



North, South, East, and West

Eighteen airplanes, six rental vehicles, and a number of taxis and rides in private cars. Those numbers only begin to tell the story of the globetrotting our family has undertaken during the past two months. It has been a busy, joyful, fruitful, and exhausting season, and we feel incredibly blessed to have this life.

In December we flew to the U.S. for a brief family vacation before leaving our twins with Abby's parents and flying to Thailand with Josiah for our annual regional coordinator/connector meetings. Don and Caroline Armstrong hosted us this year, and, as always, it was a joy to spend a few days with our colleagues from around the world.

During our meetings we have the chance to share openly about what is happening in our respective regions, getting a sense of what God is doing and how we work together to support our larger Church of God family. We also have conversations with office staff about upcoming goals, projects, and visions for the future, constantly examining how to best walk alongside missionaries and national leaders around the world. During free time between meetings, Don and Caroline put together a fun slate

of cultural activities that allowed us to bond further over cooking classes, elephant rides, and learning to drive on the opposite side of the road. Nothing builds teamwork faster than a driver learning to depend on a navigator both for directions and reminders about which lane to use—not to mention the collective laughter when he, once again, turns on the windshield wipers instead of the blinker!



After our trip to Thailand, we returned to Casper, WY, where we had the chance to have Abby's dad dedicate the twins to the Lord, something the pandemic and constant travel had made difficult. We also recorded a video for our newest ministry partner, Highland Park Community Church. The congregation is already well-connected in our region, and we look forward to being able to work together even more closely. Our return flight to Costa Rica ended up being quite an ordeal, but the Lord provided in surprising ways. If you want to read a crazy story that starts with a delayed flight and vomiting and ends with God's provision through the kindness of strangers, click [here](#).

A couple weeks after we got home, after the stomach bug finished working its way through our family, Abby flew to Lima, Peru, to share as the featured guest speaker for the country's annual General Assembly meetings. Each year, in addition to the

mandatory business meetings, delegates and other church members gather for several days of conferences and worship services. This year's theme focused on the family, so Abby led sessions about love languages, sexuality, forgiveness, and Christ-centered child-rearing. She was joined for a couple days by Sharon Montenegro (photo below, left), daughter of Pastor Noily from Costa Rica. Last year, Sharon led an excellent conference in Costa Rica about finances, which started with the biblical foundation of stewardship before turning to practical application. We knew that what she shared would be of incredible value to pastors in other countries as well, so we were thrilled that she could share with the families in Peru.

In addition to the teaching time, Abby enjoyed having the chance to listen to other sessions, including the business meetings, and to have a number of informal conversations about church matters and family topics that were brought up in the sessions. The Church of God in Peru has gone through some difficult seasons lately, so it was a blessing to see the growth that has happened and the vision for the future, and it was helpful to learn what areas still need healing, both in the larger church and individual lives. She was also grateful to get to stay with Pastor Octavio and Isbelia (photo, right), pastors of the host church, who are originally from Venezuela. Their story of the way God led them out of a dire situation to Peru is another incredible testimony that we hope to share at a later date.



The day after Abby returned from Peru, Jason joined a group of pastors and young adults from Costa Rica and flew to Guatemala for a Mesoamerican youth forum. One hundred fifty delegates from nine countries gathered for four days, joined in the evenings by a few dozen more locals. It was an incredible time of worship, teaching, and connection for all. Some attendees had never traveled out of their home countries before, and it was a joy to see their excitement and to watch them build relationships with their brothers and sisters that will continue to bear fruit for years to come. Like Abby in Peru, Jason had the chance to have heart-to-heart conversations that can only happen in person, and he was grateful for the opportunity to hear from and share with leaders about what God is doing and what next steps he is calling his people to take.



Thank you for your prayers for our family as we have traveled around the world and as God has continued to provide opportunities for service and connection.

Beauty from Ashes

On February 2, a series of wildfires ripped through central Chile, near the city of Valparaíso. Abby was in Peru at the time and began to hear concern about what was happening in the neighboring country. After further conversation with Veronica Hidalgo, wife of CIID treasurer Alberto Martínez, she began to get a fuller picture. Alberto and Veronica currently work in Chota, Peru, but they are from Chile and are still well-connected with close relatives and the Church of God in the area.

After talking with Veronica, Abby got in touch with national leaders Carlos Barlow and his wife Marisol, whom we got to know during our trip to Uruguay in October, and they shared with us news of absolute devastation in the areas around their home and church and about the work they were already doing to help out, even as fires still raged all around their city.

Although we are incredibly thankful that the church and church members were spared a direct impact from the flames, all of them have friends and loved ones who have lost their belongings or their lives in the inferno. A total of 131 people died and



thousands of acres of land were burned, including entire neighborhoods that were wiped out and a major highway, where people were trapped in their vehicles even as they tried to flee. A number of nature reserves and the local botanical gardens were also destroyed. In the botanical gardens, a caretaker, her grandchildren, and her elderly mother lost their lives, and 98% of the vegetation is damaged or destroyed. Miraculously, one treasure that did escape the flames is Jardín de la Paz, a garden grown from seeds of trees that survived the atomic bomb in Hiroshima.



