

October 2016 Knapp Family Update

Time marches on here in Jacó with the Knapp Family! Josiah is by far the tallest in the family! He is 14 years old and finished 7th place in his category in the Costa Rican national surfing circuit.

Josue is 10 and also surfing, and he enjoys playing basketball at school. He is trying to grow up quickly to catch his older brother! Lidia is 8 and—*growing up with two brothers*—she’s learning to be a tough little girl. Pamela and I are dealing with the experience of our bodies letting us know that we are coming upon middle age! *Yikes!* When I mention this to my dad, he just laughs and says, *“Just wait a few years. You ain’t seen nothing yet.”* Ouch! The changes we feel in our bodies reminds us of how short our lives are and that we must make them count for Christ.

Prayer Requests

- 1) Thank you for praying for renewed strength, as I believe God is answering.
- 2) We have hired another administrative assistant to help with the growth of the ministry and increasing government red tape on both sides.

Answered Prayer

- 1) Wisdom for leading our family, the church and Radical Life.

- 2) For the effective training of the 30 facilitators for the small groups.
- 3) That the small groups would be used mightily by God for both discipleship and evangelism.
- 4) That the rest of 2016 will be a tremendous time of new salvations and growth for *Iglesia Radical*.
- 5) That God would provide a CPA and Treasurer for *Radical Life*.

Thank you for your friendship, prayers and support as we work together in Jesus’ name. May God bless you.

The Knapp Family

The Knapps are serving in Playa Jacó, Costa Rica

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Radical LifeLines

News from Radical Life Ministries



It's Autumn in Costa Rica...

Greetings everyone! I pray you are well. It’s been a while since I wrote an “update” letter, and I apologize for that. The past several months have been extremely challenging, and I went through a time of discouragement.

There are always normal challenges and difficulties; however, in the first half of this year, we were hit by a series of punches. Two members of the church’s leadership had to be removed from their duties, due to unrepentant hearts after being confronted in love for breaking clear scriptural requirements for leadership. It’s always tragic when loved ones refuse to be restored to fellowship. I’m saddened to communicate that our director of facilities mantenimiento, Elyin Rivas and the director of children’s ministries Angela Aguilar at *Iglesia Radical* are no longer affiliated with *Radical Life* or *Iglesia Radical*.

Of course, no follower of Christ should expect smooth sailing. Jesus told us, *“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it.”* (Matt. 16:24-25). When I hear someone say, “It’s so difficult to follow God,” I think to myself about the alternative, and I say, *“No thanks. I would much rather be near God where we are guaranteed trials and tribulations than far from Him.”* We choose to respond as Peter did, “Lord to whom shall

we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68).

Through the physical pain of my back injury and surgery and the life adjustments that followed, plus the emotional pain of watching people you love make really bad choices, I have learned a lot. I have come to realize that leadership expert John C. Maxwell is correct when he says, “When it comes to discouragement, there are really only two types of people: splatters and bouncers. When splatters hit the rock bottom, they fall apart, and they stick to the bottom like glue. On the other hand, when bouncers hit the bottom, they pull together and bounce back.”

Another lesson I’m learning is that the greater the battle is, the greater the victory will be. It’s so easy to want to quit when we feel like we have failed, but failure does not mean defeat.

The apostle Paul encourages us, “Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain” (1 Cor. 15:58).

Ordination!

In October, **Pastor Diego Jaramillo** of *Iglesia Bautista Fuente de Luz y Salvación*, Orange Park, Florida, visited to teach at our annual leadership retreat and to assist in the final ordination process of three of our members: **Fernando Piñero**, **Gustavo Corrales** and **Edgar Moreno**. It is always a privilege to be with pastor Diego. In 200, Pamela and I surrendered our lives to God through the preaching of pastor Diego, and it was in his church where I was ordained for the ministry in 2005.

Through your giving towards the *Radical Life Scholarship Program* Fernando has earned his bachelor degree in Biblical studies from **ESEPA Seminary** in San Jose. Fernando is married to **Jessica** who is also a graduate of ESEPA, they have two children. Fernando has faithfully served for the last five years as the youth pastor.

