



### Praises!

- God's continued work in Ipialis and San Juan
- God's calling my sister Joanna to missions

### Prayer Requests

- Growth of the San Juan Church
- Visas for the kids

### Visa Prayer Request

This prayer letter will be a little different than our typical letters as we have a unique update and special prayer request. A few months ago, we praised the Lord that Colombia had granted Amanda and I our permanent visas. This is a big deal since the permanent visas normally take many years to get, and we were able to get them as a result of our daughter being born in Colombia.

From there it should have been an easy process to get the rest of our kids visas as beneficiaries. We also believed we had time to get them since our religious visas granted before our entrance to Colombia were valid until 2024. What we did not know was that we only had 30 days from the issuance of my resident visa to also apply for the kids. At the end of the 30 days, our kids visas were automatically cancelled or expired. When we applied for our kids' visas, we were held back for more documentation and then found our kids were considered illegally staying in Colombia. We began to work through the process of correcting the situation and paid the fines levied against us. After getting the last batch of paperwork from the United States, we reapplied, only to find Colombia had just passed a new and massive immigration law under their newly-elected president.

Because of the new law, the application system was shut down. We were waiting to reapply, then learned a few weeks ago that Colombia's new law would not allow us to apply for the kids' visas from inside Colombia. We needed to get them back to the United States and apply from here.

Long story short, we bought last-minute tickets to get the kids back to the United States and flew out of Colombia the day the



new immigration laws took full effect.

We are back in the United States for what we hope will only be a short time while we complete the visa application process for the kids.

We cover your prayers that Colombia will quickly grant the kids their permanent visas and that we will be able to return to Colombia soon.

God has done much in the ministry. We have been able to see two brand new church plants begun this last year and had begun laying the groundwork for a third. God has provided two men who are preaching for us in our absence. The Bible club work also continues and is even growing while we are gone.

God also brought a veteran missionary who, Lord willing, will begin the Bible institute this next January. Unbeknownst to us, God was putting him in place to help us continue the ministry in our absence. We are grateful that brother James Roe is currently helping us in the San Juan church plant and Bible club ministry.

Please pray for God's continued work in Ipialis, San Juan, and Nariño. Although we miss being in Colombia and involved directly in the work, we are encouraged that the work continues and in the knowledge that God has a plan and a purpose in this situation.

### **“Pray Ye the Lord of the Harvest...”**

One of our continual prayer requests is that God will call more laborers to the harvest fields, especially to Colombia. We are excited that God has called my sister Joanna to the mission field and she is taking steps to be able to come and help. God has gifted Joanna in many areas, especially musically. She plays the piano and violin very well and will be a tremendous help in the work in reaching Colombians for Christ. We had planned to begin teaching music to the kids in San Juan, and Joanna will be a tremendous help in this, as well as the music ministry and evangelism.

Joanna currently works on staff at Ambassador Baptist College and plans to come for an initial year in Colombia beginning this next May or June. Please pray with her for God's blessing and help as she finishes her time on staff and then provision for her time in Colombia. May God then guide her to the mission board He would have her serve with and pave the way for permanent missionary service.

Thank you so much for your continued prayer for our family and ministry. We are so grateful for each of you!

In Christ,  
Matt Smith  
Missionary to Colombia