

RONNIE AND JAQUE MACKENSEN • JULY 2021 • CHIRIQUI, PANAMA



Kids' Club group

Oi!

Tudo bem pessoal? Nós estamos no Brasil! (Portuguese).

"...What?...the Mackensens are in Brazil...why?...I thought they were supposed to be in Panama?!?!"

Last time you heard from us, we had just moved to David, Panama, where we joined our teammates, Alvaro and Mauren Barrantes. After arriving, our team got to work and started a kids' club program in the neighborhood, with the goal of reaching the kids in the surrounding neighborhoods. We also decided to start having small in-house Sunday services.

The kids' club program is held every Saturday where we first spend time playing games in the local park with the kids. After playing a few games, we have a small snack and finally we share a small Bible lesson with the kids. This kids' club program has been an awesome outreach ministry for our team. We started with only five kids and we now see 11 kids coming consistently every Saturday! Through this kids' club ministry, it has given us opportunities to reach out to the parents of the kids who are attending the club activities. Our Sunday services started with just one family but since then we have had up to three families attending our Sunday services.

In our last update, we spoke of starting Portuguese and English classes in the community as a form of outreach. We held 10-week courses for both Portuguese and English and we had a class for adults and a class for kids in each language. These ministries allowed us to form better relationships with the people in the neighborhood. In the future, we hope to have more classes so that we can continue meeting and reaching more people in the neighborhoods and surrounding areas.

After spending six months in Panama, we had to leave due to the expiration of our tourist visas. So we decided to go to Brazil! Jaque is originally from Brazil, so going to Brazil served us in many ways. We traveled to Brazil with the primary goal of updating and obtaining all of Jaque's personal and official documents so that we can apply and obtain permanent residency in Panama.

A secondary goal was that we hoped to visit the churches in Brazil that have a relationship with GMI to have fellowship with them and also possibly have an opportunity to speak and edify the Body of Christ. Finally, being in Brazil would allow us to spend time with Jaque's family.

We traveled to Brazil at the end of April, planning to spend three months there.



In-house Sunday service



Ronnie preaching in a Brazilian church

Upon arriving we began the process of obtaining Jaque's personal and official documents. After two and a half months, I am happy to report that we have finally updated and obtained all the necessary documents needed to start the permanent residency process in Panama. Permanent residency in Panama will allow us to stay indefinitely in Panama which will allow us to do ministry more effectively and efficiently without having to leave the country every few months. Many years ago, missionaries first came to Brazil sharing the gospel of grace, teaching God's Word and doctrine, and planting churches in both the northern and southern parts of Brazil. Today, many of these churches have grown and matured greatly.

During our time in Brazil we have had the honor and great opportunity to preach at and encourage some of these churches. It's been a lot of fun encouraging the Body of Christ in these churches to continue growing and to not only be churches that grow locally but to be churches that support missions and also send missionaries! From these opportunities, we have even seen some Brazilian youth who have shown interest in becoming missionaries which is very exciting. We are praying for their lives and that God may watch over and guide them. Visiting the churches in Brazil has also allowed us to have a lot of fellowship with the members of the churches which has been encouraging for us. Being in Brazil has really been a blessing for us because it has also given us so much time with family. This has especially been a blessing for Jaque, seeing her family, speaking her native tongue, and just being in her home country. We will be leaving Brazil and returning to Panama on July 20. Our prayer and hope is to plant a church in Panama where the gospel of grace is proclaimed and people come to hear and learn God's Word. Our hope is that the Panamanian members of the Body of Christ understand, know, and rightly divide God's Word, the Bible, as it says in 2 Timothy 2:15 NKJV.

Praises:

- We praise God that we were able to travel to Brazil.
- We praise God for our health and that we have been healthy this entire time while in Brazil.
- We were able to purchase a car! We praise God for His provision in being able to purchase a car. We



Our new GMI car

also thank you for your support and prayers.

- We give praise for the fruit that God is producing in Panama. Our teammates, Alvaro and Mauren, have been working hard while we have been in Brazil. The ministries have been growing and expanding!

Prayers:

- Pray for the ministries in Panama that they would continue to grow.
- Pray that when we rejoin our teammates we are able to help with the expansion of the existing ministries and help start new ministries.
- Pray for the Portuguese and English classes.
- Please pray for the future martial arts ministry. Ronnie is hoping to start teaching Taekwondo very soon. Taekwondo is a great form of outreach and can be easily used to catch the attention of people of all ages.
- Please pray for the future church in Panama and for the future church building. Pray that God guides in purchasing land where we can build the church building and the Body of Christ can meet. If you would like to donate towards the Panama land project you can do so at: (<https://gracem.org/project/panama-land/>).
- Please pray for our health that as we travel, we might stay healthy.
- Please pray for our permanent resi-

dency. Upon arriving in Panama we will apply for permanent residency. Please pray that this process goes smoothly without any problems or hiccups.

We thank you so much for your prayers and support for our ministry.

In Christ,

Ronnie and Jaque Mackensen



Ronnie teaching a Brazilian woman who is interested in missions how to speak English