

GAMBOA UNION CHURCH

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APRIL 2010 PASTOR, WE WANT TO GET MARRIED. Now, that is not so unusual to hear. I have done over fifty weddings. BUT, this couple were from the Wounan Indigenous people who lived up the river from Gamboa and he was the chief. Filipe and Luzida had set up their "bohio" (palm branch hut) over fifteen years ago and had two girls still living with them. The older children had blessed them with several grandchildren and also lived in the village.

They had been thinking about this for quite a while and had talked with others about making this public decision before God now that they were Christians. In their culture a couple would simply come together, set up their bohio and start having babies. Years ago they had a procedure for marriage but that had gotten lost with time. So now, after further counsel as to the importance and meaning of a Christian wedding, they had made this decision to get married. Filipe's father and mother had also made the same decision about 25 years ago.

They just wanted to do it as part of a Sunday morning service and not have a large event, but yet to make it special. Last year I conducted a Christian wedding for an Embera couple with the traditional dress with flute and drums. For a reception people sat on the floor and ate rice, fish and yucca. It was really special.

So I asked Tulio, the groom from the Embera wedding, to speak at the service. He told how he had come to Christ after living with his wife and several children. He also had considered the implications of living for Christ and making a public commitment to his wife before God and witnesses. His message helped us all get a glimpse into the culture and traditions of an Indigenous tribe and the difference that Christ can make.

Filipe and Luzida sat in the front row with special clothes....they looked great. They had arranged for cultural music from the Interior of Panama and after the message and the vows, we closed with the flute and drums. So special a morning with visitors and a wedding cake.

The public testimony of a life that has been changed by the Lord is so powerful, especially if it is the life of a leader. Filipe and his family have made several trips to the interior of Panama sharing their faith with their tribal group in a way that only they can. God is at work with the Indigenous people. Gathered around the throne with be people from every tribe, tongue and nation. (Revelation 4 and 5)

SAMARITAN'S PURSE – Once again we were able to have the Christmas project started by Franklin Graham as an outreach to our community and surrounding area. Over 150 kids filled our church for lots of fun, music and message followed by a shoe box size filled with items for their age group. Some of you have packed boxes...well, here is one place where they were used....thanks so much.

BUSES – Amazing divine encounters have made it possible to sell my book to the tourists from around the world. On two separate occasions, a bus has stopped right in front of the church, the guide introduced me to the people and many wanted the book....and the bathrooms!!!

Tax deductible gifts can be sent to: Mrs. Sydney Corbett; 231 SE 45th Terrace; Ocala, Fl 34471

Thank you for all you love, prayers and support....In His Service, Bill