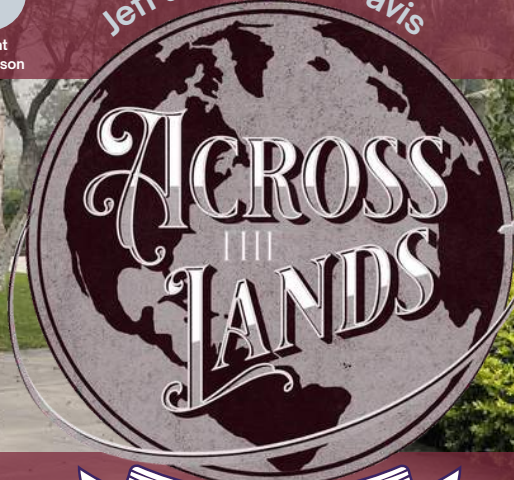


9 Countries  
34 US Missionaries  
51 National Missionaries  
1 Great Commission

Jeff and Joanna Davis

- Works of Evangelism
- Establishing Churches
- Equipping Nationals



La Molina, Peru

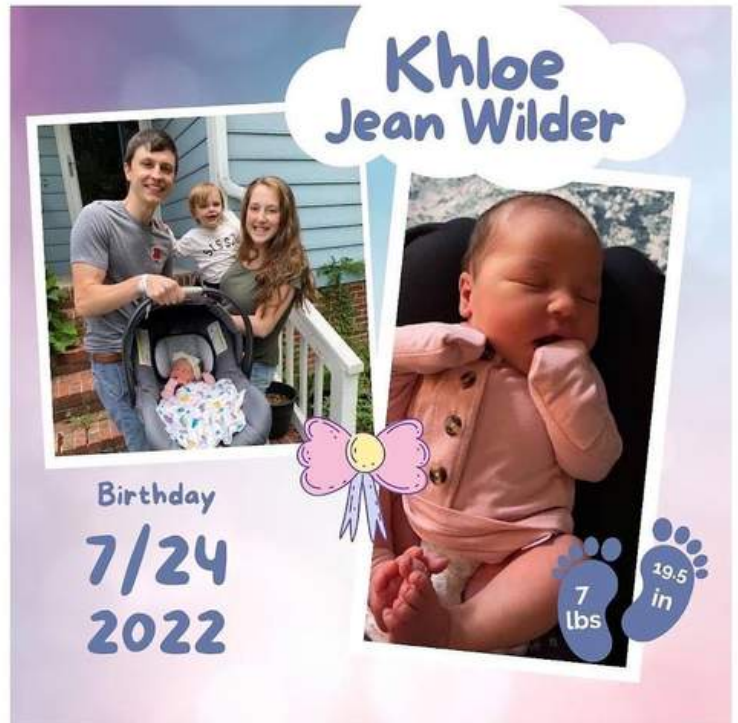
EXHORT  EQUIP

Aug - Sep 2022

ENLIST  ENGAGE

## Family Update

The Lord blessed our family last week with a precious new addition. Khloe Jean Wilder was born on July 24, to our daughter Bethany and her husband Kris Wilder. Joanna was with Bethany in Raleigh three days before the baby was born and has remained there for the past week to help Bethany, particularly with their two-year-old daughter Karis. In God's providence, I had the privilege of speaking in Wilmington last Sunday at the Park Avenue Baptist Church for Pastor David Robinette. You may remember him as one of the ministry trainers who was in Uruguay a couple of months ago. Because of the proximity of Wilmington to Raleigh, I spent a couple of days with Bethany's family. Since arriving back home a couple of days ago, I have been preparing for my trip this weekend to Florida, where I will be speaking for a Missions Emphasis Sunday at Parkway Baptist Church in Lakeland. I then will fly to Utah to help my son Caleb and his family for a couple of days as they are packing up all of their earthly belongings and moving back to the Upstate of South Carolina, where Caleb will serve as the Family Pastor of a church in the Spartanburg area. I will drive one of his cars thirty hours across the country. Naturally, I am going to break it up into phases. I am excited because my journey will take me through Kansas where I will have the opportunity of visiting the Williams family, dear precious friends, and ministry partners, particularly with our ministry in Uruguay. I have the privilege of preaching at their new church Homewood Community Bible Church. Though I am dreading the drive, I am looking forward to the opportunity to connect with ministry partners across the USA. I have also already downloaded several audiobooks.



