Dear Friends and Family,

When we sent our last update, Hannah was in the States having tons of fun figuring out how to get our sending letters apostilled. She made lots of phone calls and had a few dead ends. But by the grace of God, she came back to Peru with an apostilled letter in hand. Steve met her in the Lima airport and we spent the next few days running all over that huge, smoggy city engrossed in the first phase of applying for our missionary visas. We are very relieved and grateful to have this process underway after a time of wondering if it was even going to be possible to apply.

Steve has been working several days a week up at Ushpabamba for a couple of weeks now. Progress seems slow but steady. The walls in the new bedroom and kitchen will probably be painted this week, which marks one of the last steps before we can actually move in to our new home. We are so humbly thankful that the church leadership of Jesus El Buen Pastor has shown their commitment to the church-plant in Ushpabamba by improving the building like this.

We have a special prayer request and piece of news to share. There are twin sisters at the orphanage that we want to adopt. They come from an abusive, drunken home and don't meet the legal requirements to stay here at this orphanage for much longer. Because they are special needs, their chances of being adopted by anyone are slim to none according to our Aunt Ruth who runs the orphanage. It feels very early to put this news out there since we have no idea at this point if the adoption will happen or not. We have yet to sign a single paper or talk to anyone officially besides our aunt. But we have prayed very seriously and have come to the agreement that it's something we want to do if the doors open for us. For that reason, we want you to know about this pending possibility and we ask for your prayers that God's will be done in our lives and the lives of these two girls who need a home. Their names are Lucero and Saraí. They are seven years old and they both love (and need) warm hugs.

We want to say a heart-felt "thank you" to God and all of you for your prayers and financial support during this last month. We can truly say with Paul that, "[we] have all and abound. [We are] full, having received from [PEF] the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God" (adapted from Philippians 4:18, NKJV). Thank you for standing behind us as we serve here!
Please also pray for Steve's ordination process, which is about to begin. He just had his first meeting with Scott Dillon who will be training Steve for the next six months or so. We both have a lot to learn about real-life, hands-on ministry here in Peru and this training, which will lead towards Steve's ordination, is an exciting time for us. Please pray specifically that there would be wisdom, unity of spirit, and humility as Steve studies under Scott. These meetings are planned to happen once a month and Steve is excited to delve back into studying doctrine and Church history.

Also, once Quechua studies begin, as we hopefully anticipate, in Ushpabamba, it will still be a while before either of us become conversational. Steve picks up words a little more readily in conversation, Hannah more by private study. Hannah longs for that day when she can sit with elderly Quechua women and understand their conversations. They love to chatter, and she hopes to learn a lot about these darling little ladies, their culture, knowledge, and their beliefs, and to reciprocate in the sharing. Please pray for good language mentors for Steve and Hannah according to their differing needs.

In general news, we are doing very well. We continue to learn and relearn the lesson of how important it is to worship together on a very regular basis through prayer and Bible reading. Our spirits need to be fed as much as our physical bodies and when we go hungry for a few days, our spiritual zeal wanes proportionately. We thank God that He reminds us and draws us back to Himself before we faint. We are in love with each other, in love with God, and excited about what life holds for us as we serve Him together.

Blessings,
Steve 'n' Hannah

Steve decides to wash the road dust off some street-facing windows (for perspective, the building in the background is across the street).

She wore typical Quechua clothing: white flat-brimmed hat, layers of sweaters, layers of skirts, leggings. She sat on the bench at a bus stop holding her hand out to each passerby for coins. She had a cane and held a piece of papaya, nearly falling out of its plastic bag. She spoke some Spanish but constantly switched back to Quechua. As I (Hannah) sat listening to her expressive stream of unknown words, I wished I understood. The Quechua language is like a riverbed of important syllables studded with recognizable Spanish words, but I had little clue from her expressions what she was saying about those words I could understand. She might have been asking me to get her something from the market, or to accompany her to lunch, or new clothes, or a bath, or a variety of services, but I think she was mostly just talking about her life and asking me about mine. She continued to hold her hand out to each passerby. She was talking a lot, and all I could really give her was attention for a while. I know that most human beings like to be listened to, but I don't want to leave it at that. Listening without comprehension only serves someone so well. I pray for the day I can report that I have had a conversation in Quechua.