



La Luz de Cristo para Perú

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Transition and Change

As I write this to you, Billy is sitting in the garden fielding questions from yet another in a long line of people from the community who continue to come to the house each day to see if the news is true. Our days are filled with these encounters right now, with tears, with questions, with pleas, and with the air of sadness and uncertainty. To fill you in:

- We have been feeling like we are more and more called to coaching, counseling, mentoring, and training. We have been working on preparing ourselves in that vein for the past 18 months or so and have been using those skills and that calling here in Peru, as well as long-distance with other missionaries. In late May, we decided to talk to The Mission Society about how to go deeper with those skills and how to use them more. They were in agreement with that calling and we began talking about different things. At that time, we said that we wanted to stay in Peru for at least another year, maybe 2, to finish up what we started here and transition to another role - so we thought we would be here until 2014 or so.
- Almost exactly a week to the day after we talked to The Mission Society, we received news from the government here (via our Peruvian lawyer)... the educational laws are changing and it will effect our programs. Beginning in January 2013, ALL children age 3 and up must attend school, either Peruvian public school or an accredited, certified private program. Our programs do not comply. Therefore, we are being forced to close down our ministry projects in December. Our timing decision was made for us. This was a big blow! We weren't really ready to take this step NOW, but it seems that God has other plans. Guess maybe He knew that we wouldn't really ever leave unless He closed the door and forced the issue. Yet, at the same time, we see it as confirmation that our feelings and our call is real and that this change was coming and it was in the will of God.

So, we are in rapid transition mode right now... we have been so swamped with short-term teams and other responsibilities in June and July that we haven't been able to truly address this issue until August. We have been working with The Mission Society to see what this means to us and what happens next. As of right now, we are working on closing down things here, selling our stuff, going through the paperwork related to relinquishing our residency and visas, etc. We went to Atlanta to have meetings with the office a couple of weeks ago. There are several possibilities on the table... we have been asked to be on The Mission Society's Train-

ing Team that travels to train missionaries (that only happens a couple of times a year), we are going to be working with other missionaries in the vein of coaching, counseling, and mentoring, and several other ideas that are on the table. Where we will be moved to is still up in the air, but we will probably be placed across the Atlantic somewhere in the 10/40 window, as this is where the most need is for missionary care and training right now. We are really honored that TMS values our experience and our skills and wants to use us as trainers and to lead and help others. There is a little 'fear factor' and uneasiness in not knowing where or what or how... but it will all work out and we trust God to lead us to the right place and the right people.

All that being said - we will be back in The States by Christmas and will spend time there until May. We look to be 'repositioned' and sent out again in May. We will have time to visit people, speak at churches, reconnect, and share the ministry (both in Peru and the new ministry). We have to travel to Turkey in February for a training that we will be helping to teach, but otherwise, we'll be around. We look forward to seeing you!

In the meantime... we are swamped! We are mega-stressed. We are emotional wrecks. We are struggling to figure out how to close things, say goodbyes to people we have grown to love and have called 'family' for several years now. We are in limbo - not knowing exactly where we will go next and what that looks like. We are overwhelmed with big decisions and tiny details. Life's just hard here right now.

I know that's a lot of news... wish we could say it to each of you individually. Please do not hesitate to email us with your questions or concerns... we want to address all of them!

Right now, we need your prayers!!!! (**see page 3**) This is a tough time for us, we are a rollercoaster of emotions right now and the timing is a huge blow to us. Love to all of you... Again, please keep us in your prayers.



REAL Southern Living... Our life in rural Peru

Strikes, schedules, goodbyes, AAAHHH!.....

Our life right now is just plain not-normal. Okay, so some of you are thinking, "When was their life EVER normal?!" Touche'. But eventually, when every day is crazy and abnormal, the abnormal becomes 'normal' and you start to settle into your known-normal. But right now, WOW! We are over the top on abnormal!

- **Strikes:** Strikes are the way that things are done here. If anyone is unhappy with anything, they call a strike. It is not uncommon for the roads to be closed due to strikes or for the miners to be on strike. But right now, we just seem to be overrun with strikes! Teacher strikes, road strikes, postal strikes.. You name it, it is on strike! The postal strike just ended and we just received mail that was sent to us in June (it was nice to get several pieces of mail, though!).



