

La Luz de Cristo para Perú

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A New Culture

Okay - I know the name of this newsletter is *La Luz de Cristo para Perú*, and yet, WE ARE NOT IN PERU! I'm starting to feel like the 80's-90's character in the Where's Waldo books! In June, we were training in Brazil, in July & August we were training in Colorado, and now we are in Costa Rica for language school. If you are thinking to yourself, "will they ever get to Perú?", you are not alone! We are thinking the same thing! God's path is taking us to many venues in preparation for His calling in Perú.

We have arrived safely in Costa Rica with all of our belongings packed into 2 suitcases each. We did decide to pay a fee and take three extra bags that accommodated some of Sarah's toys, bed linens for each of us, towels, and several books that we are required to read before Perú. Upon arrival, we sailed through customs and immigration... the customs officials even helped us carry our luggage from the inspection area to our awaiting driver! What a welcome! We were prepared for a hassle and expected to pay duties for extra baggage and their content, but instead were greeted with smiles and helpful hands. ¡Gloria a Dios!

It didn't take long before we realized, to quote Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, "we're not in Kansas anymore". We went from living in a 3600 square foot Victorian home to living in a house the size of our old living room. Yes, I'm serious. The boys can lay in their twin beds and reach across their entire room. Our kitchen literally only accommodates one person at a time. There is no hot water in our home (typical in this country). The only available hot water comes from something called a "widow maker" in our shower. That sounds scary, doesn't it!? It is!!! A widow maker is an electric "fixture" that consists of actual electric wires running into a shower head that heat the water as it exits the pipe. The shower head is about eight feet in the air, for good reason. You wouldn't want to accidentally touch this widow maker thing and jump start your day!

Hallelujah, there is a panaderia (bakery) two blocks from our house! This is the very first place we went after leaving the airport, even before we went to our new house! Thank you, God, for providing this piece of comfort for us! It's amazing what a hot loaf of bread will do for your spirits!

Walking everywhere is an adjustment. We knew that we were not going to have a vehicle and we were prepared for this idea, but not this reality. It is hard to get used to the fact that when you run out of milk, you cannot "jump in the car and run to the store real quick." No, on



The children of La Carpio live along a highly polluted river in San Jose, Costa Rica. They are of Nicaraguan descent, living in extreme poverty and poor living conditions. Laurie & Billy Drum are working in ministry with the children of La Carpio each week, teaching bible stories and songs and sharing the love of Christ with His children.

the contrary, you will need to put on shoes and get an umbrella and walk to the store, attempt to buy milk using only your limited Spanish, put on your math brain and convert your dollars into *colones*, and then walk back home in the rain. This is a 30-40 minute process, at least. This is especially complicated by last minute school supply needs, which are not readily available at just any store! Living here requires a lot of planning and flexibility.

Which brings to mind the rain. In Costa Rica, there are two seasons - the rainy season and the not-so-rainy season. Either way, you are going to get wet. This is a tropical rainforest country, and they didn't name it the "rainforest" for it's dry qualities! During the first week or so, the constant rain was a source of minor depression. Now, we are completely accustomed to it and almost don't even notice! An umbrella is a permanent fixture on everyone's wrist. Our shoes are always wet and our feet are always dirty. I have a new respect and understanding for the act of foot washing in the Bible.

The rain makes algae grow incredibly well... the majority of the sidewalks are slick with green algae because they never dry out. Billy has dubbed this "green ice" - he frequently gives us an unintentional acrobatic skating show as we walk to school. Luckily, this hasn't resulted in any actual falls yet, just great entertainment!

