

TAILGATERS & STOWAWAYS

It was our last clinic day and Freddy had hatched a plan to take motorcars over to the new architectural wonder of Iquitos, the Nanay Bridge that spans 2.2 km over the Nanay River. This was a treat, as only special permission is currently being given to do so. Hursula and I were the last ones to leave the train of motorcars and we took in the vista and marveled at what God can do through modern engineering.

Suddenly, a giggle erupted from Hursula, a giggle that could bring worlds into existence, and as I looked to the tailgate of the motorcar I saw that there was a stowaway: a little boy named Ramico. As it turns out, he didn't want to walk all the way back over the bridge. Of course, my mind flashed to the story of Jonah, another stowaway. Undoubtedly, there could be a creature in the river below large enough to take the little guy in his belly. However, there was no storm or someone fleeing God's call, just a boy who wanted to get somewhere, not recognizing his own value. If Ramico had just asked, he could have been riding on the front seat right next to us.

We bought all his crackers that he had been instructed to buy and then resell. Then he pulled out a tiny cross, all he had for payment, and handed it to me with a big smile. I introduced Ramico to the rest of the team who was already on the boat waiting. We lavished him with some gifts and then I told him how the Lord was looking out for him that day, and that the Lord loved him. Next time, all he'd have to do is ask and a free ride would be waiting. We wanted him in the front and center seat with us.

We can find ourselves being "Ramicos" towards God's missional plan for us. Sometimes, we come on mission trips as tailgaters/stowaways. We come because we have FOMO, or are obligated to check a box with a friend or spouse, as was the case for Zack, my son-in-law, and James the youth pastor, because their wives have a heart for the Peruvian people. We may need to prove we're actually still married (LOL), as was my case this time since it had been eight years since Jon had been to Peru, or we may need healing, liberation, etc. We aren't always quite sure how to approach the trip we are committed to.

Then the Holy Spirit shows up with a giggle of delight over you, His child, and brings you up to the front and center of His will. New worlds will be born because of your obedience. There is no need to be a stowaway or a tailgater. He offers you the best seat and vista right next to Himself, in order for others to understand His love, healing, and salvation. The overall testimony of our team was seeing how God was able to use our obedience as we left behind the tailgater/stowaway mindset. God blessed us so much more in return for any act of service we offered.

In the words of Jonah 2:9 from the Good News Translation: "But I will sing praises to you; I will offer you a sacrifice, and do what I have promised. Salvation comes from the LORD!" Indeed it has.

Beth Pepper, Esta Lucecita Clinic Operations Director



Our team at pastor Nelly's church, Belen De Judea. Nelly has lovingly and fearlessly taken the lead pastor role since her husband passed away of Covid in 2020. We were able to see close to 200 patients in her community, as well as serve the children with a festival and spiritual care.

Divine Appointments

I made my first trip to Iquitos as a physician, back in 2015. This trip was planned as a “fact finding” trip to do medical teams in the future with MEPI and Amazon Outreach. God had other plans and we were able to actually hold many clinics and treat almost 900 patients. I was so moved and touched by that trip that I decided I needed to come back and also include my family.

We are fortunate to have our children, Carter (16 yrs.) and Cole (13 yrs.), in a Spanish immersion program. We believed that it would not only benefit us to serve as a family but also provide the boys with an opportunity to see the value in being bilingual and how their study of Spanish could be effective in God’s kingdom. This June we were able to make our third trip to Peru as a family. What joy it was to celebrate working for the new nonprofit Esta Lucecita born out of Amazon Outreach/ MEPI, which focuses on the “whole person” medical mission, and also to support the MEPI pastors’ communities with medical/spiritual care.

By far, this has been the most moving trip we have been on and we are seeing the fruit of our labor. Carter was functioning as a translator for the spiritual care team and was a part of several healings and salvations. Carter testified that his “testimony” was to be used as a translator. Carter saw God’s purpose and handiwork in his bilingual education since he was young. Eph. 2:10 comes to life...”For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Pastor Raymundo, an apostle of MEPI, impacted the boys with his stories of discipleship amongst the remote and deep villages nestled in the farthest tributaries of the Amazon. After hearing him speak, Cole was moved and came to me and asked to be baptized by Pastor Raymundo. Before I even had a chance to talk to Beth Pepper, our team leader, Cole had made arrangements with her. Beth said that she sensed the Holy Spirit’s presence all over Cole when he asked to be baptized. Later that afternoon as the rainforest clouds billowed up, Cole was baptized in the Itaya River at the boys orphanage we have served at over the years. With the old hymn “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus” being sung in Spanish and in English, Cole was baptized. He was buried from the old life, risen with the new life.

This year, what has been highlighted to me more than the other 7 years was that we too are so blessed by the people we go to serve. —Beyond blessed, Dr. Michael Werkema



Our spiritual team had the honor of praying over many people during our medical trip to Iquitos in June. Many people have suffered greatly during the pandemic, losing family members while also recovering from Covid themselves. We had the privilege of seeing God move in many ways as He healed many physically, but mostly by touching the hearts of the people through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, giving renewed hope and strength to each person we encountered. Our team also received much encouragement from our Peruvian brothers and sisters as we heard their courageous stories in the midst of deep trials and hearing how God has moved in amazing ways in their lives. Mostly, we were deeply moved by the continued praises given to our God despite these hardships, and that no matter what our circumstances are, God is always good! Thank you for giving us the honor once again to partner alongside of Amazon Outreach. —Lucie Jerch

Being the Light

In 2015, Beth Pepper had a vision to provide medical care to underserved communities through the network of MEPI churches. Over the years, that vision has grown into a new non-profit called Esta Lucecita (This Little Light). We were recently blessed to travel with a team of 17 Americans to join with over 30 members of the Peruvian team to serve over 875 people in six clinics over four days.

