

teamAREQUIPA (simple) Newsletter

December 6, 2011

As always...

...the more detailed version with photos is available on our website at www.teamarequipa.net.

Missionary Mom

"A Beautiful Sunday"

by Megan McKinzie

Sunday, November 21, was one of the best Sundays I have experienced in our time here in Arequipa. I have witnessed lots of beautiful Sundays here, but I think the timing of this Sunday is the reason that it felt like such a blessing. Two things...

We got up Sunday morning to be out at Naranjal by 9 am. Sunday was the inauguration ceremony of a new library, and it has been my favorite by far. I have taken part in four library inaugurations up to this point, but the reason this one stood out is because it was Naranjal. If you keep up with our work, you realize the significance of this event. We have established "amistad" (or in English "friendship") with this community. We have had a presence among the people in Naranjal for close to three years. This is the first library where this is the case. The words spoken by the community leader were words of thankfulness for all that has been done. The people are excited about the library. Alfredo, our Christian brother, spoke on behalf of the Arequipa Rotary Club and CUDA. He explained that a library is a place to discover new things and read about other worlds. Our dream is that this library will encourage the children and older generations to dream big about the future. It is an exciting time. Because I am mostly involved with the library work, I feel like I can have more of a personal impact on that community with the library ministry. I wish that all of you could have been there to see the children and parents looking through the books that so many of you back home helped to contribute. After the inauguration, we shared in a time of communion, singing, and teaching with the community. God be praised for what he has done, is doing, and will do in this beautiful place!

I am thankful for my mother-in-law's visit to see us. We were worn out from being at Naranjal all morning. Our house church meets at 2 pm in the Porvenir library location. On a Sunday where I would normally dread going to the meeting (because my kids would be grumpy and I would spend the whole time keeping them quiet through the meeting instead of participating), my mother-in-law offered to keep them at home--all you moms out there be ever so grateful for nurseries and free child care that the churches offer. Greg and I went to the meeting, and instead of carrying a huge diaper bag I carried just my Bible. All but two of our members came to the meeting. It was absolutely the most encouraging meeting I have been a part of. We shared in a time of singing, and after many songs we began to share about our week. Our group has used this month to fast and pray about various aspects of the church life here. One of those things is personal opportunities for evangelism. I sat there and listened to five of my Peruvian brothers and sisters share about the opportunities that have presented themselves to them in just this month. I cannot tell you how exciting it is to listen to their testimonies and pray with them

about God furthering his Kingdom through them at this time. I couldn't help but think that this is what the church is for. Edification happened that Sunday. Prayers were offered and prayers were spoken in praise because of God answering our petitions this month. We sat around a table and broke bread in remembrance of the one that this life is all about. We ended our meeting by trying to memorize Galatians 2:20 for the coming week, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

I write these things to encourage you all at home. I wish that you all could sit at the table and share with the family here. I am indebted to you for allowing me to be one that experiences these things. Thank you so much for the blessing of these three years of ministry in Arequipa. God is amazing, and I can do nothing else but sit back in awe.

ACDU View

by Kyle Smith

Here's hoping that the rapidly approaching end of 2011 finds you well. We are experiencing significant success in Arequipa right now and find ourselves prepping for a big year in 2012. However, we have some very specific needs that we are bringing to the people in our lives to seek the support we need to make it happen. We ask that you prayerfully consider making a donation to CUDA by the end of the year or a pledge for 2012 so that we can launch some big changes in the very near future. There is plenty to be excited about around here these days!

First off, we have a three-person Peruvian staff ready and waiting to tackle this effort as their full-time employment. Currently, they are serving as volunteers with whatever time they have available outside of their existing jobs, but that time is often limited. Alfredo Oporto will be the Executive Director. Paty Montoya will be the Director of Finance. Abraham Olivera will be the Director of Community Development. They are active members of our church groups, well qualified for their respective roles, and eager to dive in. In order to hire all three for a year, we need \$30,000 total. While this may seem like a large sum, the idea is to be able to buy their time for the next year and have them spend part of their work week generating income in order to provide for the future. Our goal is sustainability, so that they are not dependent on donations long-term. This is merely an initial investment as capital to get a running start.

