

# THE KOTVAS FAMILY

*Missionaries to the Deaf and Hearing—Peru, South America & Beyond*

Sending Church: Emmanuel Baptist Church— 1819 Hill Ave. Ft. Myers, FL 33901— (239) 936-4252 — Pastor Bob Ossewaarde



June – August 2023 Prayer Letter

Dear Friends and Family,

Sorry for this letter being a bit later than usual. I have been traveling and there has been a great deal going on. I am reminded of Jesus in Matthew 9:35 going about all the cities and villages teaching and preaching. What a blessing to be *"busy about the Father's business."*

## Ministry News

In June, Efata Christian School for the Deaf celebrated its 53<sup>rd</sup> anniversary. What a blessed time we had. Deaf came from all over Peru and some from other countries to celebrate this monumental occasion. Due to COVID, we were not able to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, so this was the memorial celebration. It was so good to see so many former students and to catch up with them.

We were able to reopen the school after the COVID shutdowns in a limited fashion, but it is a start to a new future for us as we work to rebuild after such a long time.

Various pastor friends of this ministry came and participated in the events. We were especially happy to have Evangelist Jim Sloan, Pastor Reggie Rempel and Missionary Steve Houghton, all longtime friends both to me and to Vernon Miller, the founder of Efata. Several of our missionaries sent out of Efata and some of the former teachers and workers were present. We were blessed to have Deaf saved and baptized, and others reconciling their lives to Christ.

Two weeks later, we had our missions conference. It was good to see our people recommit to missions and our responsibility to support our own missionaries. In addition, at the end of July through the first two weeks of August, we were privileged to take a group of 30 members of our church on a mission trip to Ecuador to visit, encourage and support our three missionaries there. This was a wonderful time. It was such a blessing to see our missionaries and their families working and serving. Several were saved during the trip.

In July we had our first follow-up meeting with several of the churches in Lima who participated in our massive evangelism event back in May. We are working and planning to duplicate our effort next year in two other key cities in Peru. It is wonderful to see local churches band together to bear the cost of printing the tracts and reach out to the local pastors in the two cities we are targeting for the first quarter of 2024. We are grateful to Faith Baptist Church in Tacoma, Washington, who as of now have three containers of Bibles in the process of being prepared for us for this endeavor. What a joy to work with

Pastor Smith and his team and the churches that support their efforts to send Bibles and materials to us.

During the mission trip, I flew to the States for a VA medical appointment and was able to report to a couple of churches in Florida. While there, I had the joy of interpreting for the Deaf for a conference in Orlando with my mentor and friend Steve Houghton. After this I visited several English and Spanish churches in Washington and Oregon to present our ministry and attended a wonderful Spanish family conference in Riverview Baptist Church in Pasco, WA. It was great to see good solid Bible believing fundamental Baptist Spanish churches growing and preparing young people for the Lord's work.

Lisa and I just returned for Chiclayo where I preached for one of our missionaries to the Deaf and hearing for another family conference. What a joy for both of us. It was a great time. Many made decisions for their families.

The first week of September, we have the blessing of providing facilities and assistance for Pastor's School again this year, hosted by International Baptist Church here in Lima. This conference is always a great help, encouragement, and challenge.

## Family News

Lisa is very busy preparing for a ladies conference in October. She is helping teach our grandchildren and continues to teach the Deaf girls in our Deaf Bible Institute Home economics class.

The kids are doing well. Jessica and Jennifer continue with their schooling and are fully involved in the ministry and learning their instruments. Joel is really doing much better in his language abilities and loves to help Mom in the kitchen.

Once again, thank you for all of your care and support – both in prayer and finances – for this blessed ministry to the Deaf and hearing of Peru and beyond.

Blessings,

Joe & Lisa  
Joel, Jessica & Jennifer