



NEWS FROM

BARRANTES FAMILY

Serving together
in Chiriquí Province,
Panama

Alvaro, Mauren, Josué, Sofia and Elisa

NOVEMBER 2019

We arrived on the field...

What has been happening?

We left the USA on July 9 with mixed feelings — it is a beautiful country with people who showed us their kindness and who made us feel at home for six months.

We returned to Costa Rica where we stayed for six weeks visiting and reconnecting with family and friends, preaching some Sundays in our church in Costa Rica, and sharing our experiences about how well we were treated in the USA. In addition, we were putting personal matters in order and gathering legal papers that we would need in Panama.



Sofia's birthday celebration
at school



Fellowship activity in
a local church in Panama

Finally, we arrived in Chiriquí, Panama, on August 26 and settled into a small hotel in the city of David for two weeks as we tried to enroll the kids in a local school. At the same time we were looking for a house to rent so it was a tiring time. Sometimes it seemed that Panama's Ministry of Education would not allow us to enroll the kids, but after long nights praying, God opened a door and we were able to enroll them. Now, they are doing well every day and making many friends. God showed us that our homeschool work in the USA was good; we praise the Lord greatly for this because it was an answer to prayer from our previ-

ous letter. We thank you because we know you are praying for us.

As we mentioned, we were looking for a house. We visited many options trying to find one that would fit our needs and our budget. Then God provided a very nice house near the city of David and our kids' school. It is located in a good neighborhood where we are already meeting neighbors with whom we are sharing our lives by spending time with them, playing with their kids, and gradually sharing Christ and our ministry with them.

It has been a challenge to adjust and get used to a lot of new and different things, such as the



Barrantes family at the
Costa Rica/Panama border

If you would like to be part of the BARRANTES MINISTRY, please go to:
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culture, weather, and a different Spanish accent, but we are completely sure God is doing something in this beautiful country and in this beautiful city.

Where are we now?

We are working on two things: 1) obtaining Panamanian residency, and 2) getting a religious legal entity that allows us to work in our ministry and move forward on the next steps like community activities, outreach activities, and purchasing land where we can plant a church. This has not been easy due to the large number of immigrants coming to Panama mostly from South American countries and also because of fiscal problems in which Panama was involved in the recent past. The Panamanian government has tightened controls and requirements for foreigners seeking residency because of this. We ask for your prayers for this matter, too, and that God would continue to guide us and continue to open doors for us as well.

We have used our time praying, strengthening ourselves as a family, meeting local people, and getting involved with the culture. In these two months we have visited several churches and some ministries in order to know and understand the culture of the local church, its role within the culture, and their spiritual struggles and needs. We have also seen at least five good-sized properties with good locations and reasonable prices where we dream and visu-



Fellowship activity in the neighborhood

alize planting the very first Grace Bible Church in Panama.

Finally, we want to thank you for your prayers, where we see God working in every moment. We have worked on moving some of our personal things we had kept in Costa Rica while we were in the USA and they have now successfully arrived in Panama. Now we are a little more comfortable with our own beds and the toys of the children which they had missed for several months.

Next steps...

We are always asking God to help us love this country and our Panamanian brethren and to serve and share with them the gospel.

Please pray that we may have a good and tangible option for property to plant a church. In order to make this a reality, also pray for

more people to join the team and help to have the first Grace Bible Church in Panama.

Starting a new ministry comes with many prayer requests, some of which we have already mentioned. You can also pray for us and this ministry:

1. to go ahead with immigration procedures without any obstacles.
2. so that we can reach out to the Panamanians and begin our discipleship and teaching meetings.
3. so that our children continue to make friends and can feel at home in this beautiful country.
4. to get the budget we are still needing to complete the purchasing of our furniture and to pay for residency procedures.
5. to raise up the amount of monthly support we need for a family and ministry car.
6. for our friends and neighbors—Vilma and her sons, Rafael and Jorge—so that we can be witness to them and we can share the gospel of grace with them. Also pray for our kids' little friends, Angelo and Pascual, and their mother, Carmen, to start discipleship and to share and learn about Jesus Christ.

We want to praise the Lord and we are very thankful for all of you, our supporters and friends who continue faithfully praying for us. Thanks for your faithfulness first to God and then to this ministry in Panama.

Love in Christ,
Alvaro, Mauren,
Josue, Sofia and Elisa