

## Cross Family Ministry Update September 5, 2022

Dear Praying Friends,

We thank our good shepherd for leading us through a variety of joyful occasions over the past few months. May your joy in the Lord increase as you read about them!

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NIV)

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances;  
for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

**Disciple Making 2022:** We rejoice that more people are being called out of darkness into God's marvelous light! In our last update I mentioned that a baptism service would soon take place. Thank you for praying. God answered prayer and gave our church a joyful afternoon of Christian fellowship. Our oldest daughter, Alexia, was baptized along with seven other Christians. It was very encouraging to hear the believers give testimony to God's saving work in their lives and then see them follow the Lord in baptism. God helped Alexia write out her testimony in Spanish and then confidently share it with the church before her baptism. I have had the privilege of helping baptize several Christians over the past few years here in Peru. It was a special blessing to baptize Alexia! We look forward to seeing God's continued work in our family and the church!

Some of the people that have recently come to know the Lord and gotten baptized are people we have known for several years. May we all persevere in planting and watering the seed of the gospel, believing that God can make it grow and produce fruit in his timing.

1 Corinthians 3:5-9 (NIV)

What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe – as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. For we are co-workers in God's service;  
you are God's field, God's building.

For the past few months our church has offered several group Bible studies each week. We thank God for using that teaching time along with the regular preaching of his word to equip believers to serve him. I thank God for his help to prepare and teach a class on Christian Service and Leadership on Tuesday and Thursday evenings over the past few

weeks. We are glad to have a growing group of believers that are eager to serve the Lord in the church and make disciples in their community.

Our church celebrated its 7th anniversary in July. God gave us a tremendous weekend of celebration as we expressed our gratitude to the Lord! We were so glad that Kelly was feeling well enough to be there for the anniversary weekend – especially that she could play the piano for the hymns and the special groups that sang!

We thank God for several families that joined the church membership on Sunday, August 21. Each of their lives represent a beautiful story of God's mercy, grace, and redemption. We pray that God would continue to provide unity, wisdom, and spiritual growth for our church here in Peru.

Romans 15:13-14 (NIV)

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

I am glad to have the opportunity to preach through 1 Timothy in the remaining Sundays before we travel to the USA. The girls and I participate in and help with children's Bible clubs on Saturday mornings and afternoons. We pray that these children and their parents will come to know the Lord and experience the joy of living for God's glory instead of suffering the consistent consequences of slavery to sin.

**Family life for God's glory:** Kelly and I are so grateful to the Most High God for giving us the joy of celebrating 15 years of marriage on August 4. We thank him for sovereignly guiding us through all of these years for his glory. We thank God for the joy he has brought to our family through Kelly's pregnancy. He has also used various circumstances and trials to increase our perseverance and faith in him.

We thank God that Kelly is now 22 weeks along in the pregnancy. We thank God that she is no longer dealing with the severe nausea that affected her for several months. At an ultrasound last week we found out that our baby is a little girl. She seems to be growing and developing well. We are so excited to have another girl in our family! Her due date is January 8, 2023. With her four sisters we have waited until their birth to announce their names. Since for this pregnancy the girls are older and more aware of how Mommy and their baby sister are doing, we decided to announce her name to family and friends early. We thank our life-giving Lord for Eliana Hope Cross. One of the meanings of Eliana is "My God has answered." We thank The God Who Sees us for answering our prayers for another child. We thank God for teaching us the importance of raising our girls in the fear of the Lord as we bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. We thank God for the opportunity through this time to teach

our girls from God's word how he wants us to love him and to love others with a joyful fervency.

We thank God that the girls recently finished another school year and after a break got started back on another year of studies. We thank the Lord for the Christian, homeschool curriculum that he has provided.

I am currently reading and teaching through 2 Samuel, Psalms, and 1 Timothy in our home Bible study time. I also enjoy reading other books out loud to the family after meals. Over the past few months we have read *From Ants to Aids: The Experiences of a Medical Missionary in Africa*, and a couple of the books in *The Chronicles of Narnia* series by C.S. Lewis. We are currently reading *The Horse and His Boy*.

**Stateside ministry 2022-2023:** Thank you for praying about our trip to the USA. We are glad to tell you how God has been guiding us and providing for our needs.

After praying and evaluating many details, God directed us to purchase flights to the USA. If God wills, we will leave Puerto Maldonado on September 27, 2022 and arrive in Orlando, FL on September 28. We look forward to starting our time in the USA by serving the Lord in Florida for several months. That will allow us to get settled in and prepare for Eliana's birth. We thank God for directing us to a house we can rent during the time we plan to be in Florida. It is owned by members of our sending church and is very close to the church property and the birth center we plan to use for Eliana's birth. We are so thankful for this option!

We thank God that a partnering church in Pennsylvania has a missions van that we can use during our time in the USA! This was the van that God provided for our stateside ministry in 2019. We pray that God would provide a way to get the van down to Florida at the start of our trip and then back to Pennsylvania at the end of our trip.

We look forward to spending time with our 12 partnering churches to give in-person updates about what God is doing here in Peru. We pray that God would use our lives to encourage believers to faithfully serve the Lord wherever he places them. We pray that God would use our lives to raise up the next generation of cross-cultural disciple makers (missionaries). When Kelly and I were growing up, God greatly used the missionaries that we met and read about to get us thinking about serving God in this way.

Over the past couple days Kelly and I have been praying for God's guidance about our travel schedule to visit our partnering churches. We look forward to seeing all that God will do for his glory during our time in the USA. We pray that God will guide us through the process of transitioning from service to him here in Peru to service to him in the USA.

**Cultivating an appreciation for God's creation:** We continue to look for opportunities to get out and enjoy God's creation. We enjoy pointing out the beauty and complexity of

God's creation around us. It's fun to hear the girls say "Look at that . . ." and then go on to describe some interesting part of God's creation that they have seen. We praise God for giving us life and the gift of being able to enjoy it for his glory.

Nehemiah 9:6 (NIV)

You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you.

Thank you very much for your consistent prayers, encouragement, and financial support. You are an essential part of our life and ministry here in Peru. We look forward to seeing you at some point in the next few months if it is the Lord's will.

Jay

---

Jay & Kelly Cross

Alexia, Isabel, Esther, Lilian, and Eliana