



### Praises!

- Opening of the Bible institute
- Visas granted and airline tickets bought
- God's continued work in Ipialis and San Juan

### Prayer Requests

- Amanda and Joanna's language learning
- Johnny and family as they return to Venezuela
- God's blessing on the Bible institute



### To God be the Glory

God has done so much since our last prayer letter. We want to share as much as we can and give Him all the glory.

The most exciting thing to me is the opening of the Lighthouse Baptist Bible Institute in Pasto Nariño. This is truly an answer to many people's prayers. I would like to share a little of the story as we know it. Heaven will reveal what we don't yet know.

In 2020, we had a deputation meeting scheduled at a church in Texas. However, at the last minute, the meeting was cancelled. We, unfortunately, never had the privilege to meet the pastor or the church. Praise the Lord, unknown to us, the pastor began to pray for us and the ministry we would have in Colombia—and for a Bible institute. God began to put pieces together that we could never dream of. I was looking for Bibles to bring to Colombia and began calling various printing ministries. One ministry I called took a special interest in us. The secretary's husband trained national pastors in Cuba for years, and they had a personal interest in Colombia. Three months after we arrived in Pasto, he visited us and shared his desire to help open a Bible institute to train national pastors. God began to put a team together for the Bible institute. Pastor Ceron, who we have helped and learned from here in Pasto, has so graciously given of his church building, time, and help to begin the institute in Pasto. Twenty-five people from his church began studying the first semester two weeks ago. Please pray for this group of people to not just be encouraged and strengthened but also equipped for church planting throughout Colombia. I look forward to helping share the teaching load this fall. Our dream is to see it grow from being a Bible institute to a Bible seminary. May folks come from all over Colombia and Ecuador to train for the ministry. May God allow an indigenous, church-planting movement to be born.



Another exciting answer to prayer is that Colombia has graciously granted all our kids' visas the end of December. We all now have permanent resident status in Colombia. The final step will be the registering of our visas in the country. Please pray that we don't have any issues with that.

Praise the Lord that today we were able to find and purchase plane tickets back to Pasto. Our departure date is May 23. We cannot wait to get back. We all want to go now. However, there is a reason God has directed us here for now. Please pray for my wife Amanda and sister Joanna as they study Spanish here at the language school. Amanda is improving greatly. This has been an invaluable time already for her, and we are grateful that God allowed us to be here. Joanna plans to come to Colombia for her Baptist World Mapper internship with us this summer, and next year and will, Lord willing, return to language school in the fall to complete the program here. Please pray for her as she learns Spanish to learn quickly and well.

### Ministries Update

We mentioned in our last prayer letter how God has put Brother Carlos and Brother Johnny in place to preach and continue the ministries in San Juan and Ipialis. Praise the Lord for how God is blessing both churches. Ipialis celebrated the first-year anniversary the last week of January. God has done so much in just one year. In San Juan, the Bible club continues to go well. The church services are small, but we are so grateful for the few who come faithfully week after week. Please pray for their growth and for more folks to be saved, discipled, and added to the church. The addiction recovery ministry is also advancing well. The residents look forward, every week, to Brother Carlos and his Bible study. They are working through the Gospel and the fruits of the Spirit. Please pray that these men genuinely come to Christ and see the transformation that He alone can give.

Brother Carlos and his family have been faithful in their ministry and outreach, and we are so grateful for all they are doing in our absence. We were very excited when they went last week to evangelize and invite folks to church from the two towns near San Juan. May God give fruit in the cities of Contadero and Gualmatán. Someday, these two towns will also need churches. May God raise up men to plant these churches.

One of the disappointments we have had recently is that Brother Johnny and his family have decided to move back to Venezuela. They have been a huge help and blessing in Ipialis and will be missed greatly. Pastor Joel and his family are back from Mexico and will be working in Ipialis. We can't wait to get back to help there as Joel is now beginning the ground work for another church plant down in Ecuador and will be investing more time there. The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few. May we work, for the night is coming.

Thank you so much for your continued prayer and support!

In Christ,  
Matt Smith for the family  
Missionaries to Colombia