In addition to the staff, we feel strongly that they will need resources provided for them to make headway in creating sustainability and growing the programs of CUDA. Coupled with needing to vacate our current office space, we have sought out a larger locale to serve as CUDA offices and ministry space. We have located a 3 story building in a central location right by the largest university in town and have big dreams for how to use it. The first floor lends itself to being a student center & coffee shop, which would provide both ministry opportunities and a source of income to help support the entire organization. The second floor would serve as the CUDA offices, including a meeting area. The third floor would provide living quarters for an employee (to double as security) and a classroom. Both Alfredo and Abraham are experienced in teaching English, and we believe that this is their most

profitable skill in terms of generating revenue. Plus, advertising that one can converse with Americans as practice is a major draw in maximizing enrollment. Overall, this is the best way we can equip our new employees to build toward a sustainable organization while we are guaranteed to be here with them. Initial estimates are that we will need \$30,000 for rent, startup costs and overhead for a year.

As such, the math comes to us needing \$60,000, so that we can hire the workers and get the building. We will immediately ask that the CUDA staff start their efforts to bring in funds one way or another, and feel that it is important that we help provide them with the means to do so successfully. This is the time to make it happen and we are ready. Each time God has brought us to the edge of our own comfort and prompted us to take a big step, He has been faithful to provide and we are confident that He will do so again.

Crossing Cultures

“Entrepreneurs”

by Larissa Smith

As a reader of this newsletter, I’m sure you know that a large part of our developmental ministry is doing micro-loans, which just means small amounts (by our definition) loaned to small businesses. I’ve recently done more thinking than usual on this subject due to some conversations with Anna Heikkilä about her thesis topic options and realized some cultural trends that I had simply not noticed before.

In my mind, being a business owner implies some sort of access to the needed resources, be it knowledge of how to run the business, capital to do so, a marketable skill that is somehow needed in the immediate area, sheer volume of new ideas and energy to pursue them, or a combination of these. Basically, it’s a big deal to step up and decide to start a business and be solely responsible for it. Not many would choose to do so, knowing the risks.

But around here, it’s incredibly common. Rather than simply finding a job that leaves the true liability in someone else’s hands, many people choose to do their own thing. We have borrowers that do everything from sewing to running restaurants or clothing stores or simply managing a little neighborhood shop or cutting hair or building furniture. Often, they choose these careers as a way to support their families without having to go somewhere else in the city, allowing quite a few moms to work from home so as to still care for the children. And the specificity of their jobs can be impressive. We have one borrower who sews work gloves all day, every day. It boggles my mind how this city can need that many gloves, since she pumps out something like 12,000 pairs a year. How did she end up finding this particular niche in the economy of Arequipa, Peru that sustains her young family? Somehow she did and stepped into that gap.

But just because they have made it work so far doesn’t mean they are truly equipped to run a business. Many do not keep accurate books of their accounts. They lack an understanding of the value of saving, planning for future projects, or how to maximize growth through capital improvements. They may manage to support their family on a fairly consistent income, but it probably stops there and fails to grow into something that provides real security or a way to improve their quality of life. Naturally there are exceptions, but for the most part, these business owners need our input because they simply lack the ability to take the next step.

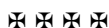
It is exciting to see how being in our loan program can change those struggles, as we provide training and information beyond just loaning money. But rather than seeing them as struggling workers who need a boost, it has been refreshing to me to realize the courage they all demonstrate in the simple act of stepping up to the plate, choosing a job and doing it, even if no one guarantees their paycheck. They don't wait until they have it all planned, figured out and funded. They get to work and do the best they can. As someone who likes certainty, backup plans, and defined goals, I am impressed by how successful they are able to be just by doing their best.

A Word

by Greg McKinzie

When we talk about ecclesiology (our understanding of the church), there are two levels to consider. The first is the abstract, presumably universal level at which we think about what the church is. The second is the practical level at which we think about how a local church must embody that essence. One problem that has affected many churches is the assumption that the second level, that of application, is just as universal as the first. This belief leads some to the conclusion that the forms, styles, practices, and traditions of the church universal should be pretty much uniform throughout the church local. The expectation that the New Testament will provide those forms bolsters the assumption.