I often think of our missionaries as the arrows and their partners as the bows. It takes both working together to hit the target. EMU's target since 1946 has remained the same: (1) Works of Evangelism, (2) Establishing Churches, and (3) Equipping Nationals to Do the Same. All to the glory of God!



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## A TALE OF TWO CITIES

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” and so begins Charles Dickens’ novel, “A Tale of Two Cities.” In preparing for my recent trip to Peru and Chile, it was an appropriate summation of my emotions leading up to the trip. Due to COVID restrictions, I had to postpone my scheduled trip two times and then eventually cancel altogether. I was excited to finally have the opportunity to make the trip and visit my dear friends Tim and Cheryl Chapman and their children in Lima, Peru, and Tom and Connie Chapman in Antofagasta, Chile. At the same time, I was exhausted from an incredibly busy schedule where I had overcommitted. I had just returned from an unexpected trip out to Utah to help my son Caleb and his family move back to South Carolina. I took advantage of the trip and scheduled a service at a new church and also met with several pastors or ministry leaders, but in one week I had just driven over 50 hours. I definitely was going to need God’s strength for the two weeks that I would be away visiting two important cities where EMU International missionaries are serving.

It is an amazing thought that one morning you can crawl out of your bed and later that evening be on the other side of the world.

### Thursday, August 25, 2022

Up at 4:15 a.m. – left home at 4:30 a.m. My son Caleb took me to the airport. I checked two bags, one loaded with items to take to the Chapman families. A few weeks earlier, a group from my home church Palmetto Baptist Church in Powdersville visited Lima to assist in the Theological Retreat that Tim Chapman described in last month’s newsletter. My pastor Dr. Sam Horn told me about a crazy form that I had to fill out due to COVID restrictions in Peru. It took me over 30 minutes to try to figure out all of the requirements. When I checked in, I was required to show the health affidavit form and also my printed vaccine card. The lady behind the counter reminded me of the double mask policy which was

still in place in Peru for public transportation and indoors. I have TSA precheck which is very helpful, so I breezed through security. I arrived at the gate 11 minutes before boarding. I was glad to be upgraded to Business class. It was nothing too special, just a bigger seat and I was first to board. I immediately had the flight attendant bring me a coffee. I used my flight time to listen to an audiobook and I studied for my upcoming sermons. Upon arrival in Miami, I was able to get a lot of steps in as I walked around the airport for three hours. I stopped for breakfast and made a few phone calls. On board the flight, the cabin was full. It was a long flight, seven hours. Fortunately, we did not have to wear masks until we got off the plane in Peru. I breezed through immigration and customs. I was required to show the health affidavit and my vaccine card. Due to Lima’s crazy traffic, Tim and his fifteen-year-old daughter Abby were a few minutes late. The drive to their house is only about 20 miles, but it took us over an hour. Tim and Abby are huge Philadelphia Phillies fans so they followed the game cast on our drive home. We stopped at a small bakery to buy fresh bread. When we arrived, I was greeted by Cheryl and their sixteen-year-old son Micah. The Chapman’s have a nice house which sits at the bottom of a mountain in La Molina, east of the city. They live on the bottom floor of a three-story building. At supper, we discussed our plans for the week. My home away from home was in the basement, which holds Tim’s office, a small bedroom area, and a family room. It was a very comfortable space for my time in Lima. Tim’s office has an excellent collection of Spanish and English books, a nice desk, and a good Wi-Fi connection. After a busy day traveling, I was glad to grab a shower. Due to COVID, it had been a while since they hosted visitors, and when I turned the water on, the shower head broke, and water sprayed everywhere. After trying to repair the shower and eventually giving up, I went back downstairs and unpacked both suitcases. I took a few minutes to Facetime my wife, Joanna. I climbed into bed around 10 p.m. (11 EST). Several times, I woke up in the night wondering, “Where am I?”