For the past few days, the main road between Huancayo and Lima has been blocked because a town had some issue with the airport??? Not sure what that was about, but blocking the main highway is always a surefire way to get noticed! And the teachers... the teachers have been on an all-out national strike since the end of July. And it depends who you ask as to exactly why they are on strike. Some have told us that it is about benefits and retirement. Some have said it is about a national competency test. Who knows? The bad thing is that kids have not been in school since July! Now, that shouldn't really effect Kuyay Talpuay since we are not affiliated with the national schools, but it has caused us some attendance issues... parents are keeping their little ones home since the big ones aren't in school. Doesn't really make sense to me, but that's the way it is. In one of our programs, it hasn't been an issue - we are at full capacity/full attendance. But in another of our programs, we have only had 3 or 4 students each day. And in Tinyari, because we operate out of the public school, we haven't had students since July!

- **BUSY!:** June and July were full of short-term mission teams and The Mission Society bringing 100+ people together in Huancayo for training. Add to that the baby goats. Then add the playground team at the beginning of August, a quick trip to Texas to see Ryan graduated from university, and a quick trip to Atlanta to have meetings with The Mission Society office about our transition... we just feel like we have run ourselves ragged! Thank goodness that the Kuyay Talpuay ministry team is so great at holding down the fort without our physical presence (of course, that's the plan, right? For them to be empowered to do it alone!). And it just keeps going - this week, we have a short-term medical team from Alabama serving here, then several workshops and trainings for our workers, then we are hosting a family retreat (see the calendar of events on the back of this newsletter). Pray for us to have some calm in this storm of events and responsibilities!



- **The Big News:** Since we came back in August from Texas & Atlanta, we have been focused on telling the communities about our departure in December, the closing of the school programs, and what this means for them. It has been an emotional rollercoaster. We have done it so much now, that we know what to expect from Peruvians and Peruvian culture: there is initial shock, then lots of tears, then begging and pleading for us to break the law and stay anyway (and all manner of creative scenarios for how to do this), and eventually the settling into the news and how to move forward. Each time, we know what to expect but it doesn't get any easier. Watching people go through the grief cycle is not fun. And watching everyone go through it at different times and different rates and different ways... Wow! Add to that the fact that we, too, are going through our own period of grief. It's rough.



So, we are going a little crazy right now. Again, you are probably thinking, "They were always a little crazy!" Yeah, yeah, we know. Pray for us to find the strength to withstand the craziness of these circumstances, to transition well, to be able to help our team and our community deal with grief and find a way to walk through this together... we really need your prayers right now.



Another Playground!

Who ever dreamed that in two years we would build four playgrounds in Peru???. Read to find out about the dreams of one Peruvian teacher...



As we drove to the worksite of the new playground that was being built (the fourth playground in two years), Billy turned and said to Rosio, "You know, all of this is God's response to a dream that you had!" Rosio just smiled and shook her head, her eyes filling with tears. Two years ago, we asked the Peruvian teachers and missionaries that we work with to share their hopes and dreams for ministry with us. Rosio shared that she really wished that children had opportunities to play. She wanted to find a way to build swings for one of our ministry communities so the kids would have a "park". We mentioned Rosio's dream to several supporters and people back home in Texas. Soon, Rosio's dream took flight and people began donating money for swings and other things. In 2011, Christ United Methodist Church—College Station, Texas decided to send a mission team to Peru to build not one, but TWO children's parks, complete with swings, towers, slides, balance beams, see saws, tire climbers : the works! Last August, Rosio's dream became a reality as the villages of Iscos and Patarcocha worked to construct playgrounds. In May of 2012, a third playground was constructed in the village of Tynyari. And in August 2012, Christ UMC College Station, Texas returned to build the fourth Peruvian playground - this time for the native Ashaninka village of Shankivironi, in the jungle of Peru. This playground was built by CUMC labor and funds, with additional funding coming from First UMC Navasota and First Presbyterian Navasota... children attending VBS collected



money for the playground project and bought a slide for CUMC to install. Love the collaboration of churches, of youth and children working to serve and love on youth and children in another country... so incredible! Thanks to all who have donated funds, who have prayed for, and who have participated in making these 4 playgrounds a huge success!!! We never dreamed that we would build playgrounds when we came to Peru, but Rosio DID dream it - and God responded!

