

# NEWSLETTER

May 2023



Latin America

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## PICTURE HIGHLIGHTS



Children's Day festivities hosted by **Miguel Saboyá's** church in **Bogotá, Colombia** brought in 50 neighborhood children. The church also celebrated its 2-year anniversary this month!



Children's Bible club in **Yaurisque, Peru** (**Sacarias Ccopa**)

**“Join the journey . . . not just where we've been, but where we're going.”**

**Baptist Evangelistic Ministry Endeavors – Latin America**

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c/o Central Missionary Clearinghouse, PO Box 219228, Houston, TX 77218-9228

## Snow in Cusco, Peru

Following the heavy rains and destructive flooding back in March and April, two of our church starters sent reports of wintry weather in areas of **Cusco, Peru** this month. While the far-reaching region of Cusco spans a variety of climates, the mild-weather areas of Ancahuasi and Poroy rarely experience this much snow.



This blanketed field in Ancahuasi was a peculiar sight for **Pastor Hernan Leva Huari** - he compared it to Alaska!

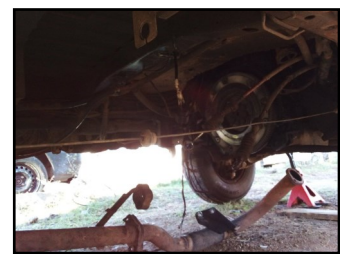
Less than an hour away in Poroy, **Pastor Javier Saavedra Peña** also marveled at the falling snow.



The amazement was tempered by concern over possible crop loss in the primarily agricultural towns. To see videos sent in by Pastor Javier and Pastor Hernan, visit the blog page on our website, at [bemela.org/snow-in-cusco-peru/](http://bemela.org/snow-in-cusco-peru/). Please pray for the believers in Peru who continued to be affected by unrelenting weather-related difficulties.

## May Project of the Month: Church Transportation Needs

For our *Project of the Month*, we are seeking to bless several of our national pastors with offerings - for some, to fund some much-needed repairs and maintenance on church vans; and for others, to contribute to vehicle purchase funds.



In some areas of Latin America, whether a church can provide transportation is often a determining factor for adults and children who want to attend church but are unable to get there themselves due to distance, health, age, etc. Church vans are integral to ministry, including visitation and outreach, services and prayer meetings, Sunday School, Bible club, youth group meetings, activities, camps, conferences, and more. We invite you to pray about this need and consider participating with us - *any amount will be a great blessing!* Please donate online\* or send checks (*payable to Central Missionary Clearinghouse*) to:

**May Project of the Month**  
**2601 South 14th Street**  
**Burlington, IA 52601**

\*see page 6 for online giving information

## Honoring Mothers (and a special update!)

Several of the Latin American churches shared the special ways they celebrated mothers this month.



The congregation in **Villa Toledo, Peru (Pastor Hetler Ramos Concha)** gave small gifts to all of the mothers.



The church in **San Juan de Calderón (Gabriel Macancela)** gifted family pictures.



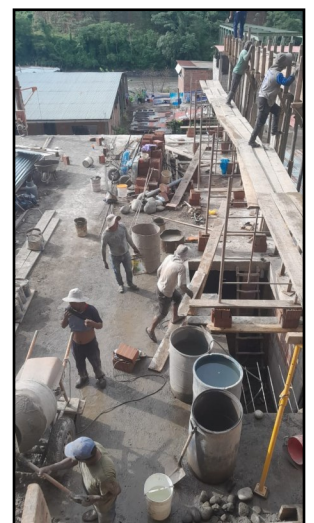
The **Baptist Church in Zacapoaxtla, Mexico** held a Mother's Day service and fellowship. **Pastor Ignacio Salazar's wife, Leticia**, commented that the Lord worked in the hearts of many of the mothers that day.



Pastor Rolando Arias, Gladis, and their three children: Abigail, Paul, and baby Benjamin

In **Peru**, the **Baptist Church in Kiteni** invited the community to a Mother's Day service and took pictures of each family.

**Pastor Rolando Arias** (*BEME-supported 2017-2019*) has taken full oversight of the church while Missionaries Tim and Barbara Whatley are on furlough. He is also currently preparing three faithful men to take on leadership positions within the church. The building project is moving along, but the process has been long, difficult, and dangerous. In addition to cutting into the mountain to expand the existing structure, other obstacles brought on by the pandemic, finances, weather, labor, and civil unrest have affected the flow of the project.



God is faithful, however, and you can see the progress in these recent pictures. The roof is complete, but there is significant interior work left to be done.

Please keep the Arias family, the Whatleys, and the church family in Kiteni in your prayers.

## Letter from the Director

*Dear friends, prayer warriors, and supporters of BEME-LA,*

These are days of great productivity for our Lord! Whether it is here in our home office, our remote administrative locations, our supporting churches, or with our hard-working Latin pastors starting new churches in multiple countries - the labor is going forth, and souls are being saved, disciplined, and added to the church - all for God's glory. Such busy activity could be overwhelming if it were not for uplifting prayer and encouragement, faithful support, and a God "whose name is above all names."



We praise God that several new churches have partnered with BEME this month: three churches gave additional gifts to the ministry, one church doubled their monthly support, and we had an unexpected meeting in Idaho that was truly a blessing to our souls. Please pray as we are now scheduling meetings and travel into 2024.

