

Link Letter No.9 May 2013

Dear friends,

We are moving into the cooler, much pleasanter autumn weather here in Paraguay, with lots of bright sunny days with temperatures in the 25-28°C range, and very little humidity. May is definitely my favourite month of the year.

The Paraguayan general election took place peacefully on April 21. Hundreds of Asuncion City buses were sent up from Asuncion to different parts of the Chaco the day before the election to ferry both indigenous and Hispanic voters to the different polling stations and then back to their communities. I visited one of the polling stations at Pozo Colorado, 55km south of Rio Verde on election day. There was a very friendly, almost festive atmosphere, with people queuing up in



A polling station, during the Paraguayan general elections



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Tim is the Coordinator of the Enxet Old Testament Translation Team based at the Anglican Centre in Rio Verde, Paraguayan Chaco. He works alongside the translators Juan Martinez and Asuncion Rojas as they translate into the Enxet language and check completed drafts and keeps the Anglican Church of Paraguay, CMS and the United Bible Societies updated on progress.

orderly fashion to cast their vote at the local school, or sitting down in family groups to have pick nicks. The local shops and restaurants did a roaring trade.

Most of Makxawayaya, Sombrero Piri and La Patria seemed to be there, so it was a good opportunity for me to catch up with news from those places. El Estribo folk, including my colleagues Juan Martinez and Asuncion Rojas, were bused to another polling station, 100km to the north.

At the beginning of May,

following an invitation from the Argentine Bible Society, I drove the president of the Paraguayan Bible Society, Pedro Escobar, and the Vice president, Raul Narvaez, to Roque Saenz Peña, a city in the Argentine Chaco with a population of about 80,000. We were there to attend a service of celebration to mark the launch of the Toba Qom Bible.

The service was held at the main Iglesia Evangélica Unida Toba speaking church within a Toba residential area of the city. Members of the Argentine Bible Society and members of the United Bible Society from the UK were present, as well as our delegation from Paraguay. It was so encouraging to see the Toba translators we had met during our studies in Peru several years ago celebrate the completion of the Bible in their language. Esteban Voth, our main lecturer in Lima, was also present having now become the United Bible Society's international director for translation projects.

We continue to make progress on the translation. Checks on Leviticus were completed at the beginning of March. Further checks on the Psalms were completed at the end of April with the exception of Psalm 119. We had checked about 60 verses of Psalm 119 when a glitch with the computer programme occurred, preventing the editing of the remaining verses. It became difficult to move the cursor, delete words, or write anything! The odd thing is that the glitch has only affected this Psalm.

There were no problems checking Psalms 120 to 150 or with Jeremiah, which we were also checking.

Incidentally, verse 60 says: "I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands." These problems are usually quickly sorted out over the internet, with the innards of the computer programme examined by a consultant in Canada, which means bringing the computer to Asuncion with its good internet connections. This we will do when our colleague Tito La haye returns from a trip to Turkey.



Tim with Toba translators Rubén Alvarez and Rafael Mansilla, and UBS translations director Esteban Voth and his wife



Tim at the translation office

During Easter I was able to visit one of the newly formed Enxet speaking communities just a few miles away from Rio Verde called Primavera. I took along pastor Mario Caballero and a group of musicians from El Estribo, selected by Mario to lead the worship during the Good Friday service which was



Good Friday service at Primavera

held in the open air. That same evening they took part in a service at La Rosakue, another Enxet community located about five miles away. Whilst they were at the service I drove back to Rio Verde to prepare their supper, a typical Chaco rice and beef stew. The following day, a Saturday, I drove the musicians back to El Estribo in time for the afternoon football match.

Not long after Easter I had the opportunity of visiting two Angaité speaking villages in La Patria with Patricio Mendoza, one of the leaders of the church at San Carlos. The Enxet members of the church at San Carlos had gathered together 26 bags of second hand clothes for people in La Patria. The back of the Toyota was piled high with the all the bags of clothes. As this was in the run up to the general election one of the La Patria pastors, Agripino Sánchez, jokingly told me that they had mistakenly thought I was a politician distributing gifts in order to get votes.

Dengue fever continues to be in the headlines in Paraguay, principally affecting the area in and around Asuncion. There have been 75,000 cases reported since the beginning of the year. The cooler weather has helped bring down the number of cases from 7,500 a week to around



Pastor Agripino's daughters

3,000. Fifty two people have died so far this year compared to 70 deaths for whole of 2012 and 38,000 cases.

Fortunately there have only been a very few cases reported in the Chaco as the mosquito which causes the disease – *Aedes aegypti* – does not seem to thrive in there. Symptoms of the disease include fever, muscle and joint pains.

Points for prayer

■ Sadly, suicides amongst Enxet speaking young people continue to cause us heartbreak and worry. Another young person committed suicide in Makxawaya at the beginning of May this year.

■ Give thanks that the general election took place without incident on April 21 and pray for the new president of Paraguay, Horacio Cartes, who will be sworn in in August.

■ Give thanks for the recent opportunity to witness the launch of the Toba Qom Bible on May 4 in the Argentine Chaco. Give thanks for the continued progress with the checking and for the rain in Rio Verde during March and April. Continue to pray for rain in La Patria.

■ Translator Asuncion Rojas' daughter in law Miriam (married to Asuncion's son Valentin) is expecting to have her first baby sometime during this month. Please pray for a safe delivery.



Young people from Makxawaya

With love in the Lord Jesus

Tim and the translators

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 on links@cms-uk.org**

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Church Mission Society

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