In this series, I will work through some of the factors we take into account as the church in Arequipa seeks to embody Christ faithfully in our context. I hope to show how we go about translating the first level into the second level.



God's Family

The New Testament employs a variety of metaphors to represent the church's essence. One of the most significant is certainly *family*. It is probably the most powerful scriptural resource for reframing church where it is understood institutionally. More importantly, *family* is an expression of the real relational dynamic that exists among followers of Jesus. It is more than a spiritual legal status that we affirm to be true because God declared it so; it touches upon the nature of community life and identity. We articulated our vision over five years ago: *God's family celebrating and serving in Arequipa*. Coming from church planters, this was nothing if not a core ecclesiological statement. It arose from our convictions about what God's people *should be*. Some understanding of Peruvian culture played a part in the visioning process, but subsequent study really solidified our view of church. Here is a relevant section of our strategy document (pardon the length):

Community and Family

As migrants to the city, many of the poor in Arequipa are displaced from the community life of rural Peru or from their extended family networks. In addition to this, they are socially marginalized by the wealthier members of society. Family units struggle against the destabilizing effects of urban existence. A lack of identity and a longing for authentic community are pervasive and well documented dynamics. This is particularly so among the Quechua people of the Peruvian Andes. An important part of the Quechua social structure is *ayni*, a word that means "mutual help" or "reciprocity." It is a kind of barter-system worldview, in which members of a community assume reciprocity in order to survive. Karsten Paerregaard writes, "*Ayni* is present at all levels of social life, including agricultural work, house construction, participation in rituals and fiestas, etc. In the two

cities [Lima and Arequipa], on the other hand, migrants rarely look for help among fellow villagers” (Paerregaard, 45).

“Popular grassroots movement” (PGM) is a term used to describe both secular and religious groups, but they all have common sociological characteristics. Discussing characteristics of charismatic PGMs among migrants in Bogota, Colombia, Steven Armet observes that incentives for personal well-being through community activism have played a role in the growth of these churches. But he adds:

However, the strongest impulse for community-building has been the local churches. Striving for community is an explicit value based upon a biblical theme of *koinonia*. Improved social relationships have resulted in mutual support networks of reciprocity between neighbors (Armet, 379).

Peruvian missiologist Samuel Escobar observes, “although in these popular churches there is emphasis on personal conversion, they also create community through networks of mutual help and a redemptive experience that brings moral change” (Escobar, 2007, 1998). This dynamic sounds uncannily like churches filling the void left by the absence of *ayni* in the lives of Andean migrants afloat in urban, capitalist environments. Richard Shaull describes it this way: “As the traditional patterns of the extended family and rural community disintegrate under the impact of modernization, those suffering most from such disintegration often find themselves included in and supported by a new family and community” (Shaull, 266).

For these reasons, a form of church life that fosters community and “family” is vital for a church planting strategy.

Armet notes that the growth of Christian PGMs was through innovation in evangelism. Rather than traditional mass evangelism, “it is the multiplication of churches that has been the primary means for expansion.”

Several barriers had to be overcome, such as leadership styles that deter emerging leaders, the pastors’ own insecurities, and a reluctance to release resources in terms of personnel and finances. Different methods of church planting were employed, such as the formation of cell groups or by hiving off parts of congregations to form new churches. The results have been very satisfying.

Many other church movements throughout Latin America offer precedent for overcoming the barriers of traditional church growth in favor of family and community oriented strategies. Jorge Maldonado writes, “The expansion of evangelical groups has spiralled specifically among the poor sectors and middle strata of society where the deterioration of living conditions and the disintegration of family structures have been most sharply felt” (193). Maldonado documents some critical aspects of conversion among Latin Americans. One, he discusses family-based conversion patterns: “In contrast to the widespread idea that the new convert breaks with his or her family and community, the rule appears to be that family nuclei are converted.” “The process of conversion, which begins with a member of the family, quickly extends through the whole network of relatives and connections.” Two, he discusses the significance of church for those who convert individually:

Cases of the conversion of isolated individuals seem to occur mostly among young people apparently detached from their families whether through migration, a break with the home, or personal problems (drug addiction, alcoholism, long-term unemployment or the like). In these instances their conversion fulfils a dual purpose: it places them in a substitute family (the household of faith, where a new process of socialization begins) and connects them again to the

family from which they came, now as a “new creation,” with the mission to bear witness to the gospel (Maldonado, 195).