Gustavo also completed his degree in Biblical Studies from the same seminary, also through the scholarship program. Gustavo is married to **Andrea**, who is currently halfway through her Masters Degree program in psychology. They have two children. Since January Gustavo has been serving as administrative pastor of *Iglesia Radical*.

Edgar is a graduate of the **University of Costa Rica**. He is an engineer, and he designed the plans for the construction of the church and other projects built through the church’s ministry. Edgar has faithfully served in several ministries in the church and as a deacon for six years. He was ordained as head deacon.

Pastor Diego preached at our main service and then traveled with the leadership team to a three-day retreat near the Arenal volcano. During the retreat, he spoke about how to overcome challenges in ministry, teamwork, and effective communication within the team. It was wonderful to visit with our beloved pastor Diego.



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Missions Conferences

Taking the Word to the States

Have you heard the phrase: “Teamwork makes the dream work”? That is definitely true when it comes to missions and fulfilling the Great Commission.

The Bible calls those of us who work together “co-laborers” in the Lord (III John 8). We are so thankful for the individuals and churches that have teamed up with us to minister in Jacó. In February, I was invited to be the keynote speaker for the missions conference of **Heritage United Methodist Church of Clearwater, Florida**. It was such a privilege, and I was so thankful for the opportunity to share. God knows that we need a great team of diverse people behind us to accomplish what He wants to do here in Costa Rica.

In September, I was invited to share

at the annual missions conference at **Bethel Baptist Church in Villas, North Carolina** (just outside of Boone). The pastor there is Charlie Martin, former pastor of **First Baptist Church of Indian Rocks** and former president of **Trinity College**. I’m very thankful for the opportunity to spend time with the many people God has put in my life who are examples of faithful, loving, obedient disciples of Jesus.

The time invested traveling and sharing about what God is doing and His plan for the future is encouraging—both for those who hear how God is working through their support and for



David at Bethel Baptist

me, as I have the opportunity to hear how God is working in *their* lives, as well. The friendships that are formed as we carry out God’s plans together is one of the biggest blessings of being a part of the church. When the church comes together in faith, love and obedience to His word, God is glorified and in all of this we are blessed indeed!

Short Term Mission Teams

A Summer of Service

This summer we had the opportunity to host five short term mission teams. In June we received **The Holy Family Church** through **IsleGo Missions** from Los Angeles, California.

They served the people in the river community doing light construction. In July, we hosted **Northland Church** of Orlando who came to help with putting a roof on a house in the river community, to minister to the children there and to help with a construction project at the church. A week later, **Coral Ridge Presbyterian High School** of Ft. Lauderdale also taught the children and did light construction. In July and again in August, former **Washington Redskin, Virgil Seay** brought his sports camp for kids again this year to hold two football clinics for the youth. The youth had a great time learning about teamwork and how the church should work together to accomplish our shared goal of making disciples. It was a novelty to play American football in Jacó,



as surfing and soccer are the most common sports here. The youth loved it!

Worship Director

Two years ago, **Rafael Amador** responded to God’s call on his life to invest two years of his life serving at **Iglesia Radical**. Originally from Puerto Rico, Rafael is a graduate of **Trinity College of Florida**. During his time in Jacó, he has been an excellent example of God’s love for the people here. His main responsibility was to raise up a praise band at church; however, he also taught a weekly Bible study (through the book of Romans) and preached on several occasions. I believe the two new additional students from church who are now studying at seminary (through our study program) are a direct result of Rafael’s ministry. We thank God for his time of service here. Rafael will be missed, but we praise God, because he will continue his education towards his Masters Degree in the U.S. Please pray that the newly-formed praise team will continue in the teaching and example they received by Rafael.



