

Hello!

Last Monday a team of 10 InterVarsity staff and students from Iowa and Nebraska joined us here in Costa Rica. It has been life giving to connect with old friends and meet new ones. We have been excited to join InterVarsity with Estudiantes Cristianos Unidos (ECU), our student movement here, and serve alongside one another. We are one week into our two-week trip and God has been so faithful and good to us. We wanted to share with you a few highlights our first week together along with a few pictures and also ask you to pray for the second week.

On Wednesday we traveled five hours south of San Jose to a city called San Isidro de General. A little background is needed here. ECU was founded 40 years ago but has never had a presence in the southern zone of the country. The movement has asked our family to move in December to this area to plant new ministry on the college campuses there. The city we will call home and where we will begin serving is called San Isidro de General, the largest city in the south (100,000 people). On Wednesday our team of Americans joined 7 Costa Rican staff and students and we headed south.

Our team spent two days on campus with the hope of meeting some Christian students who would like to join us next year in planting the ministry as well as building relationship with the university. We did a proxy both days (an interactive evangelistic model that we have used in the states with InterVarsity), prayer walks through campus, bible studies, English corners (having English conversations with students who wanted to practice their English), service for the university and invited students to a party one afternoon and to a bible study the other.



We had been praying for God to go ahead of us and prepare the way and we were overwhelmed by His faithfulness. We met over 150 students and received contact information of over 50 students that expressed a desire to join us in starting ECU on their campus. We met faculty that were thrilled to see us on campus and the director of student life expressed her desire for our presence there. Multiple students told us how they had been praying for a Christian group to begin on campus. Above all, we found the soil open to the Gospel and ready for planting and we hope in time much fruit will come from future ministry there.



One quick story I must share. We met a faculty member named Roberto. He told us that on May 26th of this year he and a handful of the professors had begun meeting to pray. As a group they longed to see their campus impacted by Christ but as faculty were unable to specifically lead a group of Christian students. So, they began praying for a group to come to their university and begin ministry. Not 3 weeks later, we showed up. God is good, isn't he?

For Rachel and I, these two days were an incredible blessing. We saw God had gone ahead, once again we experienced his faithfulness to our family, we felt confirmation from Him that this place is where he wants us to serve and our hearts are at peace in the next step of our ministry in Costa Rica.

This coming week we will spend a few days serving in two poor communities in the city and then head to the northern part of the country and serve alongside an already established ECU group on their university in a city called Liberia. Please be praying:

- For our team, that we would continue to be united and serve one another in love. That God would work in our hearts and be speaking to us.
- For the time in the city that those we serve would be encouraged and experience God in our time together
- For our trip North, that we would be a blessing to this group of students that is already serving on their campus and that through our ministry more would be added to their number

Thank you for your prayers, support and encouragements. We are blessed to be sent by you.

Joel, Rachel, Lucy, Charles and Annie