

A Family for God

Musical family puts spotlight on Jesus through Together Ministries

Story by Carmel Palmer
Photos by Geraldine Wilkins, unless otherwise noted

During a sound check at Calvary Chapel Irvine, CA, a band member plugs and unplugs cables on the soundboard. The scene looks typical—except that the helper is 3-year-old Jayden Preciado, under the supervision of his mother Golden. When Jayden tires of his task, they test microphones by singing the ABCs. While sister Avalon, 10, carries the 25-pound guitar case to their father Michael, 8-year-old twins Micah and Zachary fly action figures off sound equipment. Soon all but Jayden will be onstage, leading worship.

This is a typical night for the Preciados, who travel as a family worship team under the name Together Ministries, an outreach of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, CA. Based in California, the self-described “musician-aries” have traveled the continental U.S. and even overseas, encouraging believers and inviting people to know Christ. “Worship music is a tool in evangelism,” said Michael. “Music is often used to prepare hearts to receive the Word. It’s like a nurse preparing a patient for surgery.” The Preciados play a variety of venues, from men’s, women’s, and family retreats to a recent concert at a military base. Golden added, “Our strategy has always been to see where God is working and join Him there. However God sees fit to use our family, that’s what happens.”

Brought Together by God

Michael and Golden met in a worship-leading class at the Calvary Chapel Bible College, then located at Twin Peaks, CA, where they discovered a shared dream of working alongside a spouse in full-time music ministry. Golden asked Michael to be her band’s bass player, and a few months later their relationship began to grow. They were married the day after graduation. For four years, they toured with the ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ before branching out on their own.

They had a clear, simple vision for their ministry—coming alongside pastors to help people draw closer to God. Money would not be the focus; instead, they would be flexible to go wherever He led them. They sought counsel from a friend, who used “Together Ministries” as a hypothetical ministry title during their conversation. The instant they heard the name, the Preciados knew it was perfect. Little did they know that two-thirds of its meaning was still on the way.

Children were not in the initial plan. In the words of one producer Golden talked to, “When you have kids, it’s all over.” Although she had once agreed, Golden began to wonder, *What if God somehow included our children in the ministry?* The answer to her question came swiftly—Avalon arrived into Together Ministries one year later. Another year later, the twins were born. At each junction Michael and Golden asked God if they should change direction, but they strongly felt they should continue music ministry.

Raised on the Road

At first, including their children meant simply finding ways to tour as a family. They traveled in a motor home and recruited nannies or relatives willing to help them on the road. But as the children grew, so did the Preciados’ perspective on the meaning behind Together Ministries’ name. They wanted the kids to participate in all God did with the ministry. Living on donations, they shared stories of God’s provision with the children. Soon they found each child was musically gifted. By the time Jayden joined the troupe, it seemed God was building their band from the inside out.

In 2008, the Preciados took a year off from music ministry and moved to Honduras, where Michael and Golden taught at an elementary school. Difficult but rewarding, the experience unified their family and



Michael and Golden Preciado lead worship at Calvary Chapel Irvine, CA, with the help of daughter Avalon, 10, and twins Micah and Zachary, 8. The entire family tours under the name Together Ministries, serving through music in a variety of ways.



Before and after performances, the kids find time for learning and play.

expanded their understanding of God’s kingdom. After completing a yearlong study of the Gospel with his elementary Bible class, Michael asked if anyone was ready to accept Christ—the entire class raised their hands. Another pivotal moment came when Avalon and Micah joined their parents onstage for the first time.

Since their return to the U.S. and to music ministry a year ago, all three older children



3-year-old Jayden removes audio plugs.



Michael’s mother Gloria, who often helps with the children, holds Micah.



The Preciado family sings in Spanish at the Sonrisa Orphanage in Tijuana, Mexico. Their familiarity with the language has opened doors. Photo courtesy of Together Ministries



Preparing for a song at CC Costa Mesa's Fourth of July event, Zachary reads from the Scriptures as Micah and Avalon look on. Photos by Lisa Pascua

have frequently sung alongside their parents, and the family has recorded an album together. While homeschooling, the older children listen each day to individual song parts Golden has recorded onto their iPods.

Sharing the Vision

Life on the road can mean long drives, late practices, and little one-on-one time with the kids and each other. But Michael and Golden agree the opportunity to share their vision with their children far outweighs the difficulties. Both had mapped out their own roads before they felt redirected onto God's—Golden was an Olympic-hopeful gymnast while Michael had a promising rock music career. They want their children to know from the beginning that their gifts are for God's glory. Michael explained, "We tell them, 'God wants you to be involved in ministry—let's go do it!'"

Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you ...

2 Timothy 1:6a

Donathan Williams, Golden's brother and assisting pastor of CC Vero Beach, FL, explained how their shared vision blesses the churches in which they minister. "Just the fact that they're here serving the Lord with

their entire family inspires others to do the same," said Donathan. Their example motivated his church to join them in Honduras for a family mission trip, where elementary-aged children witnessed to orphans.

Pastor Tim Fraser of CC Irvine, CA, has recently included Together Ministries in the church's monthly visits to Sonrisa Orphanage in Mexico. The family's Spanish skills have been invaluable in building relationships, but he said the greatest blessing of their ministry is their availability. "Most musicians want to play for a big audience," he elaborated. "But Michael and Golden will drive hundreds of miles to lead worship at a tiny rural church. Speaking as a pastor, that's a huge encouragement for the smaller Calvary Chapels."

Going Where God Leads

Recently Michael and Golden brought Avalon on their second overseas trip, performing at Creation Fest in Cornwall, U.K., and the European Missions Conference in Austria. In California, they've started donation-based music lessons with a focus on worship. They also reach out to the Hispanic population. Regardless of where the road ahead leads, they are committed to their original vision—flexibly serving God as a family through quality music. "There



The Preciado women sing together.

isn't a limit with the Lord," Golden declared. "We're just waiting to see what He does." 🙌

Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Ephesians 5:18b-19

Together Ministries

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