Praises! Our oldest son, Ryan, graduated from Texas A&M-Kingsville with a degree in biology and a minor in journalism!!! He is currently taking a semester off before beginning grad school next year. We had a FANTASTIC time visiting with family and celebrating graduation in Texas (even though it was about 350°F every day and I'm pretty sure most of my skin cooked off!)

Praises that our Kuyay Talpuy teacher, Luz, gave birth to a precious baby girl (Luz Cielo) in early August!!! She weighed 2.9 kilos (almost 6 pounds). She is beautiful!

Pray for us: Surviving these next couple of months is already proving to be brutally painful. Pray for us, and also pray for the people we are leaving behind. Thankfully, we have always known that nothing is forever and there may come a day when we may have to leave, so our Peruvian team has been prepared and empowered and trained all along to move forward and lead ministries without us. Pray for them as they make decisions for going out and building their own ministries now, based on what they have learned and experienced over the past 4 years.

Pray that supporters don't abandon us during this time of transition! We will still need to maintain our own support!!!! Everyone in The Mission Society is funded by churches and individuals and we will need to continue that way. It is not uncommon for people to stop supporting missionaries when they go into a time of furlough in the USA and when they are in transition... pray that we do NOT lose support and that people stay with us in this change!

Continue to Pray for us as we work to minister to the people of Peru. We still have a couple of months before we depart and we will continue to hold classes (both for children and adults), train teachers, coach and counsel, disciple, work the gardens, etc.

Pray for The Mission Society office and the people who are working to discern what is best for us as we transition from Peru to 'somewhere else'. **Pray** for us as we try to wait patiently for answers.

The Drums | HOW TO CONTACT US:

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DEAR BILLY AND LAURIE,

- I will pray for you. Please send me your newsletter by e-mail: _____
- As God provides, I plan to partner with you by giving \$ _____ Per month / quarter / year for _____ years.
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'Suppose a child should fall into a well, who would get the reward for the child's rescue, the one who held the rope and lowered the other to the bottom, or both? God says they will share alike. The one who stands at the top and makes it possible for the other to go down into the well in order that the child might be rescued is just as much entitled to the reward as the one who goes down. You may not be able to go down; you may never see the foreign field, but you can hold the rope. You can make it possible for someone else to go. You can send a substitute, and if you do, your reward will be just as great as the reward of those who actually go.'

~Oswald J. Smith

Calendar of upcoming ministry events:

- Sept. 1-8: Medical mission campaign in Chongos Bajo, Peru with a team from Covenant UMC—Dothan, Alabama, led by The Iveys (we'll be helping and translating)
- Sept. 10-11: Kuyay teachers workshop in Christian retreat games / experiential games led by Ash McEuen
- Sept. 13: Workshop for Peruvian missionaries in Fundraising for Missions led by The Drums
- Sept. 28-30: Christian camp retreat for Kuyay parents and students in Shankivironi, led by Kuyay Talpuy teachers, missionaries, and Haydee & Miguel Trigozo
- Oct. 13-20: Children's outreach mission to Tinyari... mission team from Covenant UMC Dothan, Alabama led by The Drums
- Dec. 10-12: Coaching training in Peru, led by The Drums
- Dec. 17: Last day of classes in Kuyay Talpuy, Christmas party, closing of schools.
- Dec. 18: Drums leave Peru. Back to the States to prepare for the transition...
- Feb. 1-16: Laurie & Billy travel to Antalya, Turkey to attend training and to train other missionaries in using coaching techniques. Also traveling to check out a possible future ministry location in the 10/40 window.

We will be in the USA from January—May 2013. We will be doing several things during this time: training, speaking engagements, meetings, reconnecting with supporters and churches, etc. We would love to add you, your church, your Sunday School, small group, etc. to our schedule!!! Let us know when we can come visit you and share about Peru, about missions in general, and about our calling to serve others around the world.

SHARE THE LOVE OF CHRIST WITH THE PEOPLE OF PERU.

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