Maldonado’s research reveals data very similar to Armet’s:

According to the converts themselves, most of the growth of protestantism, occurs as a result of the direct witness of spouses, members of the family and relatives (74.5%), and not through the mass media (1.2%) or any other means. *“Family groups,” “family worship,” and “house churches” are some of the most effective ways of propagating the new faith.* This not only represents in itself a protest against the centuries-old tradition regarding sacred places, but gives the family a significant role in extending the evangelical movement (emphasis added; Maldonado, 195-96).

For millions of Latin Americans who have lost their roots and their supportive networks in moving away from the country to the town, or who are leading a marginalized and anonymous existence in the large cities, or have been exploited for centuries in the country without any obvious way out, evangelicalism offers a base community, a substitute family which fulfils the functions of the extended family, which compensates for the institution of kinship and maintains . . . the relative security of the farm (Maldonado, 197-98).

Maldonado refers to “a base community” in his description. “Base ecclesial community” (BEC; alternately Christian Base Community, CBC) is another term used to describe the PGMs of Latin America. BECs are usually discussed in relation to the Roman Catholic groups that emerged after Vatican II under the influence of liberation theology. What is highly significant about Catholic BECs for any Protestant church planting strategy is the fact that these groups represent the only resurgence of the Catholic church, and they address the very same sociological dynamics we are considering here in much the same way. No few studies have compared BECs with charismatic grassroots movements. Moreover, even for the Catholic church, the only viable growth strategy in Latin America is to move the church out of the temple, and this has not been in tension with the parishioners’ religious expectations. Rather, BECs are fundamentally lay movements. Charles Self writes:

While many of the groups were middle-class and unthreatening to the hierarchy, they did promote lay participation and small group experience. In fact, many base communities which were later radicalized by liberation theology began as small, pietistic Bible studies (Self, 65).

The BECs have truly proliferated among the poor, however, as the emphases of liberation theology and the activist disposition of these communities would encourage. Another point of reference is the document produced from the Bishop’s Conference in Medellín, Colombia in 1968:

The Christian ought to find the living of the communion, to which he has been called, in his “base community,” that is to say, in a community, local or environmental, which corresponds to the reality of a homogeneous group and whose size allows for personal fraternal contact among its members. Consequently, the Church’s pastoral efforts much be oriented toward the transformation of these communities into a “family of God,” beginning by making itself present among them as leaven by means of a nucleus, although it be small, which creates a community of faith, hope and charity (quoted in Cavanaugh, 74).

Again, we are dealing with the sociological dynamics of marginalized people empowered to experience God outside of traditional confines and to live and work together as a community to realize a different kind of existence. René Padilla, a leading evangelical missiologist, has been challenging Protestant missiologists for decades to understand the emerging “new ecclesiology in

Latin America.” He notes the significance of a document from the subsequent Bishop’s conference, in Puebla, Mexico:

In particular we have found that small communities, especially the CEBs, create more personal inter-relations, acceptance of God’s Word, re-examination of one’s life, and reflection on reality in the light of the Gospel. They accentuate committed involvement in the family, one’s work, the neighborhood, and the local community. We are happy to single out the multiplication of small communities as an important ecclesial event (quoted in Padilla, 157).

“It must be recognized,” says Padilla, “that the grassroots communities do not represent a unified experience but, rather, follow at least two different lines, one emphasizing the community life in small groups and another one stressing the theological and political importance of the fact that the communities are constituted by the poor.” Both of these experiences converge in the movements that understand the holistic impact of the inbreaking Kingdom. Suffice it to say that our strategy must address these two factors in a significant way.