Church Planter Retreat

In September, **The Church of Eleven 22** sponsored a retreat where a small group of church planters from around the United States and the world came together for three days of fellowship in a remote location in southeast Georgia. I knew right away that God was in it when our host, **Pastor Joby** said something like: “For the next couple of days, we do not have an agenda. I’m a church planter, too, and I know what you’re going through. So, we’re just going to pray for each other, have some good conversations, catch some fish and go hunting.” Praise God! What a refreshing surprise those few days were. God knew how bad we all needed that. It reminded me of when Jesus would take His disciples into the wilderness or across the lake for some special time with the Father. I returned to Costa Rica renewed and excited to continue.

Thanks, Jack!

It is with mixed emotions that **Radical Life** accepts the resignation of our treasurer and dear brother **Jack Boyd**. He has faithfully served on our board of directors for a number of years. We are very thankful for his friendship and excellent service throughout the years. He has been a huge blessing to the lives of many. He has offered to serve until the end of 2016. We are currently praying that God will lead us to someone who can serve in this position.

Training Facilitators For Small Groups

Teaching the Teachers

We are very thankful to our partners, **IsleGo Missions** and **Northland Church of Orlando** for connecting us with **BILD International**, a ministry that specializes in curriculum for Christian education. We are excited about this particular curriculum and consider it an answer to our prayers for the following reasons:

- 1). The curriculum is an accredited program and recognized by major Bible colleges.
- 2). It offers several different levels, new believers small group Bible studies, a one-year certificate in Biblical studies, AA degree in Biblical studies, four-year bachelor degree in Biblical studies, and a six-year master’s program in Theology.
- 3). Northland church has a partnership



with **BILD** that allows us to print the books in Costa Rica for each course level.

- 4). Because of their partnership our only cost for this curriculum will be our cost of printing.
- 5). Its philosophy of education is designed and written for learning styles most common in the global South (Latin America, Africa, parts of Asia).
- 6). **BILD** is sending their representatives in Latin America (from Peru) to help train our leaders in how to more effectively use the curriculum.

We believe all of these benefits combined means that God is making some major steps towards the Bible Institute we visioned years ago. We can’t wait to see what God will do next!

ISA World Surfing Games

‘Picking Up’ a Ministry

This past Summer, Jacó was chosen as the location of the **International Surfing Association’s World Surfing Games**.

This event is like the Olympics of surfing. Twenty-seven countries participated, and the municipality of Jacó estimated that over 65,000 people attended the event. **Iglesia Radical** was chosen by the **Surfing Federation of Costa Rica** to help keep the beach clean during the seven-day competition. We collected truckloads of trash, but more importantly, God gave us favor with many people that needed to see the positive impact the church can have on a community.

Unfortunately, in Costa Rica, many churches have rules about being in certain places where they could be “contaminated by sin or sinners.” I’m ashamed to say that most people were surprised to see a church picking up their trash and telling them that God loves them. *After all, isn’t that what God did for us on the cross?* According to scripture, the

Cross is a picture of God’s love for us by taking the penalty of our sin (trash). If we are not careful (as the church), we can become

so self righteous in our own eyes, that we can forget who we were when God saved us.

It was a big lesson for us; we learned that we have a lot of work to do in our community to accurately communicate the Gospel in word and lifestyle.

Actually, the people’s surprised reaction to the volunteer service of the church caught the attention of the national news! The **Surfing Federation of Costa Rica** made a video and posted it on their Facebook page. Currently, the video has had over 30,500 views! The most read newspaper in the country (*La Teja*) wrote a full page article and even made of front page! The national television channel also mentioned the church’s involvement at the competition.



Youth Camp

Youth Ministries

This year Fernando, the youth pastor of **Iglesia Radical**, and his volunteers took the youth group to their annual camp. They spent three nights at a Christian camp near the Tarcoles River also known as the “Crocodile River.” The Bible studies focused on the Trinity. They also worshiped together and later painted signs with Bible verses and put them up around the local area.

Christian Surfer Camp

In March, the Knapp family attended the annual Christian Surfer camp held in MarBella, located in the northern province of Guanacaste. The directors of the local Jacó chapter of the **Christians Surfers** are members of **Iglesia Radical**. We camped in tents for two nights. There were small group Bible studies during the day and special worship at night. Several people received Christ, and three people were baptized!



Surfer Campers