

Travel Report

Trip to Bolivia and Peru - May 26th to June 15th,

1. Introduction

As usual, I went on this trip along side Arturo Köbernich. Once again, it was a fully packed travel plan. Besides the things we had already been looking forward to, we also had to deal with some subjects that were not easy to handle. Therefore, we were especially happy and thankful when we took a look back at the end of the trip to recognize all the positive outcomes and results. With certainty, we were able to say that “the lord was with us and worked and blessed” Praise and glory to the lord. One main focus for us was the time we got to spend with the missionaries. We had the opportunity to listen to them and observed, which matters are close to their hearts and what problems and challenges they have to face. To pray for one another at a time like this is a very important matter. After this, we can think about and collaborate about new paths and perspectives. As I have written and said before, I am convinced that our missionaries are our greatest chapter.

2. Bolivia

2.1 Children’s home “Moisés”– currently there are six teenagers in the care of the Children Home family. The home’s parents Martin and Agustina are serving as usual with much love and care. A few months ago they made the decision to move. With their children, they lived in a home in El Alto, an outlining suburb. Now they moved closer to the center of town where they are in walking distance to schools, vocational training facilities, work, and so forth. This makes things a lot easier. Limberth Meija, who is already independent, but still living “with the family”, got married the middle of July. He is making good progress in his vocational training and work. Three of the girls have also started their vocational training in January 2012. Elianan Ayala Quispe is completing a 2 year program in the field of gastronomy. Leny Leon Cuba is also working on a 2 year training program in the field of hospitality and tourism. Rosmery Huatya Mamani is working towards a degree in financial management at the university. During the counselling sessions with Martin and Agustina we realized that they need psychological support. We were able to get that organized for them.



2.2 New projects – We see that our main tasks in Bolivia over the upcoming years lay in La Paz’s neighboring city El Alto. Poverty, alcoholism, occultism, and violence decide the life of many of the people. El Alto is the largest growing city in Latin America, and already has over 1,5 million residents. We have been in talks with the leadership of the Bolivian Baptist Union. We are in search of where and how EBM MASA and the churches are able to support projects, which can reach needy people with the Gospel through word and act. On many different occasions, we have contemplated whether we should retreat from Bolivia completely, but realized that EBM MASA’s task in Bolivia is not finished. Even though the search took longer than anticipated (maybe because we wanted to remain true to our mission concept, which we were able to do so), we were finally able to make some concrete choices for some new, soon to be started, projects.

The first of which is the planned PEPE-project, which is going to start in the beginning of 2013 and will take place in the former children’s home. We are very happy about this. Duane Guthrie, missionary of the CBM in Bolivia, is currently our representative at the Baptist Union. Concerning the Baptist Union in Bolivia, EBM MASA and CBM have been having a positive relationship over the past few years.

The second project is the training for missionaries and colleagues for El Alto. This project is also planned to take place in the former children’s home. The purpose is to be able support new projects with these new colleagues in the future.

3. Peru

3.1 “La Libertad” – that is the name of the regional Baptist Union for North-Peru. In this region we are supporting the missionary project in Otuzco and Jimbe. As usual, we had a meeting with the leadership in Trujillo (about 560 km north of Lima), in order to evaluate and decide together the future of the work at both locations. The cooperation with our brothers and sisters is always positive and leads to a good and practical



implementation our common goals. There were some conflicts between the Church in Chimbote (responsible Church of the Jimbe region) and mission work in Jimbe, which caused our missionary sorrow and distress. We dealt with this subject together with the leadership, which was not an easy task. A good solution was found and reconciliation took place. We are certain that Hugo is now going to be able to fulfil his service with even greater joy and commitment.

- **Jimbe and Region** (missionaries Hugo and Carlota Mondoñedo) – Jimbe and the other four mission stations are growing. Hugo is still a passionate missionary. While this missionary work is still relatively new, it is making good progress. During our visit a mission meeting was planned in the Canchas village, which is a mission station.





About 200 people from all five mission stations came to the meeting that took place from Friday evening until Sunday midday. Some people took an up to 8 hour long trip by foot upon themselves in order to be there. Some of the leadership brothers and sisters from Trujillo and region, such as the missionaries from Otuzco, Silva Azabache and Santos Dominguez, also attended. Arturo and I were allowed to give some sermons, there was also a lot of worship and prayer. The closing service on Sunday was a spiritual event. Nine people were baptized accepting the lord into their hearts, blessing of children took place; there was a sermon, and three "weddings" took place, where the happy couples were placed under the blessing of the Lord. After accepting the Lord into their hearts they married in the civil court, but that Sunday they married in the Church. Two of the couples are already grandparents. The next missionary meeting is already planned for the following year at the mission station Rayan, which is located at about 4000m elevation above sea-level. In Rayan are just a few families who received the lord, but they are now willing to do what it takes, to make this meeting count. It is touching to see how these brothers and sisters, who have so little, are willing to donate so readily.

- *Otuzco* – During the meeting in Trujillo we were able to meet the missionary couple, Silvia Azabache and Santos Dominguez, for Otuzco. They began their service in January 2012. They are well aware of their calling for this service, and know that Otuzco is a "difficult turf". Our talks convinced us of their abilities, and their love and passion for the missionary service and we are very happy to have this new EBM MASA-missionary couple in Peru.



