



KNOWING NOTHING BUT JESUS CHRIST & HIM CRUCIFIED (1 COR. 2:2)



Family Update

Linda and the kids are doing great! We have really enjoyed living in downtown Hartford and are taking advantage of all that's available in the city. For example, the Hartford library is a few blocks down the street and Bushnell Park is only half of a mile away. So just the other day we rode our bikes to the park, hopped on the horses at the the vintage 1914 carousel, and toured the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch. It was a great day to be out and about in the city, having fun as a family, and meeting people.

✠ Praise God for Kingdom-Minded Churches ✠

Our family has been in Greater Hartford for two months now. Our days are filled with meeting people in the community and building relationships through local events, children's activities, campus connections, and home schooling meetings. I'm also working hard to connect with local pastors and their churches. In doing so, I have been tremendously encouraged by how kingdom-minded the established churches have been to our church planting vision, independent of denomination. In fact, one of the local pastors summarized the positive responses that I've experienced by saying, "The Kingdom of God is glorious and so much larger than any one church ministry." After scheduling a time to meet, he closed his e-mail with these words, "I'm thrilled that you are here and it's my honor to serve you. Let's plunder hell together!" We are praising God for such kingdom-minded churches that are willing to link arms and partner with gospel-driven and gospel-preaching men like myself. In addition to developing relationships with new pastors, we've also strengthened our partnerships with Valley Community Baptist Church and Wintonbury Baptist Church. Both of these churches have been unbelievably kind to pray for us, commit resources to our efforts, and encourage their folks to be part of our core team. The specific details are on the following page. Read on! You'll be encouraged to hear the kingdom-mindedness of these churches.

DON'T FORGET OUR NEW CONTACT INFORMATION

Steve & Linda Thiel
43 Wethersfield Ave. Apt.1
Hartford, CT 06114

860-338-0253 (Steve)
860-338-0277 (Linda)

MEETING PEOPLE AND SHARING THE GOSPEL

I am having opportunities every single day to be in the community and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with the people I meet. Yesterday, I took my car to the mechanic and sat there for several hours while it was being repaired. During that time, I interacted with the owner about the shooting at Sandy Hook and the current debate to put armed guards at local schools. It was a great opportunity to share about man's sinfulness and our need for a Savior. We had a great interaction on who Jesus is and why His life, death, and resurrection are essential for the forgiveness of sins and the hope of eternal life.

Valley Community Baptist Church

The leadership at Valley has been such a blessing to partner with us in our church planting efforts. From the very beginning, Senior Pastor Jay Abramson's excitement was evident. I still remember him saying, "You can take half our people and plant in our parking lot, we just need more gospel-driven churches in Connecticut." Their commitment has not wavered but has only grown stronger. In meeting with the rest of their pastoral staff, I have been given the opportunity to lead their small group initiative in the towns north of Hartford on the I-91 corridor. This platform provides an opportunity for me to minister to people who live in communities very close to where we desire to start this new church. Our prayer is that they would catch the vision of being a part of a church-planting church that faithfully ministers the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost.

MATTHEW 28:19-20

"GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL THE NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER & THE SON & THE HOLY SPIRIT, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THAT I COMMANDED YOU; AND LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS, EVEN TO THE END OF THE AGE."

Wintonbury Baptist Church

The folks at Wintonbury have been such a blessing to our family during this transition. Our kids participated in their week-long Faith Quest ministry just a week after we arrived in Connecticut. Our family also joined them on their family camp over Labor Day weekend at Lakeside in Pittsfield, MA. And now the church leaders have asked their people to pray over the course of 40 days about participating in what they're calling the "God-sized opportunity" of joining our church plant. After providing the relevant details about our vision in the Prayer Guide, they made this statement to their people, "As hard as it might be to see people leave Wintonbury, our hearts rejoice at the thought of God's Kingdom expanding through a new gospel-driven church in our area. Is God calling you to join Him and Steve in this new work?" We are praising God for such Kingdom-minded churches!



LINDA'S PERSPECTIVE

The past eight weeks have been an amazing experience for our family! I explained it to one of my new friends by saying, "I feel like my life is a movie that is unfolding right in front of me. There are so many wonderful and amazing things taking place every single day that I can't wait to see what's going to happen next!" And it's really been like that. I was expecting the transition to be extremely difficult. In fact, I thought that it would take at least three months before Hartford felt like home. But to my surprise, I met new friends and started establishing relationships within the first week. Many of them have been the result of connecting with other believing moms through our homeschool group Classical Conversations. Last night, we hosted a family of six for dinner. The wife and mom has become a dear friend here in Connecticut. In fact, I had the opportunity to tell her what a blessing she has been to me personally. I believe our easy transition is the result of two things, the prayers of all of you and the training that we received over these last five years with seminary and NETS. The Lord has been very kind! He's answered my prayers to provide good friends, and we are meeting new and great people every day. I can't wait to see who we're going to meet tomorrow. I'll keep you posted!

WE APPRECIATE YOUR PRAYERS

1. FINDING FAVOR WITH PEOPLE

Please pray that we would continue to meet people in our community who are excited to be a part of our core group.

2. PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDING

Please pray that local churches around the country would be excited to partner with us and financially support our church planting efforts in Greater Hartford in 2014.

3. BALANCE IN THE MIDST OF BUSYNESS

Please pray that our home would be filled with grace, love, and laughter in the midst of the busy schedule. Pray that Linda and I stay connected with each other and with the kids.