

Many are the plans of a man's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails. Prov. 19:21

I think I have rewritten the opening lines of this newsletter at least four times in an attempt to give you a general feel for our life and ministry here but then something would happen and what I wrote that morning no longer gives an accurate picture. Sure, the Amazon jungle is now our home but people are people where ever you go and God is God and (thankfully) never changes. Our life has a lot of ups and downs – days where our faith is rock solid and growing and days when we think being here is a huge mistake, days when we love life in Peru and days we would rather be anywhere than here. Funny how humanity, love, and sin transcend all cultures. So when you struggle, pray for our struggles. When you praise God for success, praise God for success here, too.



Ministry:

We seem to have fit right into a hole in the church planting team that needed to be filled. We recently became members of the Mil Palmeras church. Amy is helping with Sunday school and women's ministries. She is already managing to teach in Spanish and really enjoying getting to know the women and children in the church. In April we will be co-leading our first small group. Christian has been asked to help organize the motocross ministry (in Pucallpa and expand it to a city farther north in the jungle), is a part the pastoral staff meetings every week, attends the men's prayer group, and is finding his niche helping plan the future for the SAM church planting team. Fellow missionary and church planter, Julio Chiang, and Christian are finding that they seem to make a great team. The gifts God has given the two of them are working together to show us what God intended by synergy. Christian is helping put into a workable plan the vision and ministry that has become Mil Palmeras, with the purpose of planting reproducing churches. We are so thankful and love our team mates, the Chiang Family. We believe that God will grow this church planting team and trust he will give us clear direction for the present and the future.



Culture:

The past several months primarily have been spent getting to know the culture of the Peruvian jungle (very different from the mountain region). As part of the orientation process with SAM we were given "cultural homework". Julio enlisted the help of several families in the church to have us over to their homes for a meal. We have had a wonderful time getting to know these families and learning about our new home, Pucallpa, from the people who were born here. The culture here in the jungle is much more relaxed than it is in Arequipa. We have adapted well to the schedule, or should I say lack thereof, and the long hot Latin days. We shop at the market and eat meat chopped with a hatchet on a dirty stool. Chicken is no longer a strange breakfast food and bananas/plantains, a jungle staple, are now a family favorite.

Family:

Our arrival in Pucallpa was not the euphoric event we had imagined. It was really hard. We wanted to arrive in time to celebrate Thanksgiving with our new SAM family, but Christian had to return to Lima to receive our crate. During that time the kids began at their new school and had a difficult time adjusting to yet a new system. The first month included lots of tears and late nights of homework and poor grades. It was all very frustrating. Honestly, we were miserable and were questioning if we should even be here. God in his grace lightened our load and things got better. Not easier in all respects but he gave us peace and the gift of good friends and good communication. The older 3 are attending SAM Academy and Max and Gavin are home schooling. They are doing very well now and are all happy here, though they miss their family and friends in the States. We also have had the special blessing of being with Beth as she was baptized last month.



We celebrated our first Christmas in the jungle. A fake tree in 100 degree weather was quite a change for us – but celebrating our Creator's birth is a joy no matter the surroundings. A huge thank you to all who sent us gifts at Christmas! What a surprise those packages were and what a comfort and encouragement to us all.

Christian is working hard to fix-up the dirt bike he bought and Gabe and Emma enjoy riding theirs on the property and on the track that Gabe built behind the school. We are still on the lookout for a smaller bike for the 3 younger kids. Since November Emma, Max and Gabe have all celebrated birthdays (ages 11, 13, and 8 respectively) and in a few more weeks Gavin and Beth will celebrate as well turning 7 and 10. Gabe is a TEENAGER and his foot is now bigger than mine. He and his not-so-little brothers are going to eat us out of house and home.



We just spent a week outside of Lima for the SAM PERU field conference. We had a wonderful time of rest and renewal. A team from our church, Eternal, in SC came down to help. Pastor Skip was our speaker. Courtney, his wife; Matt and Laurie Tandy; and Amy and Danielle came down to help out with the kids and music. We were all so blessed by their presence. Thank you!!!!

We thank you all for the prayers, support, and e-mails. We love to hear from you. We have our new website up and running so please check it out.

Seeking to serve,

The Listros

Christian, Amy, Gabe, Emma, Beth, Max, and Gavin

Address: Apartado 22
Pucallpa, Peru

Phone: (51) 571700 - home
(860) 365-8033 - skype

calistro@southamericamission.org

New website:

thelistros.com



South America Mission | 1021 Maxwell Mill Rd, Suite B

Fort Mill, SC 29708 | 803.802.8580 | www.SouthAmericaMission.org