



### Praises!

- Luis's Salvation
- Families attending church from Cordoba
- Ivan and Melissa to help in Nariño while we are on furlough

### Prayer Requests:

- Furlough preparations
- Building completion and inauguration in Nariño
- Safety and effectiveness in ministry

### I Keep Seeing Their Faces

A young man named Luis was standing at the entrance to our church in San Juan, asking for the pastor. I was setting up chairs for the afternoon service and motioned for Jorge to come with me to talk with Luis. We were about to be shocked by his story.

“I cannot see why life is worth living anymore,” he said as he began. “I used to be in church with my mom when I was little.” But as a teenager, he had joined a dissident group of the FARC guerillas. Now, he was running for his life. His brother had just been murdered by the group. He had found him in a trash bag. As Luis told us his story, he mentioned how he used to kill mercilessly. He showed us scars on his arms that he had cut when he could not kill. Now, he said he was tormented remembering his victim's faces. As he came into our town, he saw a funeral procession and decided to find a church and talk with the pastor. He was told to leave the Pentecostal church and then was rejected by the Catholic priest and just “happened to pass” our church as we were setting up for the service. Jorge and I shared the Gospel with him, and before he left, Luis bowed his head and asked Christ to save him and forgive him of his many sins. The scars remain, but praise the Lord, there is hope for living a new life in Christ.

### We Have Been Listening to BBN

San Juan is down in the valley between two guerilla towns, Cordoba and Contadero. We recently had some visitors begin attending church from Cordoba. Patricia came first. She arrived right before the service and asked if we cast out demons. She claimed to be afflicted by them and listened intently as Carlos explained that salvation in Christ was what she needed and that a demon could not possess a child of God because of the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence. She stayed for the service and has continued to attend ever since. After a few weeks, she came with



some of her family. Her brother told us that up on their mountain, they get the Bible Broadcasting Network's radio signal from Ecuador and had been listening to preaching on the radio. He said that as they listened, they began to question the doctrine they were being taught in the small group they met with in Cordoba. He asked about our beliefs and was excited to learn we believe what they had been hearing on BBN. Please pray for Patricia, her husband, their children, and Patricia's brother and family to be saved soon.

### Ivan and Melissa

Our children are really looking forward to furlough and being able to see people they haven't seen these last several years. It is amazing to me the things they remember from four and five years ago. Amanda and I are a little overwhelmed by all we need to do in the next couple of months to prepare the churches for our absence. Carlos and his family will, Lord willing, be handling the needs of the San Juan church. The church in Nariño will also need to be cared for.

In January, a young Mexican couple, Ivan and Melissa Baristein, arrived in Pasto to plant a church. We have greatly enjoyed getting to know them and have been blessed by Ivan's preaching. The Baristeins are graciously giving their time to take the leadership of the church in Nariño while we are away on furlough. We are excited at how God will use them and their ministry in the life of the church. Please pray for them as they minister and also as they look forward to the birth of their first child later this year.



### Building Update

We thought we would already be in our new church building in Nariño. However, we have had an unusually long rainy season this year. It has slowed our progress way more than anticipated. Between that and needing to take time for all the other aspects of ministry in the churches, we are not quite finished yet. The building is progressing nicely. Please pray for us as we finish and then make the move from the farm to town. It will be such a blessing to be able to reach more people for Christ and have a place they can attend in their town.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support of our family and ministry! May God bless you all there in the States!

In Christ,  
Matt Smith and Family  
Missionaries to Colombia

