

Link Letter No.7 November 2014

Dear friends,

Preacher John Wesley (1703-1791) famously stated: *“Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin, and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen; such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of Heaven on Earth.”*

Here in Paraguay we are in time of change and training new leaders in the Anglican Church. This is one of our biggest challenges. Without a new generation of leaders, the church is weak and struggles to set up the Kingdom of Heaven. Conversely a new generation of leaders empowered by God are able to implement change and usher in the Kingdom in greater measure!

Another challenge is to change perspectives and see the best in each situation, instead of the worst, and to see those around us as Jesus sees them. This is particularly important when we work as members of teams, if the teams are to be effective. Most of our life and ministry here in Paraguay involves working in teams, be they large or small, and so we thought we would tell you about some of the teams that we have been involved with this year.

Diocesan Synod: Peter as the diocesan bishop heads up the leadership of the synod, which met this year in August with the participation of 38 representatives. The overall theme was



At Synod, brothers from the Chaco leading signing in their tribal language - Enxet



Peter and Sally Bartlett CMS mission partners *Paraguay*

Peter and Sally served as SAMS mission partners in Bolivia from 1992 to 2005 where they firmly established the congregation of Cristo el Salvador. They then spent three years at Parr St Peter's in the Diocese of Liverpool. Peter became the Anglican bishop of Paraguay at the invitation of the diocese's leaders and was consecrated on 29 March 2009.

building community and the Rev Agustin Marsal from the Anglican Church in Buenos Aires was the keynote speaker. A new executive committee was elected. The synod closed with a celebration involving a whole host of participants speaking and singing in Spanish, Guarani, Enxet and English; music groups from different churches took part along with readers and pray-ers, Sunday school leaders, etc.

It was a time of great rejoicing and fellowship.

School of Ministry: We are very pleased and encouraged by this monthly event for church leaders with the participation of 15 leaders of different ages – eight women and seven men from the churches in Asuncion. The first four sessions have been led by Pastor Donald – Old Testament Theology; Sally – Training your Soul (Spiritual Disciplines); Peter – Ministry in the Spirit, and Pastor Luis – Introduction to the Bible. The second four sessions will take place next year.

Children's Evangelism Workshop: the churches joined together with FEISA to organise this course, one Saturday each month, for our Sunday school teachers and FEISA students



Emmanuel Church group members, preparing for their event at the children's evangelism training course



Leaders at the King of Kings church training course - What is Anglicanism

The Woman who Prospers: Sally and Regina (the wife of Pastor Luis) led a successful course for the ladies of the church in Zeballos Cue, based on the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31. Probably the most encouraging aspect of this course was the willingness of the ladies to support each other in their challenges and seeing how God answered our prayers. Each week we would go round the circle praying out loud for the person we were sat next to; we decided to do this to avoid the ladies feeling that somehow Regina and I were the experts (which we are NOT!). To see our

who are toy library workers. The 16 women and teenagers on this course are enjoying themselves and we have divided in small groups to organise children's events. I (Sally) am working with Natasha and Cecilia from the church in Villa Guarani.

What is Anglicanism?: We had a great time in the winter months leading a short course on this subject for the leaders of the King of Kings Church in Remansito. Travelling out there, we drove past flooded areas which left many homeless, and the neighbourhood of Remansito itself was without running water for the duration of the six weeks that we met for the course! That didn't stop us enjoying each other's company and sharing a tea together on the afternoon of the last session.



Regina (on the left) and some of the ladies preparing snacks at "The Woman who Prospers" course

sisters grow in faith and confidence in different aspects of their lives was very special.

What the Bible says about the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit: Peter is visiting the churches here in Asuncion, preaching a six-week sermon series on this subject. He is currently visiting St John's Church in Roque Alonso. Previously he's visited Emmanuel Church and the Cathedral.



St John's Roque; Peter talking with Raphael, a member of the school of ministry, while Marcos the drummer waiting for a hug to celebrate "Hug a Drummer Day"

We are encouraged by the cathedral youth group which, under the leadership of their group leader Miriam, organised a very successful youth camp in the winter school holiday with 80 participants including 20 young people from the Annexe school who have no previous direct connection to the church. It's very encouraging to watch others setting up teams working together in extending the Kingdom.

Mission Esperanza (Hope): Sally continues to be very busy along with Teresa, Ana and



Dreams for the children of Remansito from the toy library team

Mary coordinating the work of the foster home. Recently twins went to adoptive parents and they are settling in well! M and J will shortly be leaving us to go to their adoptive parents. Recently the authorities mistakenly took into care the wrong child and we had very angry parents who presented themselves on the doorstep of the home with five policemen! Two weeks later the legal system returned the child.

Staffing the home is often challenging and this afternoon Sally and Mary are interviewing a potential new helper.

We enjoy visiting local churches, here in Asuncion, in Concepcion and in the Chaco. St Pauls Church in Concepcion is without an ordained pastor as Bishop Andres has now retired. A leadership team has been set up, and there are monthly visits from the Asuncion pastors, which the church appreciates. We will be visiting next week following on from a visit to the Chaco. In the Chaco Peter coordinates a ministry team, which preaches, teaches and runs small groups. The team is comprised of Pastor Agustin, CMS associate mission partner Chris Hawksbee, and CMS Latin partner Victor Gonzalez. This team works very well together.

In his first letter to the church in Corinth (Chapter 3: 6-8) the Apostle Paul reminds us: *“I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It’s not important who does the planting, or who does the watering. What’s important is that God makes the seed grow. The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work.”*

Thank you for praying for us. This morning we received an email from one of our link churches asking about how the courses we have been doing this year have gone. It is exciting to see how your prayers for us and the church in Paraguay are being answered by God and how many different people have a part in this!

Please pray for:

- Time with different members of our family this Christmas and New Year
- Time in the UK in January and February visiting some of our link churches
- Time for rest for our pastors and church leaders in the hot summer months of January and February
- Personal spiritual growth in ourselves as well as the people we are training
- The churches to continue to develop and grow spiritually.

Thank you for your interest and partnership with us in the gospel.
With love and peace,

Thank you,

Peter & Sally

PS. Did you know that you can now receive link letters by email, sent as a pdf? If you would like to receive them this way and help CMS save money, please contact **the links team** at **links@cms-uk.org**

www.cms-uk.org



Church Mission Society

Watlington Road, Oxford, OX4 6BZ Tel: 01865 787400 Fax: 01865 776375
Email: info@cms-uk.org www.cms-uk.org Registered Charity Number 1131655