This summer we will be presenting BEME in VA, MI, IA, and WI. We also are planning an extensive trip into Latin America which will involve evaluation and encouragement with many of our 27 present church starts, interviewing prospective candidates, and exploring for expansion into new countries. I'm honored to be the keynote speaker at a national Baptist conference in Ecuador this August. Please pray that this opens up many opportunities across that country for new churches. Also, this summer, I am honored to be part of the 25<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebration for New Jerusalem Baptist Church in Trujillo, Peru. Pastor Joel Gamboa and the church have faithfully produced a strong body and started other churches off of theirs. They have overcome many challenges [most recently, extensive flooding]. **This is BEME's first supported church start. Praise God for this 25-year milestone.**

Life is busy. Let's seize the moments, seize the days, seize the opportunities. We serve a God whose "name is above all names."

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2)

*Join the journey...not just where we've been, but where we're going.*

**Andy Counterman, Director, BEME-LA**

If you are interested in scheduling an in-person presentation of BEME-LA at your church, please call (410) 804-3767 or send an email to [counterman.andrew@gmail.com](mailto:counterman.andrew@gmail.com).

## Children's Ministries

In **Shell, Ecuador**, the Saturday Bible club is growing steadily. Week after week, thirty-five children faithfully attend and sometimes, there are as many as 50! As funds allow, **Pastor Manuel Macancela** plans to hand out T-shirts with the club logo to the regulars to motivate them and to continue spreading the word about Bible club.



Recently, some children from one of the nearby indigenous communities visited the Shell Bible club with their parents. The parents spoke Spanish, but the children only spoke Shiwiar. Praise the Lord, there were believers there who could communicate with the children in the Shiwiar language, while Pastor Manuel witnessed to the parents in Spanish.



The church in **Ccachona, Peru** took its first official picture together on Resurrection Sunday. **Pastor José Churata** and this group of believers are committed to serving in Bible club. Attendance has decreased a bit lately, likely due to the start of the school year.



**Día del niño**, or *Children's Day*, is celebrated on various dates in many countries around the world, and Latin America is no exception. A few of the national pastors once again took advantage of this annual opportunity for evangelistic outreach.



**Pastor Gustavo Mis** (above) and the believers of the church in **Chetumal, Mexico** gathered in a park to play games, hand out gift bags and balloons, and draw attention to the gospel. Check out the [Iglesia Comunidad Bíblica](#) Facebook page for more photos.



The activities at **Pastor Cristián Quintana's** church in **Bogotá, Colombia** were the result of a major group effort!

Children of all ages and their parents came for the fun, games,

and food, and heard the Word of God preached. Pastor Cristián commented, *"God is good, and we have seen more fruit [of this labor] than expected."*

You can see more pictures and videos of this event on the [IBBMG Iglesia Bíblica Bautista Maravillosa Gracia](#) Facebook page.

# Prayer Requests



Street canvassing in Zacapoaxtla,

- For a **full presentation schedule**, **good health and safety** in travel for Andy and Jo Ellen Counterterman
- For our **goal of adding 20 more new church starts for support** in addition to the 27 that we are currently underwriting; We are also working on **expanding into Bolivia, Brazil, and Chile this year**
- For provision for urgent **church transportation needs** through our **May Project of the Month**
- For the many **current building projects and future land purchases**
  - \* **Third-floor addition** - Rodrigo Valdespino; **Roof/building repair** - Cristian Alvarado Quintana; **Fence or wall enclosure** - Manuel Macancela; **Construction** - Douglas Serrudo, Rolando Arias
  - \* **Saving for land purchase:** José Churata, Javier Peña, Joel Choque Arce, Gustavo Mis, Ignacio Salazar, Hetler Ramos, Gustavo González, Javier Saavedra
- For **ministry needs: vehicle repair/purchase** - Andrés Ramirez, Josué González and Gustavo Mis; **chairs** - Hernan Leva Huari, Cristián Quintana, Ernesto Vera; **fans and projector screen** - Ariel Alfonso
- For the **outreach, visitation and discipleship efforts** of the church starters, this month: **Miguel Saboyá, Sacarias Ccopa, Rodrigo Valdespino, Ignacio Salazar, Andrés Mejia, and Gustavo Huamani**
- For **José Churata's** immediate need for a **new place to live** and a **bigger church location**, as well
- For **good health and recovery:**
  - \* **Gustavo Huamani's daughter** suffered a rather hard fall that resulted in cuts to her face from her glasses, requiring stitches
  - \* **Manuel Macancela** - doctors have determined that he has a harmless gastric polyp - please pray that it remains so; his wife **Mary Cruz** is on antibiotics to fight a bacterial infection

**Thank you once again for your investment of time, prayer, and financial support for BEME-LA and the national pastors in Latin America. *We are thrilled to partner with you for the cause of Christ!***

For online giving, please visit [www.myclickandgive.com](http://www.myclickandgive.com). First-time donors must set up a secure account. Select **Central Missionary Clearinghouse** as the merchant for the account of **Andrew Counterterman**.

The following coupon is provided to designate mail-in offerings. **Please make checks payable to Central Missionary Clearinghouse**, the agency which oversees BEME funding and financial transactions.



I would like to have a part in Latin American ministries with a tax-deductible gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for:

- Project of the Month (Church Transportation Needs)**
- Building Projects**
- General Mission Fund**

**Other (please specify)**  
\_\_\_\_\_

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