What is at stake in all of this is the *quality* of relationships that we would refer to as authentic community or family life.

The quality of community life in the CBCs makes it possible to bring into existence a church in which poor and marginal people not only feel at home but also have full responsibility for all aspects of the church’s life and program. Such a church is one capable of expanding spontaneously in the poorest neighborhoods (Shaull, 266).

The data consistently demonstrates, however, that one critical variable is the size of the community. This is not to suggest simplistically that smaller is better, but we must admit that the phenomenal proliferation of these movements happens through the multiplication of small communities rather than large ones. Size is not the point, but quality by way of size “management” is.

After three years, the observations of researchers and scholars have proven true in our experience. We might add a nuance here or a caveat there, but by and large, we are only more compelled to live as family in very intentional and tangible ways with our Peruvian brothers and sisters. What this brings us to, however, is the move from the first level (essence) to the second level (application). How do our contextual ways of being together as family manifest? Answering this question appropriately transforms every aspect of what our home context understands and experiences as “church.” We will continue to explore those in subsequent articles.

Just For Kids!

by Rachel Steele

Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and as the weather in the states grows cooler, your family might be making plans to go visit grandparents or relatives. Thanksgiving is one of my favorite holidays because not only do I get to eat as much pie as I want, it also provides an opportunity for me to thank God for all the blessings that he has given me. Surrounded by family, friends and great food, it is hard not to be thankful for God's blessings in our lives.

Here in Peru, no one celebrates Thanksgiving, since it is one of those unique, very American holidays like the fourth of July and Martin Luther King, Jr. day. It celebrates our history and how two very different groups of people came together so that everyone had enough to eat. It is a story of how the Native American Indians helped the English Pilgrims who were unprepared for the demands of the new world in which they were living. So for me, Thanksgiving isn't just about being thankful for things, but being thankful for those special people in our lives, whom God uses to meet our needs. Can you think of those people in your life? It might be your mom or dad, or a teacher at school. It could even be someone unexpected, someone you might not like very much but when you most needed something, they were there to provide it.

As I get ready for Thanksgiving this year, I am thankful for my Peruvian family. Like the Pilgrims I live in a place that is different from where I am from. There are things I still don't know about Peru and Arequipa. There are things I still don't understand about the people here, and they way they do things, but like the Native Americans, my Peruvian family teaches me what I need to know, and shares what they have with me to fill the many deficiencies I still have in this new place, whether it is a word I don't know, or a solution to a problem I can't seem to solve, they are and have been here to help me.

So this Thanksgiving, I want you to think of one special person who has helped you when you needed it most, and I want you to take the opportunity this holiday presents to thank them and to thank God for putting them in your live at just the right moment. Below you will find a card that you can print and fill in to give to someone you are thankful for this year.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Dear _____,

Thank you for _____

(your name)



Just For Kids!

Recent Articles

CUDA Organizational Ethics Policy

By Greg McKinzie

The CUDA Board of Directors has adopted the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations' *Code of Ethics and Conduct for NGOs*.

Read more at the WANGO website: <http://www.wango.org/codeofethics.aspx>

November 10, 2011

MOU with Put Them First

CUDA will inaugurate a new Living Library on November 27 in cooperation with another local NGO called Put Them First.

By Greg McKinzie

Put Them First (<http://putthemfirst.com>) specializes in connecting international volunteers with schools in under-resourced communities. This library, which will be located in an elementary

school in a community called Villa Santa Rosa, will be available for the school's use. During non-school hours, Put Them First volunteers will open the library for the community. CUDA workers will train Put Them First workers in the use of our reading comprehension curriculum and reading incentive program.

November 10, 2011

ACU Professor Monty Lynn Joins CUDA Board

By Greg McKinzie

CUDA welcomes Dr. Monty Lynn, who will join the 2012 CUDA Board of Directors. Dr. Lynn is Associate Dean of the College of Business and Professor of Management at Abilene Christian University.

His expertise in the field of microfinance in particular will be a significant contribution to the board. The addition of Dr. Lynn is an exciting step toward CUDA's goals for 2012 and beyond.

November 22, 2011
