

The Jungle Journey

March 2024

Nelton & Bethany Noriega – Email: NeltonandBethany@gmail.com

Amazon, Peru

Women's Encounter Testimonies

"I went to find him in the backyard, gave him a hug, and told him I loved him!" Mercedes shared one week after her encounter, eyes beaming like a schoolgirl in love, "he hugged me back and told me he loved me too!" It might not sound like a big deal, but for this 65-year-old woman, it was earth shattering.



March 2024 Women's Encounter

To understand why, you'd have to know that her lifelong struggle with self-worth started in her childhood, where her mother constantly mocked and belittled her for being fat. It wasn't uncommon for the insults to end with her mother taking her plate of food and giving it to the dog because she didn't deserve to eat.

She left the nightmare of her childhood the first chance she got, only to enter a new nightmare with a man she has now been married to for 45 years. The insults continued, leaving her certain that the shell of her body reflected the person within; unwanted, unloved, a burden to those around her. She cried like a baby in multiple sessions as she confronted childhood trauma, low self-esteem, and forgiving those who had hurt her most.

At the campfire on Saturday night, dressed in a beautiful formal gown, she danced with the elegance of Cinderella. A muddy jungle floor served as her ballroom as she waved her dress and proclaimed, "I'm free! I'm free!" She looked like a little girl and certainly felt like one for the first time. She had forgiven her parents, husband, and the many other people who had hurt her over the years. The glow on her face wasn't from the flicker of the campfire, it was the Holy Spirit's power that had lifted the burden from her life. Not only does

she know she's loved and wanted by the King of Kings, she also went home and broke through walls with her husband! Her new vision is to serve in children's ministry and see her whole family come to Christ.

A shift is taking place in Genesis. More and more adults and families are filling the chairs than ever before. Some come by invitation from others, as they have never found hope out in the world. Others come because their teenagers are noticeably different and they want change too. Like another woman who just went through an encounter.

At close to fifty years old, the Lord set her free from the guilt she has carried over poor decisions made in her life. It was unique and thrilling to see God restore a vision for her future! She left the encounter and enrolled in college to get a degree as a professional secretary. She started classes this week! It is so inspiring.

Marcus Team

It was the hottest week we had in a while, but that didn't stop the team of 16 from rolling up their sleeves and getting to work! They started tiling the camp chapel, laid dining hall flooring, built tables and benches, and got the storage container sorted and organized!



Marcus Team laying tile



Marcus Team: community is always a highlight.

There were many comments from the Peruvians about how amazing everything looks. Camp is becoming a place worthy of spiritual births! I love how they see something as simple as laying tile as a way to show value to a person coming to their encounter. It communicates that we have been waiting for them, and they are worth the work and effort! Even more so, God is worthy of our most excellent effort.



The new dining hall

Cell Group Highlight

Some of us got to join Jean Carlos (JC) and Ronaldo in a new cell group that recently started in a dangerous community with a reputation of drugs, gangs, and prostitution. JC is from this community and since coming to Christ, it has been his prayer to go back to reach his family, friends, and neighbors. He wants to show them there is a way out.

It was inspiring to see young boys and teens waiting for a cell group when we pulled up to the neighborhood soccer

field. A lesson was prepared on the Holy Spirit starting a flame in our lives, and the need for firewood to keep the flame going. A bonfire had been prepared as a visual. The only problem was it had rained, leaving the wood wet. Every time the flame looked like it had started, it flickered out rather quickly.

Two boys worked endlessly through the whole lesson to get the flame to take. Not even gas could get it to start! But prayer that got the fire started! After the entire cell group shouted “AMEN!” at the request of God to start the fire, the next attempt brought crackles that quickly turned into a roaring bonfire. Seeing the undeniable answer to prayer was powerful! It even took more effort to put the fire out than it did to start it.

I was mostly humbled by Ronaldo, a teenager who doesn't have barriers to showing God's love. The gas they used to start the fire came from his motorcycle! In fact, he drained the whole tank in an attempt to make the visual aid work. Although it meant pushing his motorcycle all the way home, but he didn't think twice. I don't think I would have done that. Sadly, it probably wouldn't have even occurred to me to do it because of the inconvenience! His silent example of giving everything to God so the boys could get a better image of who He is shows true sacrifice in ministry!

The team gave him some gas money, but as I watched him push his bike to the gas station, my heart was pierced to follow his example! What an honor to serve Christ with these teenagers!

Riverside GoServ Team

The team of ten jumped in and finished dining hall trimming, sanded and varnished furniture, painted the dining hall, and almost got the chapel completely tiled. Their hard work and effort made the past encounter a whole new experience. It was wonderful to lead women in an atmosphere that honors the life change they came to make!

Spa Day Highlight

For the past nine years, Vero, a young lady from our church, has been reaching women who work as prostitutes, building relationships and sharing the gospel. Her dream has been to host special events for them in a church where they could feel loved and welcomed. In November, we hosted a dinner that was a wild success. Many came back for this event, others came for the first time.

I shared a short message before opening the mic for anyone to share. Pamela, the only woman who has faithfully come to church since last November, stood and told everyone that they will never feel judged or “get those ugly looks” here. She testified to how much church has



Spa Day



helped her and joyously invited everyone to come to come! No one asked her to share that, but the impact she has experienced over the past four months

didn't let her be quit. How awesome to see her reaching the least of these, even while she is in the process of being found!

