

Radical LifeLines

News from Radical Life Ministries



Praises and Phases

Thank You! The New Facilities Have Been Completed!

There are no words to describe how thankful we are to God and to all of you who have prayed, given and who came to help with the completion of the new facilities.

This is truly a work of God! This vision began fifteen years ago when Pamela and I felt God was calling us to Costa Rica (*and specifically to Playa Jaco*) to plant a church. This sense of calling sent us to Trinity College of Florida to prepare for what

was ahead. When we arrived in Costa Rica nine years ago, we began church services under a mango tree near the beach for a year and a half. Then we moved into a commercial center and rented a space for seven years. In fact, it was seven years later—*to the day*—that God provided the new finished facilities! *We had our first service June 6.*

We will celebrate what God has done and dedicate the new facilities to the service of the Lord—His worship, preaching of His gospel, teaching of His

Word, fellowship of His Saints and all for His glory! The grand Fiesta will be Friday, July 18, 2014. Everyone is



invited! (if you cannot make it, we plan to make a video and get it to you). Thank you all so much! I really believe this church is strategically located in God's perfect plan and timing to impact this entire region—Costa Rica *and far beyond!*



God's Pursuit of Jaco

Recently I was walking home from church after our Friday night service with my Bible in my hand through downtown Jaco and heard someone say, "Hey, Pastor!"

I turned around and recognized the man. I had met with him several times before to share the Gospel. He is kind of a big guy. I will not go into detail about how he looks, it doesn't matter anyway. He was smoking marijuana with several guys from the States; they were probably on spring break. They were speaking English. I turned around to shake his hand and to say hello when he grabbed me by my shoulders with both hands and loudly announced, "Look guys, it's the Pastor!" Then he blew smoke in my face and pushed me away.

I was not surprised. Maybe I should have kept walking, but I didn't want to be rude. I thought for a second and prayed about how I should respond—or if I should even respond at all. I began to walk away, and I heard them all laughing and saw others on the street just watching. After I took about two steps, I felt God say to me, "turn right back around, walk back to that guy, and tell him you love him and that I also love him."

So I did what I thought God told me to do. When I walked away, it became totally silent. The laughing stopped. Nobody said a word. It wasn't my intention to interrupt their high or the good time they were having; that's just what I felt God told me to do.

I'm not writing this to make you think

I'm so spiritual or loving. I'm neither; at least not as much as I want to be. What happened on the way home from church just reminded me of God's love for sinners. Sinners like me; like you. Thankfully, God shows His love with actions that assures us



Morgan's Cove, Jaco

of His love. As we mock Him and basically blow smoke in His face, He loves us back. He sent His Son to save us. He did not leave us in our depravity and hopelessness. He came so that we may be forgiven and have life through Him. We would be so lost without Him. Just look at the world. For example, look at the news. We would be doing those same things and acting in the same ways, and occasionally we do, even though it's only in our thoughts.

Jaco is a tough town; its reputation is really personified by the guy who "greeted" me on the street that night. Rebellious, disrespectful, foolish, trying to put on the appearance of strength and control, yet

miserable, alone, empty, lost, insecure, and dying on the inside. God knows this type of people and place all too well. In fact, He loves to show up in conditions like these. He sees past all the walls we put up around our lives and looks into our hearts.

God doesn't shy away from places that are dark and disorderly. He doesn't fear these places. It's precisely in these places where God shows up and says something crazy like, "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3). Then He starts separating the darkness from the light and brings order to things. Think about all throughout the Bible where God shows up at the most unlikely places, and at the most inconvenient times, to the most undeserving people. He chooses to forgive us, a rebellious people, and save us from our own folly

and from His wrath against sin by sacrificing His Son in our place (perhaps the most illogical act ever). However, this is the God of the Bible. He offers salvation now in this life, so we do not have to face an eternity without Him.

God does these kinds of things. He decides to love in these ways. His Word calls it grace. This is what He did for me and for you. I guess this is one of the reasons why Jaco is a place He is pursuing so passionately and purposefully. His very character is clearly on display—His glory, His grace, His goodness. Thank you for extending God's radical love to the people of Jaco. They need to know before it's too late.

Spotlight on Kids

'He who receives a child in My name receives Me' —Matthew 18:5

Francini and Bielka are from the riverbed community in Jaco. They have one brother and two sisters. Four years ago their parents faced a problem, and their children had to go live at an orphanage while their parents dealt with the issue.

Because of your giving during that time, Radical Life was able to continue to minister to them by supplying school materials, uniforms, clothing and children's Bibles.

We did not know if they would stay at the orphanage or return to Nicaragua

(where their parents are from).

Last year we were very thankful to see their entire family return to Jaco where they are once again a part of the children's ministry, "El Ranch Biblico" at the river community.



Francini and Bielka

Jessica and Fernando

Jessica is originally from Washington State and first came to Costa Rica in 2008 with a short term commitment with a ministry called *Christian Surfers*.

We met her at church, and after a while she began to work with the youth and help with summer discipleship classes. Jessica proved herself very dependable, faithful, enthusiastic and always had a great attitude. Soon we realized God had answered our prayers for help and had called Jessica to be part of the *Radical Life* team. We also learned God had gifted her with administrative and organizational skills.

We hired Jessica to serve as the administrative assistant of *Radical Life*. Since August of 2008 she has served as an absolute essential part of the mission of *Radical Life*. Every person this ministry reaches is possible because of the important administrative work Jessica does.

