

In 2007, after a 12 hour bus journey and an 8 hour walk to Chachas, Edward and Esme not only committed themselves to each other but offered up their lives to serve the Lord in the Andes of Peru.

This is an account of our missionary journey so far and projected view of what lies ahead in the next chapter.....

In 2011 Edward and Esmé along with Luis left the UK to serve God as missionaries in the Andean mountains of southern Peru. Until 2013 we as a family helped a small Baptist church in the city of Arequipa, in order to gain experience and to prepare ourselves for moving to Chachas, the village where Edward was born and which had not had any previous evangelical witness.

In August 2013, we made our first family trip up to Chachas along with Liliana and in December the same year we moved up to live and start ministering in the village.

In March 2014 God amazingly opened the doors for Edward and Esmé to get involved in teaching English with the local nursery, primary and secondary schools in Chachas and in the next village. These were amazing opportunities to get alongside children, young people, teachers and parents in the village.

Through these openings came about numerous opportunities to share the Bible and the gospel to children, young people, teachers, nurses and villagers. By the end of 2014 the Holy Spirit convicted a teacher and four young people of their sin and the need of forgiveness from God. They repented and accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and saviour and began their new Christian lives.

Following our UK leave in 2015 we returned to Chachas in March 2016 to continue living out, sharing and proclaiming Jesus in the schools and village at large. Opportunities also extended to three other surrounding villages.

We have seen God's gracious hand upon our lives, family and ministry since we arrived in Chachas. We have been committed to the cause even in spite of many challenges. In faith, hope and prayer we had a vision for continuing here but God sees the bigger picture and appears to be changing our paths for a time.

In October last year we wrote about our need to raise funds to build a simple house and multi-purpose room for ministry. The response was not as we had hoped for and meant that we could not move forward with any building works despite having previously purchased the land back in 2008. Living in just two rooms was becoming increasingly difficult. With Luis and Liliana (aged 7 and 4) growing so fast, and the majority of our time spent in such a restricted space life and ministry was becoming a real challenge. On the positive side more people from our church in Arequipa were showing an interest in mission in Chachas

and the work that we have been involved with up to 30 children and young people coming to our meetings.

As this door on the building project seemed to be closing, God opened a new and unexpected door/direction for our lives through our local church in Arequipa. In December last year whilst we were in Arequipa for a few days, Edward was asked to see our pastor Arcadio Vilchez from our local church El Camino ('The Way') in Arequipa. At the meeting the pastor shared with Edward the vision for the church for the next few years. He shared a vision for a new church plant on the other side of the city, in the most populated district of Arequipa. For this new project he shared his desire to invite Edward to pastor this new church from its launch in 2019.

Does this mean an end to our ministry in Chachas? NO!

Arcadio foresees that this is an exciting opportunity to develop the work that has been started in Chachas and the other Andean annexes with the support of the local church in Arequipa.

Additionally, with a care and concern for our family, Arcadio has a concern for the long term involvement of our family in mission. Living in such a remote village with a young family is a cause for concern which has awakened our local church to respond in this way. A church plant in Arequipa with a missionary vision is an exciting opportunity to engage more Peruvians in mission who could partner the work in Chachas and the provinces in the Andean region of southern Peru.

Following the meeting Edward shared with Esme about the invitation to be part of the church plant. We have prayed for the Lord to guide us and we have shared with pastors and leaders of our sending churches over the past number of months. We have been surprised and encouraged by such a very positive response.

We have had numerous meetings with Arcadio and Craig Querfeld (Missionary who planted El Camino church) to find out more about the vision of the church and for the church plant. Our meetings have been very positive and have given us peace to proceed along this path. It appears that it is very much God who has opened the door for this new direction in ministry at this time.

We have just had a visit from our UFM Acting Director which was most affirming. We were able to talk and pray things through with him and he was also able to see first hand the realities of our situation in Chachas and meet our pastors Arcadio and Craig. It is following his visit that we want to make known to you our next steps.

The church plant is planned to be launched in 2019. Prior to this Arcadio would like Edward to be immersed in church life and involved in preaching for a year. As our next UK leave was planned for 2019 we propose to bring this forward to 2018. This fits well with Edward's commitment to completing the academic year here in Chachas in December 2017.

Time in the UK is a very valuable time to be able to share more personally with you about what God has been doing and the plans for the future but also it is a precious opportunity for our children to experience British life and schooling too. Home education has been a unique experience and one that has been enjoyable but has not come without its frustrations and limitations in such a remote setting. Luis and Liliana have desperately missed their school friends and school learning environment. Taking all of the aforementioned into consideration we have pushed the doors to see the feasibility of Esme returning with the children this September to complete a full school year in the UK. Amazingly, despite there being waiting lists for both the children's year groups places have been made available for Luis and Liliana to return to the school that they were previously in. The mission house in Bournemouth is also available for 6 months from October.

So, God willing, Esme and the children will travel to the UK at the end of August and Edward will remain in Chachas until the end of the year to finish well with school and the meetings with the children and young people. This is a sacrifice that we are making to be apart as a family but we are trusting in God's faithfulness and provision and know that it will have great benefits in the longer term. Edward will go to the UK in the New Year and we will all return to Peru as a family in July 2018 to start work with El Camino.

Thank you for your patience in reading this oracle of an account of what God has done, is doing and hope that He will continue to use us in his Kingdom work.

With love and thanks,

Edward, Esme, Luis and Liliana