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# the **ETHAN SHIELDS** family

August 2022

Third generation missionaries assisting the indigenous church planting effort in Panama



Here in Panama, groups of protestors regularly close the Pan-American highway demanding things from the government. Near the end of June, a group went on strike and blocked the highway. Normally they open within several hours or even after a day or so. **However, this time it snowballed to the point that protestors blocked the roads for FOUR FULL WEEKS at multiple points throughout the whole country!** Due to the geography of our area, our town has one entrance/exit so basically the entire month of July we were trapped.

Different groups of protestors blocked the highway and other roads 24 hours a day, only opening occasionally for hours at a time. We missed doctors appointments, preaching engagements, and regular church services. Ethan and the two oldest kids were stuck in Costa Rica while Beth was in Panama with the two youngest kids. Thankfully we had chickens we could butcher and plenty of water stored. We never ran out of food, propane, or fuel even though our province did. We praise the Lord for protection from all the violence that occurred.

It was chaos with so many different groups each demanding more and more from the government- lower fuel prices, lower food prices, lower medicine prices, reform of the socialized

healthcare system, more funding for public education, no more government corruption, etc... Even now, negotiations are still ongoing and groups continue to threaten with more closures.

Elena and Noah had a great time at Camp Joy in Costa Rica ran by missionary Samuel White. The week was full of action packed games and Spirit-filled preaching. Ethan preached the last full day of camp. **Praise the Lord, THREE kids accepted Christ that week!**



Health issues seem to be plaguing our family at the moment. Ethan and Elena both had COVID. Ethan has been struggling for six months with continuous hives and finally found a medicine to help him get some relief. Elena needs to have a few teeth pulled and braces put on. Sofia has an extra tooth that requires a small surgery to remove. Beth is still having health problems/pain/headaches that make each day rough. **Pray** for us for wisdom, finances, and strength in the face of these challenges.