

Queridos hermanos,

Happy New Year! May God richly bless each one of you as you look forward to the unknown! For me, the new year is a great reminder of how much I need my Shepherd, how lost I would have been if I had led myself through the last twelve months. How amazing and faithful is our Creator!

The last month has been extremely packed but lots of fun. In the first week of December, Puerto Supe celebrated its 101st anniversary with a parade in which we were invited to take part. While our presentation was not altogether impressive (carried a banner), it was lots of fun to watch the school kids re-enact dances from all over Peru.

Our first event for youth was a bonfire on the beach. It took awhile to round up a crowd, but in the end about 15-20 of us enjoyed the fire. It was a good opportunity to make connections and let different circles of friends get acquainted, and we hope to continue such activities on a monthly basis. Meanwhile, my group for young women is off the ground and into our first project. We'll be painting one of the guest rooms and preparing it as a makeshift nursery to provide childcare during Bible studies and praise meetings. We also continue with our own weekly studies on themes of Christian life. Besides these things, I've also been redecorating the multi-purpose room to be a more welcoming space, and redesigning our worship meetings to be a more meaningful, intimate, encouraging time. Keep praying for these specific ministries and that I will have wisdom in how best to continue each one.

Here in Peru, Christmas and New Year's dinners are eaten at midnight the eve of, and must follow the informal fireworks displays of celebratory youth. For both of these holidays, we shared a feast in Grace and César's new home, and my bedtime was pushed back to about 4 a.m. Gift giving and fancy stuff is not a part of the holidays in an impoverished society, but we were led to center everything around community, which gave a whole different environment. The kids came together under my shaky direction to put on a Christmas program like no other! We had shepherds learning their lines at the last minute, costumes still being sewn after the appointed started time, angels running to help their crying little brothers during songs, and an audience who didn't know they were supposed to sing along! It was great fun, and everyone seemed to really appreciate it (especially the kids when they received their prizes)! We served the traditional panetón (sort of like fluffy fruitcake) and hot chocolate to all our guests.

Some of you know my good friend, Amy Vreeman, and will be glad to hear that a visit from her was my Christmas blessing! Amy helped us out with the kids' Christmas musical and lent a hand with various random tasks. Having a guest also gave me an excuse to do some sightseeing. We visited the ruins at Caral-Supe, which date back to 3,000 B.C. - the oldest civilization in the Americas! We also spent two days in the mountain town of Huaraz, which was refreshing and a bit more "Christmasy" than the coast. At least we got to see snow and wear our scarves and gloves for awhile :)

As I look forward to the next two thirds of my time here, I ask for your prayers against discouragement. That every day would be filled with purpose, and that by growing closer to Jesus, the people around me would have a growing sense of His love. Sometimes once relationships have been established, it's easy to pass by open doors without even noticing them. I hope to remain conscious of opportunities to love, and creative in my ideas for development of our ministry.

Thank you once again for all your prayers and support! Dios les bendiga,

Sierra "Punk" Yazzie

*The LORD will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.*

*Isaiah 58:11*