**Friday, August 26, 2022**

Woke up at 6:45 a.m. Walked upstairs at 7:15 a.m. and found Tim at the kitchen table reading his Bible. Tim is somewhat of a coffee snob, not really, but he likes his coffee. He brewed for me a very smooth French press Peruvian pot of coffee. When I saw the bag, I commented, "I've had that kind." "No way," he declared. On one of their recent visits to the States, they had given us a bag of the same coffee. While waiting for breakfast, I Facetimed with my daughter Hannah. She is planning for her wedding on November 5, to Caleb Greene. Cheryl and Hannah were both wearing Michigan t-shirts, as Cheryl is from Michigan and Hannah is marrying into a family of Michigan fans. Following breakfast, Tim and I left for the downtown area at 9:30 a.m. Knowing what was ahead with the traffic, I took a Dramamine. The traffic in Lima reminded me of my trip to India. There are three lanes, but they turn them into five. Roundabouts are insane! For the most part, there is a lot of give-and-take and somehow it works.

I had gotten to know the Chapmans in Michigan back in 2019 and in Uruguay this past February. On the drive, I learned more about Tim's story. We had plenty of time to talk as it took about an hour-and-a-half to drive only 20 miles. Tim is the second son of Tom and Connie, EMU missionaries in Antofagasta, Chile. He was not born in Chile but spent several years with his parents in Santiago, where he learned Spanish and much about the culture of South America. He graduated from Bob Jones University in Greenville, SC, in 1998. Following graduation, he traveled with the Steve Pettit Evangelistic Team for three years. It was then that he met Cheryl, who was also a member of the team. Cheryl, too, was raised in a Christian home and attended BJU, majoring in Elementary Education and going on to earn a Master's in Counseling. Tim would later receive his master's degree in Theology from Calvary Baptist Theological Seminary. God used Tim's love for evangelistic work, and a couple of visits to Peru, to call him into full-time missions. They joined EMU International in 2004 and arrived in Peru in 2006 as missionaries. During their first 8 years in Peru, Tim preached for many evangelistic campaigns, camps, and conferences. They also directed several camps and retreats during that time. For the next two years, Tim served as interim pastor for the church they considered their home church, and Tim helped transition that church to a Peruvian pastor. While serving in this established church, the Lord gave them a burden to plant a new church in an urban part of central Lima. Iglesia Bautista Gracia was officially founded in the spring of 2016. The vision for this young church comes from two specific motivations. The first has to do with Tim's desire to preach the gospel to a wide variety of people and cultures within the city of Lima. His desire is for God to build a church where the gospel of the grace of Jesus Christ unites believers from different backgrounds and economic classes. A second motivation is to grow a Christian perspective among the people of that area, teaching believers to think in a Christian way; to really have a

truly Christian worldview that affects every area of their lives. Much of the focus over the past couple of years has been on what Tim calls, "gospel clarity," making clear not only the theological truths of the gospel but also their implications. As we approached one of the busy intersections in town, like many places all over the world, the street performers and beggars made their presence known. One guy pulled a strap, like a long seat belt across the intersection. He walked out into the middle and juggled bowling pins. As Tim gave him a coin, he said that guy had earned his tip. Parking was difficult to find downtown. Finally, we found a lot and as we pulled in, we realized they were stacking the cars bumper-to-bumper. I commented that it was like a huge game of Tetris. As we walked across Plaza San Martin, we witnessed a man posing as a statue. Nurses were giving vaccines on the street. We visited the Plaza le Merced and its many Colonial European-looking buildings. At the time of our visit, the police were out in force due to a workers' protest that was taking place. Political tensions were high due to the upcoming election. As we walked down the tiled and brick streets to the city center, Plaza de Armas, we passed the President's house. Tim wanted to stop for coffee and empanadas al carne to tie us over until lunch. We passed the Cathedral of Lima with its massive doors and tall neoclassical towers with slate spires. While waiting to tour the catacombs, we walked through the Church of San Francisco Asis. Built in 1535, it is known for what many consider to be beautiful Baroque-style architecture. Tim and I commented on how depressing it was. I believe the word I used was, "gaudy." It houses an impressive library with approximately 25,000 books of theology, philosophy, history, and literature, as well as 17th-century artistic works by famous European painters. Everywhere you looked, Jesus was on the cross. Catholics compose an estimated 74% of Peru's population. I wonder if they know anything about the resurrection. In 1943 crypts were discovered under the floor of the church, monastery, and library. These catacombs aren't easily accessible and the dust from being underground and no doubt the decaying bones caused our throats to burn. The bones were neatly organized into geometric patterns. It was a really strange, depressing place. I'm glad I visited but not sure that I want to go again.



