

# Paul and Sarah Tester

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*The call in action*

**“Consider it pure joy” (James 1:2) and “always be joyful in your union with the Lord” (Philippians 4:4)**

Dear praying friends,

The challenge to “always be joyful” seems easy to comply with at times, but at others more difficult! In James the verse continues saying we should “consider it pure joy... whenever you face trials of many kinds”. Personally, our trials cannot compare to those in places of great suffering around the world (our thoughts and prayers turn to places like Ukraine at present), but as followers of Jesus we know there will be testing times as we follow him to the places and service to which he calls us. Since we last wrote there have been times of great joy but also times when that joy has needed to spring from our deep relationship with our Lord Jesus!

In November and December at least one of us was able to visit those of our link churches we hadn't visited since our arrival in the UK, despite Emily and Annabelle managing to pick up COVID-19 at school and having to isolate for 10 days. It was an absolute privilege and joy to see so many of you in person and we certainly don't take it for granted, given the experiences of the last couple of years! Thank you to everyone who showed great hospitality and kindness to us over this time and we will look forward to seeing you again. Thank you for the chance to speak, preach and share across the UK.

We managed to then stay COVID-free so that we could enjoy Christmas gatherings with both of our families, the only time we were able to see some family members during our stay. Living on the other side of the world to extended family is certainly a test and these moments are so encouraging and joyful. We were due to travel back to Peru on 6 January but COVID-19 struck, with first Sophia and then Sarah testing positive. Thankfully both are fully recovered but it did mean two changes of flights for us all, eventually managing to return to Peru on 22 January, just inside the limit of our allowed number of days outside Peru before losing our residency status. Paul particularly now needs to do some more paperwork in order to be able to travel again, so please pray that would fly through the immigration system and be approved!

The return to Peru went well despite a midnight changeover in Madrid and a Peruvian immigration official trying to calculate the number of days we had been out of Peru on his fingers in the early hours of the morning! The day we travelled we also had the shock of finding someone had cloned Paul's bank card and emptied the account. Thankfully all was returned and, despite some raised stress levels, we arrived to enjoy our time back in Peru. Sadly on our return Snowy, one of our girls' beloved pet rabbits, was poorly and eventually died from an infected abscess despite many visits to the vets. As you will imagine, the girls were very upset.



**Name:** Paul and Sarah Tester

**Location:** Lima, Peru

**Our call:** We want to see mission both in and from Latin America grow and develop.

**Our role:** To lead, enable, inspire and develop mission in and from Latin America. Paul is mission development manager for CMS and Sarah serves in children's ministry.



*First day back at school in Peru.*

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Praise God the girls started back at school in person at the end of February after two years online in Peru and are greatly enjoying it. However, they have been out again as we write, as Paul finally succumbed to COVID-19 in March and is now recovering. The whole of secondary school was recently closed after one case – please pray for a more moderate approach so the girls can enjoy a good run back at school.

The ups and downs (“trials of many kinds”?) could knock you out of shape if you weren’t seeking to follow Jesus’ call. But, being back in Peru, it has been good to get back involved with preaching and youth work at church (Paul) and Sunday school (Sarah).

It has also been good to be back on a similar time zone as those across Latin America and continue with the development of CMS’s mission work in the region. Paul has been working hard on a number of things, including a congress for indigenous peoples planned for October. This will bring together representatives of the church from indigenous communities to seek to discern how we might join together in mission now and into the future. In preparation there will be a number of “pre-consultations” in the different communities participating, as we seek to ensure we hear the perspective of their members.

As we write, Paul is in the midst of coordinating safeguarding training for all of our partners across the region (cue huge multilingual Zoom calls!) and is working on plans for an inaugural in-region conference for CMS’s people in mission in Latin America in January. Watch this space!

Being able to serve alongside so many wonderful followers of Jesus from so many different contexts is such a joy and a source of continuous learning and growth. Please do pray for great wisdom and sensitivity as we go, and for all the different events and plans mentioned. May God’s will be done through them all as we seek to follow his lead.

With our love and prayers,

Paul, Sarah, Sophia, Emily and Annabelle

#### Praise God for:

- The joy of visiting so many in the UK and for precious times with family.
- Our safe return to Peru, navigating all the bureaucracy and limits of COVID and immigration rules.
- The girls being back at school in person in Peru after two years out.
- The opportunities to serve with so many wonderful followers of Jesus across the region.

#### Please pray for:

- Continued joy in the midst of good and challenging times.
- The paperwork Paul needs to get done in order to travel to move well through the immigration system.
- Sophia, Emily and Annabelle to be able to get a good run of in person schooling.
- For wisdom and sensitivity to God’s leading as we plan for the different events coming up in the year.



**Photos from top to bottom:** Family day out in Lima; A chance to see sea lions on a week’s summer holiday in February; Paul facilitating safeguarding training for CMS’s partners across Latin America; In the interim between managers in Africa, Paul helped bring about a consultation about conflict and peacebuilding in DRC!

## GOING FURTHER WITH CHURCH MISSION SOCIETY

**Are you pondering a call to cross-cultural mission?** We’d love to connect and help you discern what God might be saying. Find out more about how we can help you to step into God’s mission at [churchmissionsociety.org/explore](https://churchmissionsociety.org/explore)

If you would like to discuss your mailings with us or to receive this link letter on a regular basis, please email [supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org](mailto:supporter.care@churchmissionsociety.org) or call 01865 787400

**You can give to Paul and Sarah at:**  
[churchmissionsociety.org/tester](https://churchmissionsociety.org/tester)

**Contact details:**  
[paulandsarahinlima@hotmail.com](mailto:paulandsarahinlima@hotmail.com)

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