

December Newsletter 2024

Thank you so much for your prayers and faithful support this month. We truly appreciate you, and the Lord will use your giving for the kingdom as we place it in his hands with faith. Here's where we are:

News/Ministry

For Christmas, we gave gifts and panetón (Christmas fruit cake) to many people who helped us throughout the year. We had a good time bringing pollo a la brasa- roasted chicken to Rocio's grandparents for a Christmas supper and eating a caldo (a Peruvian chicken soup) with Rocio's mom on Christmas morning. Because we felt somewhat lonely this year, these small gatherings were special and of high value to us. It was Stephen's and Noah's first Christmas Eve shooting small fireworks, which they really liked.



Giving gifts to Noah's teachers:
Ms. Techí and Ms. Bianca



Giving gifts to Stephen's teachers:
Ms. Joselyn and Ms. Monica

This month there were very many special moments when the Lord spoke, and I sensed the words truly remained or were written on the hearts of the participants by the Spirit. As it says in 1 Peter 1:24-25, "All the people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord endures forever."

It was indeed a complete joy to help lead online Bible studies of Romans this month, together with about 10 to 12 Peruvian brothers and sisters in Christ, on Mondays and Thursdays. We all felt the Lord speak and His Spirit move us through studying and edifying each other through the Scriptures this month. I learned so much by studying these Scriptures, and the Lord gave me a profound peace before, during, and after sharing. It was also a joy and always a huge encouragement to share with brother Willy, who has been one of the ones who is constant and faithful in the men's group. We are

looking at Hebrews together and are now in chapter 4. The Lord, likewise, moves us with peace, strength, and encouragement as we gather.

The women's Bible study small group is almost done with Proverbs and has gone through the whole book! They had a Christmas party this month and prayed and declared truths over their families, husbands, and kids through prayer. It was a great time!



The ladies' small group Christmas party

Circumstances

This month was a little emotionally hard for us; we struggled a lot with loneliness, but the Lord used even these times for good as we were strengthened as a family and were drawn to pray and seek God in this big transition to Peru. We were drawn to ponder, reflect, and evaluate all that has happened this year and plan how to move forward for next year. I was very encouraged through the book of Daniel to be more constant in prayer because it is only then that we are truly dependent on the Lord, who produces growth and does what only He can do- transform, empower, heal, etc.

This year has been full of the Lord working; however, we are in the phase of a process. As Nehemiah asked the king to help rebuild Jerusalem again, he first went at night to inspect the walls, walk around them, and saw all the damaged city in ruins. Later in Nehemiah 2:17-18, he describes the condition and what the Lord wanted to do, "Then I (Nehemiah) said to them, "You see the trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been burned with fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem, and we will no longer be in disgrace." I also told them about the gracious hand of my God on me and what the king had said to me. They replied, "Let us start rebuilding." So they began **this good work.**" These bolded letters also encourage us- as it says in Philippians 1:6, "that he who began the good work in you will carry it out/perfect it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

This year has felt like that for Rocio and me. We have seen many struggles and strongholds that are obstacles for the Peruvian people to truly come to the Lord. This helps us be more spiritually minded that strongholds can only be broken through spiritual weapons- not man-made techniques, strategies, or reasoning. 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of this world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds." It is a wake-up call as Paul in Ephesians tells us to pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." In the progression of Nehemiah helping the Israelites reconstruct Jerusalem, ultimately, there was opposition- leading even some of the workers to carry a sword throughout the day- a hammer in one hand and a sword in the other. This represents something we all should also have- a balance of building up the body of Christ and an alertness (prayerfulness) of the spiritual realm, knowing that the only way to build the body of Christ is complete dependence upon the Spirit and the power of Christ and the provision and favor of the Father to do so.

I was thrilled when reading Hebrews 4 to see that there is a much more effective sword than Joshua's that conquered the promised land, and it is Jesus' – in Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Thinking of Jesus as superior to Joshua first is that Jesus brought us into a better-promised land- into the kingdom of heaven. Even more so, thinking of Jesus as the conqueror in Revelations- his initial appearance to John where there was a double edge sword coming out of his mouth and his face like the sun shining in all its brilliance and the rider on the white horse who is called Faithful and True and has the name written on his thigh- King of Kings and Lords of Lords who conquers the beast and throws the devil into the fiery flames and brings peace again. He fights for us as he did for Joshua in the Old Testament; the Lord has given the battle into our hands. He is the one who has the power to break down strongholds, and we must depend entirely on Him for victory in our own lives and the lives of others.