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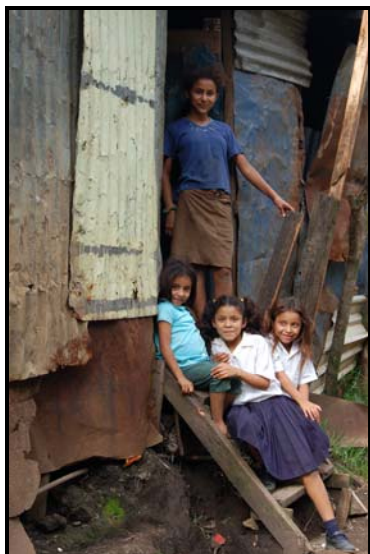
Another new thing for us is the transition from living in a small town where we never locked our doors (we didn't even HAVE locks on any windows) to living in a place where everyone has bars on their windows, doors, and a "cage" around their house. We each carry at least 3 keys now, and that's just to get into the house. This is perhaps the biggest adjustment for the boys. They hate "living in a cage." It's not that there is a lot of violent crime here, but there is a lot of petty crime (pickpockets, con-men, home theft, etc.) It isn't just our neighborhood, it's every neighborhood. But it is hard to get used to. The cost of living here is really high, but the average wage is very low. Most people get paid \$2 per hour. A medical professional makes \$1000 per month. Yet, housing and food costs as much or more than in the USA. This has resulted in a bad situation and desperate people who sometimes must resort to petty theft to feed their family. Perhaps one of the hardest things for Billy and I has been taking off our Aggie rings. Only other Aggies will understand the heartbreak of that statement, but it was necessary for our own safety.

By the way, did you know that Costa Rica is a highly tectonic area??? Meaning that there are volcanoes all around us and earthquakes regularly?! In truth, there ARE volcanoes everywhere, but not of any consequence to our safety. And there ARE earthquakes daily, but also not of any consequences to us. There were over 200 last month alone, but only one or two of those were actually felt by humans. We had one that was "feelable" yesterday, but so minor that many people didn't notice it, either. It's actually good news that there are lots of earthquakes - this constant release of pressure within the earth keeps us from having a build up of pressure which causes BIG earthquakes.

Along with the minor differences that try our resolve on a daily basis, we have also discovered some wonderful things about living here. Waking up to parrots and hummingbirds outside of your window in the morning is a beautiful experience. Having fresh lemonade everyday from the lemons that are growing on the tree out back is awesome. Looking at tropical rainforest mountains each day on the walk to school is a nice touch, too. Watching Sarah jump in puddles is great fun... she wouldn't get to do that at home because we wouldn't be walking in the rain, we would be driving!

It's all good, really. This is a path of preparation that God has laid for us. We continue to learn new things everyday. We continue to immerse ourselves in a different culture and meet new people here. We have been given opportunities to learn more Spanish, practice it daily, and use it in ministry (see article below). This is a great mission that God has sent us on and we are *running with perseverance the race set before us*.

Ministering in La Carpio...



"Lapiz" and Roberto sat in the front seat of the Scooby Doo hippie-style van as Steve greeted each of us and we prepared to drive the 45 minutes to La Carpio. When it was time to leave, Lapiz (his name means pencil in Spanish - so named because he is so smart at school) accidentally put the van into drive instead of reverse and we rolled into the car in front of us. "No problem, Man," said the ever-so-patient Steve as he fixed the situation while Roberto made fun of Lapiz. Soon we were off. We were so excited to be given the opportunity to partner with Steve Edwards and his ministry in the La Carpio area of San Jose, Costa Rica. La Carpio is a barrio on the river, comprised almost completely of Nicaraguan refugee families. Steve came to La Carpio as a language school student years ago, and decided to make this ministry his life. He works to bring hope into the lives of the kids he ministers to. The ministry now includes English as a Second Language classes, a couple of neighborhood soccer teams, a basketball team, a skateboard ministry, and cooking classes for young girls.

We have begun working in the La Carpio area each week, leading a children's ministry with the help of about 6 other missionaries. Because this is incredibly like the ministry that we did in Mexico with children, we have been asked to head

up this effort for the La Carpio children. This week, we had approximately 50 children attend. A typical ministry time includes playing games with kids, singing children's bible songs, and teaching a bible story lesson. We hope to include crafts soon, as ministry funds allow.

