



**H**ello...we are the Barrantes Zumbado family—a family of Ticos (Costa Ricans) who will be working as missionaries under Grace Ministries International (GMI) in the Province of Chiriquí, in a small city located in western Panama very close to the Costa Rica border, with a warm and humid climate and very close to the unique Barú volcano.

Alvaro was born into an unbelieving family, His parents divorced when he was five years old and he lived alone with his mother and younger brother and went through difficult times in his childhood.

During his adolescence, he had many Christian friends who shared the gospel with him; however, it wasn't until 13 years ago that he knew Christ as his personal Savior. From that moment Alvaro understood how sinful he was and how wonderful the sacrifice of Jesus was and the centrality of the cross in his life. God had been working in his life since he was very young without him ever realizing it.

Mauren was born into a Christian family. From a very young age she faithfully attended church with her family and she met Jesus at the age of nine. From that moment she fell in love with Jesus, she worked in the church as a youth leader, she started singing in the choir, and she was always an active member of the church.

In her adolescence, she participated in some short-term missionary trips, visited the United States for an evangelism seminar, and then visited Camp Caribe in Puerto Rico where God awakened in her a great desire to become a missionary.

Alvaro and Mauren met while they were coworkers at the same company—they got married in 2006. A year and a half later Mauren became pregnant but they experienced the terrible loss of their first son, Samuel, at 38 weeks. This situation helped us to experience a huge trust in God, an understanding that He is in control of everything, and in the midst of that terrible situation, we were able to share with our friends and family members about the love and sovereignty of Christ. By that time, God had awakened in both of us a huge desire to share the gospel with every person around us.

After a time of understanding what God wanted us to do for Him—to work full time sharing the gospel—God gave us Josué, our 8-year-old son, a wonderful child who loves God above all things and who has a beautiful heart. Then He sent Sofia, now 5 years old, a beautiful girl who has taught us how tender and delicate life is; and then He blessed us with Elisa, our beautiful, restless, energetic, and small two-year-old girl God has taught us to take care of and teach about Jesus.

Currently, we attend Grace Bible Church in Alajuela, Costa Rica, where Chuck Befus is part of the pastoral team. Mauren serves in the worship ministry and Sunday school. Alvaro is an elder in the church and works acting as a coleader of the missions group within the church. This group has been exploring and developing a project of evangelism to the indigenous people in Talamanca, Costa Rica, and three years ago Alvaro and the Alajuela Missionary Ministry started a project to explore new places to start a new church. They started thinking about the coun-

try of Panama since it is so close to Costa Rica and a family from our church moved to Chiriquí Province one year ago. That was a great opportunity to start visiting Panama, making survey trips that helped us to understand the Panamanian needs, and create some relationships with local people. Now we can obey God by sharing the gospel with Panamanians, building a wonderful church facility where, for example, we can work with marriage relationships based on teachings in the Holy Scriptures, and also having a place where the Panamanian youth can grow in their personal relationship with Christ and with other Christians.

Alvaro has been studying theology at the Instituto Bíblico de la Gracia (Grace Bible Institute) in Belén, Costa Rica, where he has been able to grow in the knowledge of the Scriptures.

We are now sure God has been working in our lives for a long time. It is for this reason that we want to give our lives completely to the ministry and become missionaries in Chiriquí, Panamá. We have understood the wonderful sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross so we are exceedingly grateful for that wonderful gift called eternal life.

We are preparing to visit the USA for the first half of 2019—we will spend some time sharing our testimony as a family with our brothers in Christ, developing relationships and raising support to begin our ministry in Panamá during the second half of 2019. This will allow us to continue to share the gospel of grace throughout Central America.

We are very excited for this new ministry God has given us and we want you to be part of this ministry. We would like you to support us in prayer to continue to see the hand of God in every detail.

### Our Prayer Requests:

1. **Pray** that God would prepare the hearts of our neighbors in Panama to receive the gospel of grace.

2. **Pray** that our children adapt very easily to the transitions and find friends and a school with very good values so they are happy and can enjoy studying.

3. **Pray** that God would prepare the hearts of our family members for when we share our missionary plans, and that we can be a good example and light for their lives.

4. Please **pray** that we can rent our house in Costa Rica. **Pray** also for Alvaro to quit his job at the appropriate time. **Pray** too for the entire process of leaving our country first to move for short period of time to the USA and then to Panama.

5. **Pray** that in the midst of such changes we can still stand together as a family and we can see God's hand in every detail and in every change from now on.

6. **Pray** that God will motivate family and friends to be part of this ministry, supporting us in prayer and financially as well.



*Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).*

Thank you for letting us share with you as we begin this new journey!

Alvaro, Mauren, Josue, Sofia, and Elisa

[mauren.zumbado@hotmail.com](mailto:mauren.zumbado@hotmail.com)

[alvaro.barrantes@hotmail.com](mailto:alvaro.barrantes@hotmail.com)