club, one day Jay invited me to his upcoming basketball game. After that, I attended several of his games (see photo on front cover). Though he didn't say it, I knew it meant something to him. Later, however, after having to show him some very tough love, I wondered how he would respond. Through prayer and some visits to play football, God has kept the relationship intact. Please pray that God will break through Jay's walls with **His** love reflected through me and the other Hidalgo leaders. (*Name changed for privacy)

Ministry Reproduction?

Imagine if every church in the U.S. had an apartment outreach! Last year at the Fusion Conference* I had an opportunity to teach a "break-out" session on Apartment Ministry How-To's. (*Fusion is a gathering of 20- & 30-somethings who want to put their faith into action.)



CAM or Northwest Bible Church: Who is this Stephen REALLY?

One source of confusion many people have is for whom does Stephen work? So we asked him. “Great question! That’s a source of confusion for many people,” replied Stephen. “I lead an Outreach Ministry of Northwest Bible Church (NBC), but I’m actually not on staff with NBC.



I receive my support through supporters **investing in me through CAM International***. **The Hidalgo ministry itself receives finances for curriculum, supplies, outings, etc. from designated Outreach/Missions budget money received through Faith Promise giving to Northwest Bible Church.** Any giving to Northwest Bible Church with “Hidalgo Ministry” in the comment line will be used for special projects and/or the next phase of Clubhouse renovation.” When asked if still raising his personal support, Stephen paused from his meal of rice and beans for a reply that was concise but meaningful: “Yes. Yes I am.”

For giving specifically for Stephen’s monthly support, you can see options at **www.predetc.com** or send checks (with the code phrase “Stephen Predtechenskis” in the comment line) to the CAM address listed on back.

**CAM International is a missions organization focused on spreading the Gospel to and through Spanish-speakers around the world.*

Called into the Principal’s Office...AGAIN!

Last year I was asked to be on the **Site-Based Decision-Making Committee** for **Cigarroa Elementary School**—where our Hidalgo Kindergarten through 5th graders attend. This year the principal asked me to Chair the committee. (Imagine that! A *missionary* as the committee chairman.) This has been a great opportunity to have influence in the public school. When visiting the students, they often introduce me to their friends and tell them about the “church” we have. Also as a result of this connection, we have twice hosted Cigarroa’s Community “Meet the Principal” Night in our Hidalgo clubhouse—another way for us to meet and connect with families in the community. ***Please pray that God will use me to shine His light in this local public school.***

*(Previous page top: CAM Team watches to make sure Stephen signs his life away
Bottom: Stephen teaching at Fusion Conference)*

Keeping Connected

To hunt me down, here's all my contact info. If you haven't seen me or heard from me lately, please call or email and we'll try to fix that.

Personal Address:

8775 Southwestern Blvd., Apt 2158
Dallas, TX 75206
(214) 288-7929 cell
stephenp@caminternational.org

Financial Address:

CAM International
8625 La Prada Drive
Dallas, TX 75228
www.caminternational.org
(800) 366-2264

Web sites:

Stephen: www.predetc.com
Hidalgo: www.gohidalgo.com

Prayer

Prayer For Me

- **Relationships** that will encourage me to grow
- Increasing **spiritual growth**/intimacy with God
- **Administrative** / Event Planning Helpers
- God's provision of monthly **financial supporters**
- Increased **leadership skills**

Prayer for the Hidalgo Ministry

- More **Spanish-speaking** couples and singles to build relationships with the adults in the community
- That God would raise up **leaders** within our team for the various groups (ex. Men's ministry, worship, women's ministry, reading club, etc.)
- Increased and deeper **relationship-building** with men, women, and kids in the community
- Wisdom about if and when to **renovate and add 3 more classrooms** to the clubhouse. (We're bursting at the seams on Tuesdays.)

Join Me in Ministry

If you would like to partner financially, checks can be written and sent to **CAM International (see address above)** with my name in the memo line. For monthly giving, an **automatic electronic transfer form** can be downloaded from the "Supporting" link at **www.predetc.com**