Thank you to each one from Marcus, Riverside, and beyond, who came to partner with us and invest in the work we are doing! It was especially encouraging to spend time in prayer and devotions together with you all.

Global Leadership Summit Update

We didn't get the thousand attendees that Nelton hoped for, but those who put on the conference were very pleased with the outcome of around 250 attendees. Amy McGee (one of the missionaries responsible for the Summit) could not hold back her smile when she gleefully told me, "This is great! We have more than doubled from last year!"

It was awesome to see so many new people inside the church, including professionals and university students. The content was helpful to everyone, regardless of spiritual background or profession. We are grateful for the way that God united churches and ministries in this Summit, and also gave the unchurched a new perspective of faith. We know we have not seen the end of the fruit from this event!



Left to right: Andrew, Lucas, and Edgar

Pastoral Reproduction

After several years of loyal and faithful service in the church and fruitfulness in leading others, three men have accepted the invitation to consider being anointed as pastors in Genesis. During this year, they will be given greater responsibility and will likely experience the joys and hardships that come with a pastoral calling. At the end of the year, they will accept or decline the positions. Please pray for Andrew Ronshausen in discipleship, Lucas Kirchoff in worship, and Edgar Manrique in Encounters. It is so exciting to see how these men have grown in their faith and have come to visibly and sacrificially love the church and her disciples.

Love from Peru,

Nelton, Bethany J., Kyliana, Briel, and Jayden

PRAISE POINTS

- The thirteen new women who went through their encounter.
- The teams that came to work on camp.
- The three men in the year of this trail for becoming pastoral staff.

PRAYER POINTS

- For the women to grow in their faith.
- For Andrew, Lucas, and Edgar as they consider the pastorate.
- For fruit among the women who work in the streets to come to know Christ and change career paths.

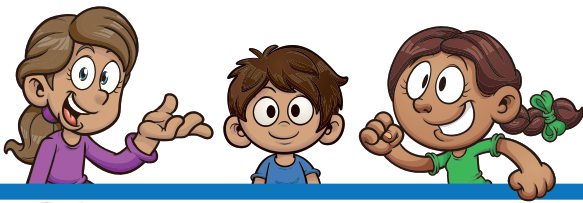
CONTACT INFORMATION

Nelton and Bethany Noriega
c/o International Messengers
PO Box 618 Clear Lake, IA 50428

* All gifts are tax deductible and may be made payable to:
International Messengers, PO Box 618, Clear Lake, IA 50428
To give online visit: give.im-usa.org/norie
E-mail: NeltonandBethany@gmail.com



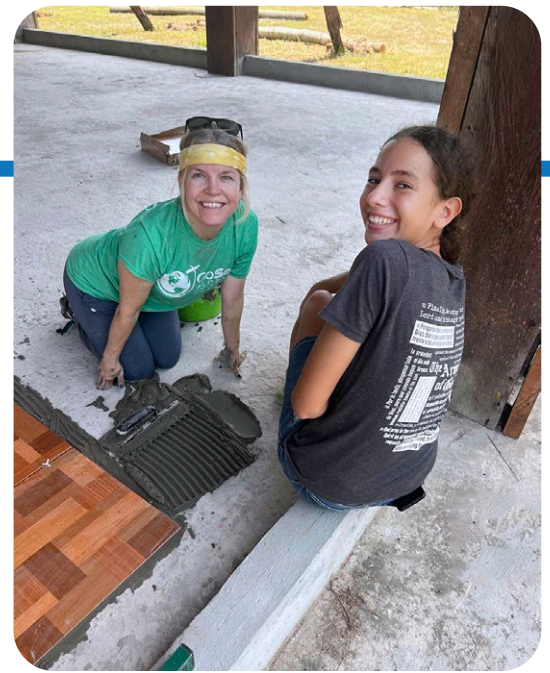
INTERNATIONAL
MESSENGERS



KYLIANAS'

ORNER

Kyliana does such an excellent job of jumping in and working at whatever the team is doing. She learned how to tile with these past couple of teams! She'll probably be able to build her own house by the time she's 18 with all the experience she's gaining. (Yes, I got the thirteen-year-old eye roll accompanied by the matching, "mom!" for writing that last sentence.)



Kyliana Tiling with Mandy.



BRIEL'S BREEZE

"Yessss!!," I couldn't keep my excitement in when I read the text. "What?" Briel asked. "We are having breakfast at night at the Ronshausen's tonight!," I responded.

"Wait! What?" Having never heard the expression she was confused and even concerned, "Does that mean I don't get breakfast in the morning!?"

Briel with daddy.

JUST JAYDEN

We are all excited about

the new baby, and Jayden especially likes to sit next to me to feel her movement. One night, as he had his hand on my belly, he looked over at me and asked me to open my mouth. A little confused, but prompted by curiosity, I obliged. He proceeded to lean close, his mouth within inches of mine, and spoke into my mouth, "Hey, Joy! This is your big brother, Jayden!"

Her instant movement brought him the exciting confirmation that speaking into my mouth is like a microphone that allows her to hear better!



Jayden with Jose Eduardo, loving on his unborn sister, per usual.