## Sunday, August 28, 2022

Up around 6 a.m. I had to study some for my message. We left for church at 9:30 a.m. for the 11:00 a.m. service. We stopped at a gas station and picked up three people. We arrived early at Iglesia Bautista Gracia. There was a large group of people setting up. The church has five deacons, two of whom are responsible for logistics and had a crew of people working together like a well-oiled machine. The church meets at APIA (The Association of Peruvian Agricultural Engineers). This was the original location of the church when it was founded in 2016. Today, they are running over 200 people in attendance and have to meet outside under a large tent. They have three pastors and a pastoral intern. Inside the building, they had bathrooms, a nursery, the children's ministry, and a coffee table.



A couple of young people were working the well-stocked library outside. Folks trickled in late. The service was full with over 200 in attendance. Pastor Daniel led the music. Cheryl played the keyboard. Luis Miguel, the pastoral intern, preached from a difficult text, Psalm 88. The subject was "Forsaken by God." If you visit Israel, this passage is often read in the prison under Caiaphas's house where Jesus was held before He was crucified. After the service, there was a luncheon for married couples. I talked with Kris Blumer for a while. He and his wife Rose Marie are missionaries who have been with the Chapmans since the beginning of Gracia. They are planting a church, two hours south of Lima in Cerro Azul. Kris and I first met several years ago when he visited Oakwood Baptist Church, the church I pastored before joining EMU. We had so many people hang around for the luncheon that we ran out of food. I preached from Ephesians 4 on communication, "Attack the Problem, not the Person." Afterward, a small group of us who didn't get lunch went out to eat Pollo la Brasa (grilled chicken). Back home, went to bed around 10 p.m.



We stopped at a restaurant called Peru Gourmet for lunch and ate outside on the patio while Tim shared with me the history of Lima. Tim recommended the Lomo Saltado a La Pobre, a Peruvian beef stir-fry on a bed of fries with a fried egg on top. It did not disappoint. We stopped for churros crema. Tim said it was for the kids (wink, wink). When we arrived back at the parking lot, it was like one of those slide puzzles trying to get the car out. We stopped to buy a showerhead at a store that reminded me of Home Depot. It was the only time on my trip that we were stopped and required to wear a double mask and show our vaccine cards. When we arrived home, Abby was practicing the piano. The entire Chapman family is very musical. Their daughter Lauren is a full-time student at Bob Jones University majoring in music. Tim and I ran back out for pizza. He broke out the churros, the best I have ever eaten. Abby made brownies and homemade chocolate sauce. Tim wanted me to participate in their family devotions, so I shared with them some of the thoughts from my message on Psalm 46. Before bed, we played a game called, "Stella," part of the Dixit family of games, which became a favorite during my trip.

## Saturday, August 27, 2022

The power went off around midnight for about 3 hours. I didn't sleep well. I had several crazy dreams. It must have been the churros and pizza combination, along with Abby's chocolate sauce. We all left around 8:30 a.m. for breakfast downtown. Cheryl recommended a delicious Pork sandwich. We visited Miraflores, the coast with its beautiful cliffs overlooking the Pacific Ocean. It was Winter in Peru but that didn't stop the many surfers. Next, we stopped at Inka Plaza. I purchased a nice baby alpaca poncho for Joanna and an alpaca hoodie sweater for me. I also got a Peruvian mug. After returning home and eating lunch, everyone was ready for a little rest. I had to work on my message for the College & Career meeting later that evening. Abby, Tim, and I left for the meeting which started at 7 p.m. There were about 50 people in attendance. The singing was refreshing and then I preached on Ephesians 6, at the end of the chapter on the Armor of God. Everyone hung around for a birthday party for Pastor Daniel's son, Josiah. We left for home around 9:30 p.m. We took a couple of girls home. It took us one hour to go about 12 miles.



## Monday, August 29, 2022

Monday, we tried to gear down a little and just work around the house. Kris and Rose Marie Blumer joined us for a delicious lunch followed by a fun time of fellowship with Peruvian coffee and cookies and a game of Stella. Later that evening, Cheryl broke out the sourdough and we enjoyed sandwiches for supper.