So, as we are walking around the walls of Jericho seven times, praying for the Lord's freedom and waiting (truly waiting and praying and depending on Him to move) to break down the walls of Jericho- we can have hope/trust and faith/ perseverance for the Lord Jesus to also conquer through his heavenly kingdom, the land and territory of the Mantaro valley in Peru. This is our prayer, and we ask you to join us in it. Nehemiah also mourned, fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven before approaching Artaxerxes, the king, about rebuilding Jerusalem. So we should start with prayer also!

Spiritually

Jonathan, in 1 Samuel 14, encourages us to add courage and lots of it to our faith. This is what we also ask for the Lord this coming year: the courage to keep trying, to keep starting, to keep initiating, and to keep proclaiming the word of the Lord and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and we place our efforts in His hands.

In 1 Samuel 14, Jonathan says to his young armor-bearer, "Come, let's go over to the outpost of the uncircumcised men (the Philistines). Perhaps the Lord will act in our behalf. **Nothing can hinder**

the Lord from saving, whether by many or by few." And his armor-bearer said, "Go ahead; I am with you with heart and soul."

Jonathan said, "Come on, then; we will cross over toward them and let them see us. If they say to us, 'Wait there until we come to you,' we will stay where we are and not go up to them. But if they say, 'Come up to us,' we will climb up, because that will be our sign that the Lord has given them over to us..." They went, and the men at the outpost shouted to Jonathan and his armor-bearer, "Come up to us and we'll teach you a lesson." So Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Climb up after me; the Lord has given them into the hand of Israel... In the first attack, Jonathan and his armor-bearer killed some twenty men in an area of about half an acre."

This was the first attack that started a battle against the Philistines in which panic struck the whole Philistine camp- it was a panic from the Lord. And when Saul and his men went into battle, they found the Philistines in total confusion, striking each other with their swords... So, on that day, the Lord saved Israel, and the battle moved on beyond Beth Aven.

Within this story, Jonathan's courage and bravery to seek out and test and see what happens and have the conviction that the Lord will save them is fantastic. That initial act of faith moved the Lord to fight for them, and similar to Nehemiah, this act moved the rest of the army to fight. In Nehemiah's case, he encouraged the Israelites- let's do this!

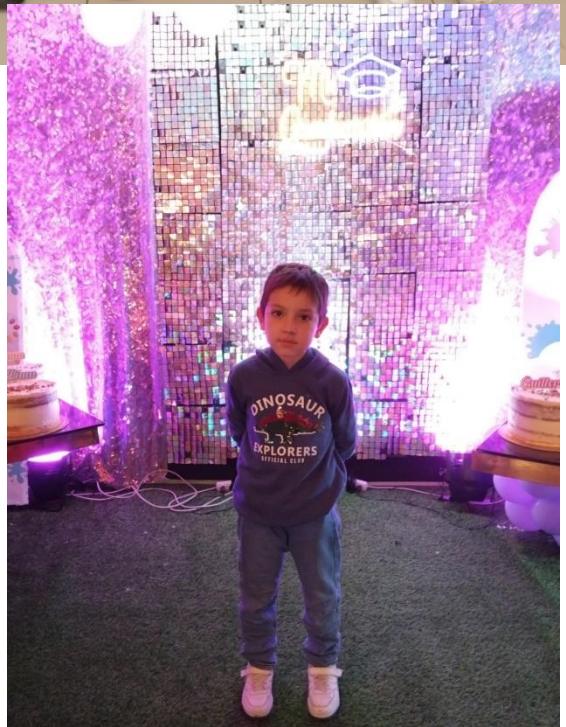
We pray for the Lord's initiative, wisdom, and courage to inspire others to move out in faith and share Him with others.

Fundraising

November's giving was great!!! We praise the Lord Jesus for His provision and grace. We are deeply grateful to each of you for your support!!! The Lord has provided for two years of ministry, and we must raise \$52,067.44 for our third year to continue this ministry and trust the Lord to continue providing and bringing this ministry to fruition. We are at 75% of the third year. Any contribution is of great value to the Lord and his Kingdom in Peru and the world. If you feel the Lord Jesus is leading you to be in ministry with us financially. You can use the link below to contribute: <https://tnpartners.churchcenter.com/giving>. You can also find this link on the Partners webpage: <https://tnpartners.org>. Make a free account and choose Josh and Rocio Ivey as missionaries to give to Peru.

Prayer Requests

1. For an outbreking of the Spirit upon the hearts of those we share the Gospel to this coming year.
2. For Christ to break down strongholds in the culture that prevent the Peruvian people from coming to Christ.
3. For wisdom to be led and guided by Christ to those in need
4. For courage to continue initiating and looking for opportunities for ministry and outreach
5. For the plans of 2025 to be guided by and in the hands of the Lord



Stephen's graduation party