



Frosty & Cathy HANSEN

Bolivia

May 2020

Equipping God's People to Serve

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"But the word of God is not bound!" – 2 Timothy 2:9

Paul rejoiced while chained in a Roman cell. Joseph found hope imprisoned in Egypt. Their confidence was in God. His gospel went forward; His purposes were sure; His truth continued to bear fruit.

We cannot tell you how many times we have been encouraged by this since March 22 when Bolivia went under full quarantine due to COVID-19. Our classes and churches are shut down at least through the end of May, but God's Word is not confined!

Those of us over 65 are completely restricted to our homes while other adults may go out one morning per week. We are blessed with neighbors who look after our needs and do our shopping.

Our region of Santa Cruz, with well over half of Bolivia's coronavirus cases and deaths, will remain under strict quarantine at least through May.

So for now we are living a new reality, but do so resting in God's purposes.

Centro Bíblico de la Gracia

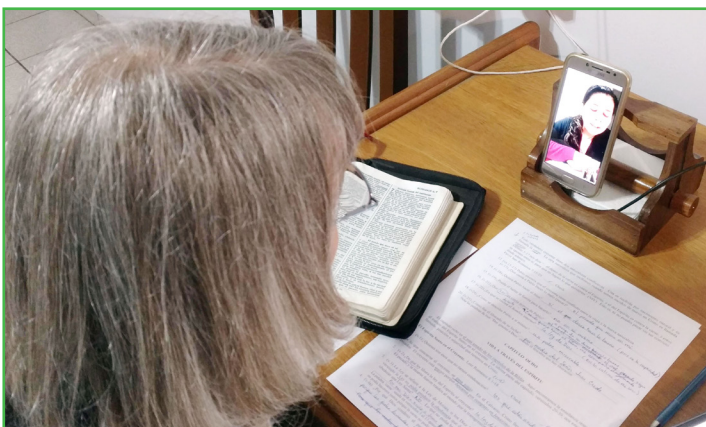
This was the year! Our desire to train a new generation of pastors and leaders in Bolivia was coming to fruition with our first year with a full schedule of four classes per week. In February we welcomed 13 new and 16 returning students for the first trimester.

Five weeks into the 12-week trimester, the quarantine hit. Then it was extended, and extended again. Attempts to teach virtually were futile since some students don't have access to computers or internet service at home.

Our current plan is to complete two trimesters this year. The possibility of a third will depend upon when the restrictions are lifted for on-site education. We are asking the Lord for wisdom as we move forward.



Students in the Centro Bíblico de la Gracia will be ready to resume class once the quarantine is lifted



Cathy sets up her phone and studies Romans in a weekly Bible study

WhatsApp? Spending time in the Word

A major frustration during the quarantine has been the inability to spend personal time with people. In normal times, we both spend a lot of time daily discussing the Bible, talking about life, and praying with individuals.

Now our chief tool for discipleship ministry is our cell phone. Cathy has been using online Bible studies by Prison Mission Association and video calling with WhatsApp with a young woman. A few questions from Ephesians has led to hours of video study between Frosty and a ministry student.

No, it is not the same as face-to-face interaction with these dear friends. But we are thankful God has given us these tools to find mutual encouragement in His Word.



Frosty joined MEB leadership to discuss the physical and spiritual needs of our churches

The Body of Christ is not bound

How does a church meet the spiritual needs of its congregation when gatherings are prohibited?

Though lacking in the technology available in the States, our Bolivian pastors quickly adapted. Brief audio devotionals sent through WhatsApp groups, short videos, and even Facebook and Zoom services have brought spiritual food to hungry hearts.

Churches have also rallied to meet physical needs. No work for over two months means no food, so church members collect flour, rice, chicken, and more to give baskets of food products to families in need.

Churches in more impoverished regions have fewer resources. Our national organization (MEB) sent \$100 to each of eight churches in La Paz and Cochabamba to help provide food supplies for their congregations.

Your Christmas offerings at work

Each year GMI sends out a Christmas catalog with projects to aid the ministries of our fields. We are thankful for your gifts which funded three important projects in Bolivia.

Located in a small rural community, Ebenezer Church provides a breakfast for 15-20 children each Sunday. We visited the church on March 15, right before the quarantine began. The church expressed its gratitude for your help.

DAR is a ministry of Emanuel Church to homeless who live near us. Due to the quarantine they are now trying to serve weekly meals to 70 people. Pray for hearts receptive to the gospel.

The third project, a Pro-Life presentation to high school students, is on hold until after schools reopen.



Children at Ebenezer Church enjoy breakfast each week before Sunday School



DAR ministry delivering meals and the gospel to the homeless

Pray with us for...

- ✦ The health care system in Bolivia, struggling to keep up with the rapidly growing number of cases of this virus, plus dengue and influenza.
- ✦ Wisdom for our pastors as they seek new ways to minister to their people during the quarantine.
- ✦ The Centro Bíblico de la Gracia as we wait to reopen and plan for the rest of the year.
- ✦ Effective discipleship ministry.
- ✦ Opportunities to partner with the MEB to help pastors and churches during the economic crisis.
- ✦ God's direction as President Jeanine Añez and government leaders make critical decisions for the country.

Thank you for your prayers for us and Bolivia, Frosty and Cathy Hansen