## Tuesday, August 30, 2022

Tuesday, August 30, was a national holiday known as Santa Rosa De Lima. She was canonized by Pope Clement on August 30th, 1671. Since then, every August 30th the people of Lima pay tribute to the patron saint of the city. It was a day off for the general population, and schools and most businesses were closed. One of the highlights of my trip was the men's breakfast held that morning. We were up early to get chairs from the church to take to our meeting place, the rooftop of a 16-story apartment building, a beautiful setting overlooking the downtown skyline, with a view of the ocean. John, a professionally trained chef, prepared a delicious breakfast for us of pork sandwiches, with salsa criolla (pickled onions), and of course Peruvian coffee. I preached on John 13, "Swollen Heads and Stinky Feet." We then enjoyed a special time of prayer together.

Later that afternoon, Tim dropped me off at the home of Alexis and Juan Jesus. While Alexis was finishing preparing the meal, I explored his impressive library. She has learned to cook Peruvian and prepared aji de gallina, a creamy chicken stew – delicious. It was a nice visit getting to know their story and talking about their future plans. Juan Jesus is working on a theology degree online from a Baptist seminary in Ecuador while also working full-time with medical machines at an area hospital. Alexis has had a busy schedule this past year discipling several teen girls through individual weekly meetings. This ministry is being dissolved into the college and career ministry. With her educational background, she has been a big help in assisting in the organization of the Sunday School literature for the children's ministries. She is part of a Women's Book Club, and they dedicate their Saturday evenings to the College and Career Group Meetings. Juan Jesus serves as the Deacon of Mercy. Part of his role is to get to know the needs of the church members, so they schedule regular visits and dinners with church families. Every other Sunday they visit the Refuge to assist Pastor Santos and his wife. The church has a relationship with this couple who runs a refuge for kids who are abandoned or orphaned. The kids live at the refuge all week and go home for one day over the weekend. Pray for God's direction as Alexis and Juan Jesus consider their ministerial future. The pastors were at Tim's house for the afternoon and supper. Juan Jesus and Alexis called a taxi and then rode with me to the Chapman's house. I joined the pastoral staff for another game of Stella.

## Wednesday, August 31, 2022

This was another great day as Pastor Ruben had invited the pastoral staff over to his house. In addition to a delicious meal, the conversation was encouraging as I learned about each of the pastors and their stories.

In 2014, God directed Rubén Villar to join Tim in the efforts to start the new church. He is a native of Lima. He trusted Christ as his Savior when he was 10. Three years later he gave his life to the service of the Lord. He has a Bachelor of Theology degree from the Baptist Seminary of Peru, also a Bachelor of Education from the Federico Villarreal National University and he is currently working towards a Master of Theology degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Louisville. He is married to his sweet wife Laura.

Daniel Antón Saavedra also serves as one of the pastors of the Iglesia Bautista Gracia. He received his bachelor's degree from the Universidad Cristiana de Las Américas (UCLA), in Monterrey, Mexico. He is married to Jessica López with whom he has a son named Josías.

Luis Miguel G. Verástegui, the pastoral intern is also a graduate of the Universidad Cristiana de Las Américas (UCLA), in Monterrey, Mexico. He attended the breakfast and pastoral staff meeting.

Tim wanted me to share my story and challenge the leaders. I spoke on Colossians 1:15-18, "What is the Church?" It was an interactive discussion about exalting the Savior through our unity, our diversity, and our interdependence.

Later that afternoon, we considered visiting the desert, but time was short, so the entire family including their dog Tuffy, visited the little street where we had purchased bread the first night after I arrived. Nearby was a beautiful little park, where we chatted and sipped our coffees.

Daniel Deland, another missionary who is starting a church in the mountains, stopped by for a brief visit. We have known his family since the early 2000s. I was his brother and sister-in-law's pastor for several years.

The next day, we would have to leave for the airport early, so I spent the evening packing for the next leg of my trip as I would visit Tim's parents, Tom and Connie Chapman in Antofagasta, Chile. I was grateful to God as He had given me strength for a fantastic trip. Following my trip to Chile, I would return to Peru for a couple of days before returning to the States. You can read about those details in next month's newsletter.



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