Steve told us "The kids have been asking for two or three weeks now, 'when are they coming to play with us?'" We didn't even know about this ministry two or three weeks ago! God's plan is so perfect! He knew that we were coming and had been preparing us for it. We are so pleased that He called us to work with His children!



Leading bible songs during ministry with the children at La Carpio.

Contact information for The Drums

You can email us at: Billy@drumsforchrist.org or Laurie@drumsforchrist.org

You can send us regular, stamped mail at:

Laurie & Billy Drum
 Instituto de Lengua de Española
 Apartado 100-2350
 San José, Costa Rica
 América Central

This mailing address will also accept packages, but they must be no larger than a shoe box and weigh less than 5 lbs. Otherwise, we will have to go downtown and wait at the post office for an hour or so to retrieve your box and possibly pay a tax on the size of the box.

We have a USA phone number! You can call us at 979-985-5268.

DEAR BILLY AND LAURIE,

I will pray for you. Please send me your prayer letter.

Update me by email: _____

As God provides, I plan to partner with you by giving \$ _____ per month / quarter / year for _____ years.
(circle one)

I would like to donate a one-time gift of \$ _____.


Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Home Church _____

TAX DEDUCTIBLE GIFTS MAY BE SENT TO:
 The Mission Society
 PO Box 922637
 Norcross, GA 30010-2637 USA
DESIGNATE GIFTS: "DRUM SUPPORT 5/321"




Miles and Sarah overlook our neighborhood in San Jose.

Prayers & Praises

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

~ James 1:2-4

Praises:

◆ We arrived safely in Costa Rica for language school and are slowly making the transition from American culture into Costa Rican culture.

Prayers:

- ◆ Pray for us as we continue our language learning. The transition from adults in the workplace to “kindergarten level students” in a classroom everyday is a rough one!!!
- ◆ Pray for our children as they continue to make transitions into a new culture. Life here is very different and the kids are making MANY adjustments. Moving from small town America to big city Latin America is really HUGE.
- ◆ Pray for the children of the La Carpio area of San Jose as we work to minister to them during our time in Costa Rica this year.
- ◆ Pray for Billy’s father, Lynn Drum, as he battles lung cancer. He has just begun treatment this month. Pray for Billy as he struggles with being far from home at this time in his father’s life.

- ◆ Pray for our peer, Erica, as she ministers in Nicaragua following Hurricane Felix. She arrived two days before the hurricane hit and devastated her town and ministry. Pray as they struggle for supplies and food to feed the children they minister to.
- ◆ Pray that we will make good friends in San Jose, especially with the Tico people. We are “outsiders” here and always will be, but we pray for national friends that will come alongside us and allow us into their lives.
- ◆ Pray for our personal walk with God. Pray that we will stay strong in the Word and grounded in Him. With stress and fatigue, we are easy targets for the enemy... pray that we stay focused and filled with the love of Christ and covered with His protection and peace.
- ◆ Pray for all the people of Peru as they continue to recover from the devastating earthquakes last month.
- ◆ God bless all of you!!!



The children of La Carpio happily run to the arms of a loving father. Billy is “at home” in ministry with children of this community.

The Drum Family

Serving Christ in Peru

Laurie & Billy Drum
3907 Old Oaks
Bryan, Texas 77802

E-mail: billy@drumsforchrist.org
laurie@drumsforchrist.org



Visit us at

www.drumsforchrist.org

The Drum Family is currently attending the Instituto de Lengua Española in Costa Rica to learn the Spanish language. They are also in ministry while in Costa Rica, serving the children of Nicaraguan refugees in La Carpio.



The Drums are called by Christ to work with children in Latin America. Laurie and Billy were both school teachers in the United States. They will work with children in Costa Rica and in Peru, working to share the love of Christ by loving His children. This is just one of several ministries they will work with.