



The GUTIERREZ Family



Arequipa protests before turning violent (downtown)

As I type this update, our city is under protest which has meant that we have been encouraged by the US Embassy to stay indoors as much as possible. We are currently safe, but also aware that things could change at any moment and become violent. Yesterday, the protestors blocked all roads to the airport and all roads that lead out of the city, literally trapping us in Arequipa. Yet we have peace because we know that we are being protected by a God who loves us and cares for us.

I also think that if you had told me before moving to Peru that protests and semi-regular power and water cuts and driving in crazy traffic, and the daily herd of sheep walking past our street, were going to become part of my “normal” life, I wouldn’t have believed you. Sometimes I look at our life here and just smile because I cannot believe that we get the privilege of living this life, and I also can’t believe that this is OUR life- with all of it’s surprises and joys included.

Since our last family update, our ministry, and therefore our family life, has changed significantly. The first Sunday of 2015, Nathaniel and Nate were given the position of co-pastors of our church, La Roca (The Rock). This new role has been an exciting one for Nathaniel but also means a lot more work. Every other week he is preaching, and on the alternating weeks leading Sunday School and Prayer meeting, he leads worship, including teaching the church members many new songs, he does home



Nathaniel leading service at La Roca

visits, membership classes, counseling, training future church leaders, and caring for those with great needs, as well as countless hours of administrative work each week. As a result of Nathaniel and Nate’s care and love for the church members, we have seen the church grow and grow over the last few months and we are running out of room on Sundays. Soon we will be adding new members to the church and baptising a few of them too.



Alicia hosting dinner with friends

I (Alicia), also found my roles change after Nathaniel became one of the co-pastors of La Roca. I started teaching the children’s Sunday School a few times a month and Nikki and I are co-leading the ladies’ Saturday Bible study. We are currently taking these young Christian ladies through the book of Galatians and it is exciting to see the theology of grace take hold of their hearts and lives. I have also unofficially become the church’s “hospitality coordinator,” which means I bake a lot of cakes and goodies for the church and make a lot of coffee. One of the best things that has come out of that ministry is that it has given me an opportunity to get to know the ladies better as they are always asking if they can



Jeremiah at soccer with the Bonham boys and other new friends

come over and learn how to bake a cake or their favorite new recipe. Being able to open up my kitchen to these girls has been an unexpected delight and I have loved being able to get to know them better through our times together in the kitchen.

Our children are doing really well and are feeling more and more at home here in Arequipa. In fact, their big dream right now is that we get a family dog and we name her Arequipa, Peru. Jeremiah (5 ½ years old) has been on a soccer “team” since January, and it is an ideal team for him. The coaches are incredibly patient and understand that at this young age it is most important to cultivate a love for soccer. He participates three days a week and loves it. He is now learning how to read and write and

still loves science the best out of all of our home school subjects. Gabriella is about to turn 4, and every day is becoming more and more of a delightful daughter. She takes very good care of her little brother and loves to play with anything princessy or girly. She is currently the only girl on our team, so she is also learning how to be tough, but thankfully the boys are also very chivalrous towards her. Simeon is almost 2 and he is our most mischievous toddler we’ve ever had! He is developing a really fun personality and has added nothing but joy to our family.



Sweet Gabriella enjoying a treat from back home



Mischievous muddy Simeon

We also have the exciting privilege of hosting our first intern, Lillian Arjona, for the summer. Her parents, Juan and Martha are the pastor/wife of the Hispanic church plant (Mision Vida Nueva) we interned/worked at in California 9 years ago and are dear to our family. Lillian is a student at Covenant College and is doing her cross cultural internship for her Community Development major, working with an NGO in Arequipa and also helping us with our ministry here. She is a delight to have in our home, and my only fear is that it is going to be far too sad for our family when she has to go back to school in the fall.

Thank you for allowing our family to serve here in Arequipa through your prayers and financial support. We are honored to be able to be missionaries and so thankful that we can work and live in Peru. We are finding that this season of ministry, although busy, is incredibly rewarding and exciting and Nathaniel is the happiest I have ever seen him. Please continue to pray for our family – for our health and safety, for the strength to continue on those days when we are feeling discouraged, and for us as we seek to serve the Peruvians here in Arequipa.

With grateful hearts,
Nathaniel and Alicia Gutierrez



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