

## Joneses to Colombia

Dear Family and Friends,

October, November, and December are very busy for us this year. We had a wonderful visit with our friend who came from the U.S. We enjoyed touring around several of the well-known tourist sites in this part of Colombia. We packed a lot into one week, but we all had a great time together enjoying some beautiful sights.

We just got back from the short term mission trip to Ambalema and Chorrillo with some brothers and sisters in Christ from Texas and from Bogotá. We had a very exciting and impactful time. We were able to witness in a public high school and in a primary school. We also focused on a specific neighborhood in Ambalema and in the village of Chorrillo. The group made it to Ambalema on October 31st in the evening. Along the way, they were able to give away some gospel tracts and candy to the trick-or-treaters in a nearby town.

The first morning, Nov 1st, we had an early, group devotional and then we headed to the primary school. We danced some kids' songs, Eri explained the wordless book, and we presented a drama to "Set Me Free" by Casting Crowns. It portrays the sinful humans that we are and the plethora of sins that separate us from God and the redemption that we need from Christ. After the skit we followed with a short explanation and gospel presentation. Our friends from Texas had brought some stuffed animals that we gave away with a verse of the Bible attached. That afternoon, we went to a neighborhood in Ambalema yet it was very rainy so we

were unable to present a movie like we had planned. We were able to perform the drama and sang a couple worship songs and finished by dancing a few kids' songs with the community.

The next day, Nov. 2nd, after our devotional we went to the high school. We had some icebreakers and songs; then we presented the drama with a short gospel presentation. Then we had competitions with puzzles where the students had to put together a verse of the Bible in English and try to pronounce it as best as possible to win prizes. We repeated these activities twice since there were so many classes. We divided all the students in two different groups. At the end we were able to act out the drama again for all the teachers and explain the gospel to them. Glory to God! Also, in both schools while the main group was doing the activities, a dental team that came with the Texas group was able to clean and extract some teeth for the students.



In the afternoon, we had some time to "rest," but we ended up taking a boat ride on the Magdalena river with some of the group; after which we left for the village of Chorrillo...

In Chorrillo, we danced with the kids, and then once more people showed up, we performed the drama and projected some worship song lyrics on the mobile unit screen to sing praise songs. We had two musicians with us who played and sang while we mixed with the crowd to encourage them to participate through singing. Pastor Eder then preached. We had a lightning storm come up as he was finishing, but thankfully Eder was pretty much done when it started. Many people left quickly to beat the rain. We also lost power for a few minutes and couldn't see anything except for the lightning. Overall, it was a great time, and the community was able to experience a sample of a church service.



The next morning, Nov. 3rd, we had the last devotional and packed up before going to a special overlook restaurant about an hour from Ambalema. We're so thankful for all who came and put so much effort and energy to present the gospel in different ways.



Our next visitors are super exciting for me since they're my parents and sister, Jennifer. We are planning for them to come visit our home, see a couple sights, see the city and our town, and also go with us to Ambalema to see how everyday ministry looks for us. We are excited that they want to share in our daily lives and hope it will be a revealing experience for them to see how we live here. We are also looking forward to having some conversations with my dad and Eder both together to talk about the ministry in Colombia: how it's been, how it's going, and what's to come. We ask for your **special prayers** for wisdom and discernment as we evaluate and look ahead trying to pursue God's will.

Speaking of the future, Dec. 11-14 is the youth camp that we mentioned in our previous letter. It's the camp that Renacer church plans every year for December. We're planning to take about 10 teens that we are working with regularly. It's in a town near Bogota, and the cost per teen is approximately \$60 USD for their room, food, a little snack money, and transportation. We have already received some donations specifically for this. The kids are so excited and have been asking for the camp and talking about it throughout the year. As you may know, these kids come from very financially poor families, and it's a great joy for them to be able to get out of their town and experience new things. **Please pray** for the most important purpose of camp, which is for them to understand the gospel and surrender their lives to God. We hope that everyone has a very happy Thanksgiving celebration with family and friends! Remember to be thankful for the greatest gift, that is, salvation through our Lord! Thank you for your prayers and support!

In Christ,  
Stephen and Erika