We are also grateful that the Church of God in Chile mobilized immediately and pooled their limited resources to provide clothing, food, water, and even toys to affected families. When others saw their response, they quickly joined the effort, and the church became a distribution center for aid. We also had the chance to walk alongside this effort through an offering from the Disaster Relief

Fund, which will provide a valuable boost to the church's effort to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the midst of indescribable devastation.

Although the threat is now largely under control, please pray for Chile as people mourn and begin to rebuild. The process will not be easy, especially as all evidence points toward the fires being set intentionally. Pray for rain, as the nation is facing severe drought conditions that leave them vulnerable to new devastation.

Please also consider walking alongside the Church of God in Chile and other parts of the world affected by disasters by clicking [here](#). We are incredibly grateful to all who have made it possible to access funds quickly in times of crisis. 100% of all funds donated to Disaster Relief go directly to support relief efforts in Chile and other communities affected by disasters around the world.

Like the trees that have not succumbed to atomic bombs or wildfires, we are grateful to see the way Lord's church has remained standing and has planted seeds of hope in the midst of devastation. May we too cling to the one true vine and give testimony wherever we go to the source of life, the one who walks alongside us, even in the midst of the flames.

Project Update

Original, jalapeño, ranch, passion fruit, and tamarind. I stood in awe of the five new bottles of hot sauce sitting on our dining room table after Jason's trip to Guatemala.

"Those are all from José?"

Jason first met José in 2018 during a visit to the Church of God's entrepreneurial training school in Honduras. At the time, José was a recent graduate of the program and he had a fledgling new business bottling hot sauce made from a specific variety of habanero pepper grown in his yard. Jason liked the hot sauce but fell in love with Jose's heart and story, and he purchased 15 bottles to share with family and friends. José was excited to make the sale and eagerly searched for enough bottles to make the sale.



Three years later, we returned to Honduras as a family, and we came prepared to buy several dozen bottles. By this time, Jose's hot sauce was selling all over Honduras, and an order of fifty was now routine. We were thrilled to see his growth and progress, and we were even happier to know that he had maintained the same heart for serving the Lord and the church.

This year, José attended the youth forum in Guatemala, and he proudly shared a variety of flavors with Jason, as the business has continued to expand. José is now the director of the entrepreneurial training school and serves as an active leader in the congregation. He is a shining example of what the program represents: productive discipleship.

The entrepreneurial training school was born several years ago as part of the church's response to the economic crisis that many church members faced, a crisis that led many to look at migrating to other countries in order to make a living. The church was also concerned about a generation of Christian consumers, people who come to church looking for what they can receive and not focusing on what they have to give.

The entrepreneurial training school has actually been incorporated into the church's discipleship program. The idea is for believers to learn the importance of becoming producers, not mere consumers, giving back to Lord and to their communities, even as he blesses their efforts. The program teaches practical small business skills, always set in the context of honoring God first with what he provides and serving as godly business owners in the community and active supporters of church ministries. Though not every new church member will ultimately own a business and not every business endeavor will be successful, the Church of God in Honduras is striving to teach believers to look at the blessings God has given them and consider how they can put those to work for the good of the Kingdom.

To walk alongside the entrepreneurial training school as they form the next generation of productive disciples, please click [here](#).

And, in case you were wondering why we only have four bottles of hot sauce pictured instead of five, we took to heart the lesson from Honduras and shared our blessing with someone else. It was a small gesture but part of an important question to keep in mind as we learn from José and others: What blessings has God given me, even in my own back yard, and how can I put them to work to be a blessing for his kingdom in my community and around the world?

Other Prayer Requests and Praises

- Give thanks for our colleague **Norberto Kurrle** and his son Marcos from Paraguay. The men have undertaken an incredible adventure and ministry opportunity, riding two donated motorcycles from Florida to Paraguay and making strategic stops along the way to connect with and encourage the people they meet, especially in some of our churches. We are thankful for the chance to see them and pray for safe travels.
- Coming up later this year, we and our team will participate in Global Strategy's **Find Your Stride** campaign. Stay tuned for more information about how you can multiply your impact in the ministry of Global Strategy missionaries. Pray for the missionaries (including our family) who need to find additional partners, and give thanks for the way the Lord will use the campaign to provide.
- Give thanks for **multiple guests** that we will have in our home in Costa Rica in the coming weeks and for **new travel plans** that are in the works, that the Lord would give us wisdom to know how much to take on and keep us safe as we are out and about.
- Without getting into a lot of detail, we ask you to lift up a couple of **complex and significant situations** going on with some of our national churches. Pray that the Lord would give national leaders, international leaders, and us wisdom as we navigate these.
- We are coming through birthday season in our family. Give thanks for **Silas** and **Rebecca**, who turned four in January, for **Josiah**, who turned eight in early February, and for **Jason**, who will celebrate yet another anniversary of his twenty-ninth birthday later this month.