3.2 Apurimac – Cusco Region:

- *Disaster Aid* – The Andes, mainly the Mariscal Gamarra region, which is located about 300 km from Cusco, suffered from flooding and mudslides in March of this year. Many families have lost everything. While Arturo and I were in Cuba, the call for help reached us via Adrián Campero. Due to our financial situation, we did not decide lightly, to transfer 15.000€ for immediate assistance. As we travelled down the app. 5000m high



mountain region deep into the valleys to visit the villages and meet the people we gave assistance to, we were time and time again met by people outside the villages, who wanted to see us. They were holding signs that read: "Thank you MASA", "Thank you for your help, brothers and sisters from Germany". Adrian Campero told us that 3,800 families were helped with food in the initial and greatest time of need. These people told that Adrian Campero and his teams were the first to reach them, even though many mountainside roads had been washed away. The military didn't arrive until weeks later. These types of action gave the missionary work enormous credibility. Now we are trying to provide lasting assistance by assisting many families with the rebuilding of their little homes.



- *Yanaoca* (app. 150 km south of Cusco) – Modesto Puñal is the local EBM MASA-missionary. He is very engaged, who under the coordination of Adrian Campero is doing a great job. There is already a mission station in 15 villages of the area. We are happy that we were able to purchase a property in Yanaoca in the past year, where we are now planning to build a church and premises for colleague training. In 2011 the Swiss Baptist Union has donated close to 21,000€ for this purpose, we are now hoping for more aid in order to be able to complete the project.



the work done and to discuss the next strategic steps. This included for example, concrete measures for the construction (what is to be done, as well as when and how), the consolidation of the mission station and the colleague training for church founding as a central point for the commitment in the area. Seeing how God is working here, filled our hearts with great joy.

- *Large Missionary Conference in Concacha Baja*

– These missionary convention (They locally know as “convenciones”) are the best way Adrian Campero has found, to replace the ‘Ketschuas’ (typical ‘festivals of the Gods’) for the people with ‘spiritual festivals’. They are regional four day long conventions. Taking part are the people from the local churches and mission stations, but also the village residents join in. There are sport competitions, such as Bible-race (starting in 4,000m elevation, the race goes to an even higher mountain. The winners get a Bible as the first prize. These competitions are split in to male and females groups as well as age-groups.) There are three to four services each day, all of which have a lot of music and proclamation. At this kind of events, many people received the Lord into their hearts, people are baptized, weddings take place, the blessing of children, and many more. Approximately 1,000 people attended the convention, which Arturo and I attended. It was a wonderful experience for us. We were allowed to serve with the word and got to meet with the missionaries and ministers of the region. In 2014, which is when the first educational trip to Peru is planned, we are intending the group participate in a similar convention, which is supposed to have an attendance of approximately 2,000 people. We have already started the preparations for this trip.



- *Curahuasi* (app. 130km north of Cusco, on route to Abancay) – the church founding work here is very important to us, for strategic reasons too. Unfortunately, things did not progress as well as hoped. Pastor Tomás Ascarza Chaparro, our local missionary, gave us some reason for worry. For the past 2 years, we have supported him intensively and invested a lot in him, in order for him to be able to face the challenges of this project. We, again, had several meetings with Tomás and his wife, also together with Adrian Campero and the church leadership. We set very clear goals, and where changes need to be made. By the end of 2012 the situation will be re-evaluated. At this time a decision will be made whether he will be able to continue his missionary function. Tomás agreed to try

his best to move in the right direction and has already made some changes to do so. We are hoping that the positive change continues. A wall was constructed around the property, which is planned to be used for the church and Mission Center. Now, the plan is to build small, simple building, where the church can celebrate the services. Then we are hoping that we are able to continue the construction little by little, which poses huge financial challenges. We are very happy about the people who have already accepted Christ into their hearts, but are hoping for an even stronger rate of growth. Missionary work is always the work of the Lord and he can and will give this gift. We are convinced that the missionary work can deliver the gospel in word and act to many people, and that the current challenges will not be able to stop the process.

3.3 Adrian Campero – At the end of the trip, we took, as usual, a lot of time with Adrian. Even though we spent many hours together while travelling, visiting the missionary projects and had long talks, we had once again plenty of time to listen to him, make our evaluations, and discuss the next steps and strategies for the various projects. We are grateful to have a missionary like Adrian Campero in Peru. We do need to pray for the people, who are going to step into his shoes in the future. This will not be an easy task.



4. *Conclusion*

I want to invite you to share the huge joy over the plentiful and positive outcomes the missionary work has accomplished and thank God for his Grace. I also invite you to continue the prayer support for the missionary work in Bolivia and Peru, as well as for the many responsible missionaries and colleagues. Every prayer and every cent that was invested into the financial support, was worth it and will be worth it in the future. I want to express our sincere gratitude for your caring support.

With warm solidarity,

Yours truly

Handwritten signature of Carlos Waldow in blue ink.

Carlos Waldow

Mission secretary for Latin America