



Dear Friend,

Greetings in Christ. We would like to share with you our first impressions, experiences, and challenges in the task of announcing God's grace to the Paraguayan people. This is our first written update since we landed on the mission field in late November 2020. We arrived in Paraguay on November 21 last year after 11 months of deputation visiting churches across the US doing fundraising for our ministry. What a blessed time it was for us ministering among God's people in America!

May God always be praised for right amid all doubts and fear caused by the pandemic. The church responded with greater love and selflessness - so much so that we could raise funds to come to Paraguay, settle into life, work on our residencies, and even purchase a vehicle for our ministry! Thus, whenever we see fruit, we're reminded that God has made it happen by the hands and with the support of so many lives who are equally committed, and actively participating with us.



*Home Bible studies in Portuguese*



*Our family at "Lopes' Palace," Paraguay's Government seat in Asunción*



*Prison ministry in Encarnacion city*

### **ADJUSTING TO LIFE IN PARAGUAY**

We had planned our first year on the mission field to be a year of adjustment. Settling life in a different country isn't an easy task, especially with three little kids. It takes time to learn the culture, history, and language. We were blessed by the fact that the other fellow missionaries who were here before introduced us to Paraguay. In addition to that, people here are very friendly and hospitable. Another asset was our Portuguese. Both Portuguese and Spanish are very similar languages which helped our comprehension enabling us to hold short conversations. Right now, our level of Spanish allows me to hold Bible studies and Viviane to teach kids at church, and we're still working to improve.

Our children are being homeschooled with Viviane. They have made Paraguayan friends through our church, Jiu-Jitsu, and soccer classes. The kids are picking up Spanish way faster than we imagined.

### **PARAGUAY—OUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS**

- Paraguayans are very religious people.
- People, in general, are very hospitable and welcoming.

Roman Catholicism is by far the greatest religious influence in the country. Most holidays are linked to the Catholic faith. There is a great devotion to "Mary" especially the "Virgin of Caacupe" – every year devotees make a pilgrimage to the city where the image is located to venerate and pay vows to it.



*Before and after renovation of the church*

*Viviane teaching the kids*

- Corruption is very tangible. The politicians, police, customs inspector - you will hear frequent complaints from people about this pitiful topic.

### **FIRST ACTS IN MINISTRY**

Here's a list of our activities in 11 months serving in Paraguay:

- Cleiton has joined Ciudad del Este church's praise team.
- Cleiton also recorded a series of sermons on the book of the Galatians in Portuguese which are available online on the church's Facebook page for the Brazilians who live in the country.
- We started weekly Bible studies in our home with the Brazilians, most of them college students. The group has grown every week.
- Viviane has also joined the church's team of children's educators and teaches Sunday school classes.
- Cleiton has started one-on-one in-depth studies to invest in the future leaders of the Ciudad Del Este church, along with the other missionary men.
- Looking ahead, our team of missionaries with the desire to expand the work has decided that next year we will be starting a new church plant in the city of Presidente Franco. We, together with our ministry partners Jerry and Sandi Bomers, will be at the forefront of this new work.

### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

- For our team. May the Lord guide our team of missionaries, giving us wisdom and harmony in the decisions we need to make to reach Paraguay with the gospel of the grace of God.

- For our family.

October 19 was our 8th anniversary. We praise God for being (and continuing to be) our source of love, joy, wisdom, and endurance. Also please pray for our children who are growing so fast. May we have the wisdom to guide them through their infant years to a solid knowledge of God and His grace.

- For our ministry

The church in Ciudad del Este is rejoicing with the recent purchase and reformation of their new church building. Praise God and rejoice with us because Great is our Lord and many are His works.

We ask your prayers for the Bible studies we have in our home, that God will continue to give us more people to minister to.

Please pray for the new church plant that we'll start next year in the city of Presidente Franco.

Also please pray for the possibility that's showing for us to support a local brother in Christ, Rodrigo, to take the gospel of God's grace to the prisons in Paraguay.

Thank you so much for praying for us.

The Menors