We visited Manzion Completa del Rey church in Santo Tomas, Casa de Esperanza in Belen, Girasoles orphanage on the Itaya River, Belen de Judea church in Iquitos, La Hermosa church in Padre de Cocha and El Shaddi church in Manacamiri. We cared for immediate medical and dental needs and provided vitamins and parasite medication. We also had occupational and speech therapists available for evaluation of specialty needs. On at least one occasion, we were able to identify a very sick infant and get him transported to the city for more advanced care.

Additionally, our spiritual care team made its formal debut. The team preached in four churches, including to the Women's Directiva, prayed with 140 people, witnessed 21 salvations and four healings, and provided support to local pastors. We also had team members ministering to 81 women by washing and caring for their feet. It was an honor and privilege to come alongside the local MEPI/AO/Esta Lucecita team to serve the beautiful souls in the Amazon Region. —Pat McCarthy, MSN, FNP, CEO of Esta Lucecita



The first Esta Lucecita medical team post-Covid were welcomed by Mansion del Rey Completa, a church that partners with MEPI. It is also our medical/clinical coordinator Hursula's home church. We had a presidential welcome complete with dancing and praising the Lord and a big feast after treating over 270 patients! The Lord used the spiritual care team which facilitated healings, salvations, re-commitments, and one-on-one time with the pastor's wife who was widowed from Covid. Many others were ministered to personally.



It was a blessing to have Matt Deatherage in Peru for the first half of 2022. A young missionary that serves in whatever capacity is needed. He's pictured here with a team from Alaska and Arkansas. A YWAM team from Honolulu, Hawaii, stayed at our facility and ministered in various locations. Our churches were blessed by the ministry of all these young adults.



The dynamic combination of the Erickson family from Alaska and the team from Brand New Church in Arkansas was fabulous. The Gospel was absolutely Good News as these teams ministered with love and generosity. Watching these young children experiencing the joy of serving in the Jungle was heart-warming.



It was a wonderful time to be with my parents, Bill and Carlene Pepper, the founders of Mission Mepi and Amazon Outreach as they ministered in Iquitos, Peru, in May.



Traveling on the Yanuyacu river which is a beautiful wilderness preserve. The elders of San Juan Village on this river asked us to plant a church and help them with drilling a well.



Here are the four newest members of our family. Abel and Jameson were born in April and Benaiah and Bridger (twins) were born in August.

Personal Note

God is on the move, and so are we. After LaRae and I spent time in Peru for parts of Oct. Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., April, and May, we knew a transition was coming. This summer, we sold our home in Ridgefield, Washington, and relocated back to Wasilla, Alaska, our new home base for leading Amazon Outreach. It was a tremendous blessing to be a part of Church on the Rock in Battle Ground, Washington, for the last eight years.

Our vision is to continue spending many months in Peru overseeing the mission and traveling throughout the U.S.A. to connect with our ministry partners. We are grateful to have welcomed four new grandbabies to our family over the previous five months. Our tenth grandchild is due October 17th. The desire to be around our family and influence this young generation as grandparents has been overwhelming and brought us back to the Last Frontier.

In the remaining months of 2022, we will be a part of four mission conferences and connecting with partner churches and friends in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. In early December we'll be at the year-end ministers' conference in Iquitos, Peru. Thank you for your generosity, friendship, and encouragement in the ministry God has called us to and the gospel work of Amazon Outreach. —David Pepper

(Our new personal address is P.O. Box 876153; Wasilla, AK 99687. The address of Amazon Outreach will remain in Battle Ground, WA.)

Current Financial Needs for Amazon Outreach

- \$30,000 for equipment and furnishings for the Bible Academy
- \$40,000 to complete land purchase in Pucallpa for a central church
- \$30,000 Yurimaguas Indigenous Bible School buildings
- \$10,000 Bibles
- \$20,000 Evangelism
- \$20,000 clean water projects

Prayer Needs

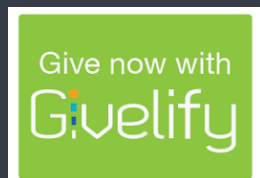
God's blessing and appointment of new leadership for Mission Mepi for 2023 until 2026.

Leaders and ministers to have strong marriages and families.

Favor with government officials for the humanitarian and gospel work throughout the region.

Thank you for your prayers and generous gifts to help those we serve in the Amazon Jungle. You are making a difference!

GIVE ONLINE: www.amazonoutreachperu.org



BY MAIL:

Amazon Outreach Peru
2210 W Main Street Ste. 107-331
Battle Ground, WA 98604

CONTACT:

David Pepper: 907-841-2434
davidpepperak@gmail.com

Beth Pepper: 269-779-3954
knotoncall65@gmail.com