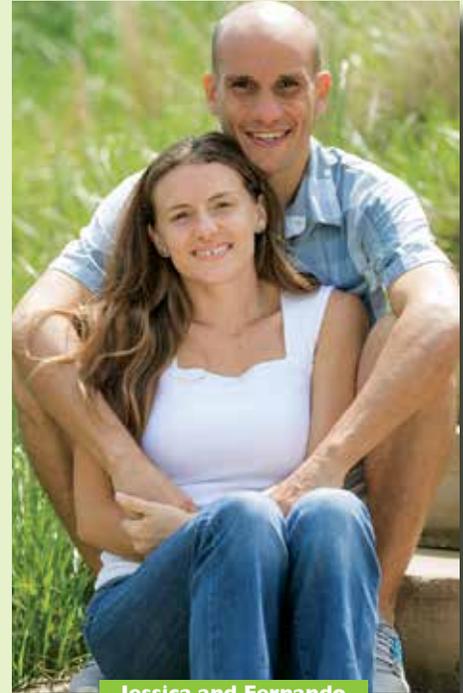
Jessica and Fernando met at church and have been married for six years. Fernando is from Buenos Aires, Argentina and first came to Costa Rica on an extended adventure/surf trip. He could have never imagined the adventure God had for him here. He came to know Christ at church and later began the *Bridges of Hope Ministry* (now called *Radical Hope*). Fernando has a pastoral gift. He enjoys being with people and experiencing life together. He has a love for soccer and surfing and also knows how to make great pizza (*all of this, of course,*

qualifies him to be an excellent youth pastor!). Fernando and Jessica have been the youth pastors of the thriving youth group at *Iglesia Radical* now for 6 years.

During his time discovering God's purposes for his life, he learned God was calling him to prepare for full time ministry. We observed Fernando's passion for God's Word and his desire to share Christ with others. Because of this, we asked if he believed God was calling him to commit to four years of seminary training to help better equip him for ministry. Fernando and Jessica accepted God's calling together and enrolled at San Jose's "ESEPA" Seminary, one of the most highly respected evangelical seminaries in Central America.

It's been almost four years since they made that decision. Four years making the two-hour drive each week to attend classes, staying a night or two, then returning to Jaco. All of this while serving as full time youth pastors and Jessica working 16 hours a week at the *Radical Life* office.

At the end of this year they will both graduate with degrees in Pastoral Ministries. We are so thankful to see what God has done in and through this couple. God has greatly gifted and equipped them both. Through the years we have seen them



Jessica and Fernando

allow God to develop in them four of what I believe are the most important qualities leaders should have: love, humbleness, gratitude and perseverance. I am looking forward to seeing how God will use this couple in the future. Please pray for them as they reach their goal of graduation and seek to raise their financial support as full time missionaries serving with *Radical Life*.

Short-Term Mission Teams

So far this year, we've been blessed to have had the opportunity to host five teams!

- To help with our Christmas outreaches we received the much appreciated visit of a small group of young men from the youth group of **Keystone United Methodist Church** from Keystone, Florida. They wrapped hundreds of gifts!
- In January we had a visit from a group of great folks from several churches in the Atlanta area. They were a part of our *Kids' Bible Clubs*, and they brought our dear brother **John Riley** to speak to our ministry team and seminary students. What a great encouragement!
- Over their spring break from classes, a team of students from **Palm Beach (Florida) Atlantic University's IsleGo**

Missions blessed one of our church families (*a family of nine, actually!*) with a new roof for their house! These students also worked on the construction of the church. Huge help!

- We also hosted a team of students from **Calvary Christian High School** from Clearwater, Florida during their spring break. They held *Kids' Clubs* and helped further train the children's ministry teachers at **Iglesia Radical**. They also helped with the construction of the church.
- In May we had the opportunity to have a group of surfers from **The Church Of Eleven22** of Jacksonville Beach, Florida. Together with the children's ministry of



Kids learn about the Good Samaritan

Iglesia Radical, they held a surf camp for kids and they laid the sod (grass) at the new facilities. Awesome time with these brothers! God did so much!

Knapp Family Update

In March we had the blessing of attending a Missions Conference at HUMC Clearwater as a family for the first time.

It was such a blessing to be there and hear some of what God is doing in other parts of the world and share some about what He is doing in Costa Rica. I also traveled to Tampa in May to speak at a conference held by **Living Faith Bible Fellowship** on the importance of reaching marginalized communities in urban settings. What an awesome time of Christ-centered motivation and fellowship!

Josiah is doing his part of church planting representing *Iglesia Radical* while surfing his new surfboard, *and yes, it was made by his dad!*

Josue just had surgery on his ears and nose. He had tubes put in his ears to improve drainage and prevent infections.



We are thankful that he could have this done. He hears better and his sleeping has improved, but he cannot go in the water for six months to a year. So, Josue received a skateboard for his birthday.

Little Lidia is doing great, she is quite the surfer girl. She actually loves it, and is pretty brave in the water. Still doing ballet and thankfully is loving school this year.

We are going to take a family vacation to the Smoky Mountains to rest towards the end of

June. The construction of the church has been challenging and we know its completion is not the finish line, but a starting line...so we want to refresh and be rested to continue growing the church!

Prayer Requests

- 1) Much needed rest and family time during our vacation.
- 2) Our family: for a peaceful and calm home in a conflictive and loud community.
- 3) Wisdom
- 4) More leaders at church and the time and creativity to equip them (children's teachers, youth volunteers, ushers).
- 5) That many more people would understand the Gospel and be saved and grow in their love of God and His word.

Answered Prayers

- 1) The successful surgery of Josue.
- 2) God's miraculous provision of the land and new facilities for the church.
- 3) The six students of the *Radical Life* scholarship program are doing well and learning a lot (Fernando, Jessica, Gustavo, Andrea, Gustavo, Laura and Angela).
- 4) The upcoming opportunity to rest for a few days with the family.

Thank you so much for your prayers and support! May God bless you!

The Knapp Family

The Knapp family is serving in Playa Jaco, Costa Rica.

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