

# GAMBOA UNION CHURCH

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**AUGUST 2009 Now I know why I am here!** These are the words I uttered on a recent trip to an Embera Indian village. I hadn't really planned to go. I had lots to do but Tulio the son of the chief had invited me many times to his village. I had performed the ceremony for his wedding last December and ever since meeting his family and relatives he has wanted me to go. (You may remember the photos I sent of that wedding).

There were two extra reasons to go. We have had a team of 40 YWAM students and staff from seven nations staying in the church for two months. They are using every room in the church for sleeping, eating and work...including my office. We have built outdoor showers and put up clothes lines. They leave on Sept. 3 for South Africa and many other countries. Their purpose is to document social injustices in the world including child prostitution and human trafficking. They are all photographers and seek to capture on film the reality of these abuses. One of their teams of ten were going and were happy to have me along.

And the other was that one of our former teenage church members, Chrystal Rock, was visiting from the states and helping the team as a translator. She was going along and this was a good opportunity to spend time with her. Other than responding to Tulio's invitation and just going along, I wondered if God had any special plans for the day.

After an hour ride in the van and a 20 min boat ride up a river in the rain and getting out of the canoe to go around rapids, we came to the village which was neatly carved out of the jungle. The thatched houses were new and there was a large communal hut for visitors. After a quick meal, the team took their gear to their huts where they would be staying for the weekend. My plans were to return late that afternoon to be prepared for the Sunday service.

Then one of the YWAM staff told me that Tulio wanted me to speak and tell his family what it means to commit your life to Christ. I hadn't planned on this. I looked for a quiet place and began to pray...then the heavy thought came, "Now I know why I am here." Psalm 27:1 quickly came to mind and then the words of Jesus, "I am the light of the world..."

But soon the sky began to really darken and the thunder and lightning started. The light rain turned into a heavy rain and the river began to rise. But Tulio's dad, assured me that someone would take me back down the river even in the storm. So I started to speak and the rains began to blow in, it got darker and the thunder louder. All of this just emphasized the truth of what I was sharing. I was excited and at peace.

Then came the wild ride down the swollen river. No need to go around the rocks now...we just went right over the top of them. It rained all the way back to Gamboa, but I had peace in my heart because I knew why I had gone.

Thanks for your love and support that makes the mission here possible. Bless you, Bill Wilbur