

Link Letter No.13 August 2014

Dear friends,

It's time once again to give you an update on what has been going on in the Chaco since I last wrote in May.

Heavy rain during a very wet couple of winter months left parts of Rio Verde flooded for a couple of days, and the indigenous communities in La Patria, El Estribo, and Makxawayaya cut off for over two months. For a few days it was quite tricky getting out from my house to the Trans Chaco Highway, as our access road was flooded, but fortunately my house, Asuncion Rojas' house and the translation office kept dry, being on slightly higher ground. La Patria was isolated the longest, and the government sent in a helicopter which went in and out with supplies, and provided transport for people wanting to go in and out.

The power kept going in Rio Verde, so the translation work was unaffected. I had to

reschedule a number of visits, however, mainly to El Estribo. I have not been able to get into Makxawayaya since the end of April, but I hope to visit again this month when the road has been fixed. I was able to get into El Estribo during July, one of the main access roads having opened.

Since I last wrote, we have continued to make progress revising the text of the 1997 Enxet New Testament. During May,



Rio Verde affected by flooding



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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.

June and July we finished revising John, Acts of the Apostles, 1 and 2 Corinthians, James, and Jude. At the beginning of August, Asunción Rojas had started looking at 1 and 2 Timothy. We continue to start early, at 7am. Asunción zooms in on his motorbike, and then drives the short distance to his house for breakfast at 9am.

It was encouraging to attend a service of thanksgiving at the end of July in San



The gate into our compound



Asuncion and bike



Tim and pumpkin

Carlos, El Estribo, with my colleague Asunción Rojas. This was a kind of mid-winter harvest festival to raise money for the running of the church, with people bringing to church their garden produce and clothes for sale. I took the opportunity to distribute copies of 1 Corinthians 13 to members of the congregation during the service so that they could follow the newly revised text as it was read out aloud.

After the service I bought a large pumpkin which I took back to Rio Verde, and then shared with Chris Hawksbee and the Mission Paraguay volunteers who had just arrived. In spite of all the rain, a number of communities in El Estribo such as Dos Palmas also had a good sesame harvest before the onset of the wet weather.

Also at the end of July, a large and lively group of Christian students from the Comunidad Cristiana en Asunción

visited the translation office. I gave a talk and PowerPoint presentation on the history of the Enxet people, and moved on to talk about translation work over the years, the many years of SAMS mission work and the current role that CMS



Sesame seed harvest

is playing. They spent three days in Yatnata, the village in La Herencia 5km from Rio Verde and met with Enxet young people and members of the church there.



Visitors from Comunidad Cristiana

They stayed in the school building but on the day they arrived it was cold and had been raining; as a result, their coach was not able to drive into the village such was the condition of the road. I did about five trips to get their luggage, including collecting mattresses, sleeping bags and cooking facilities from the hired coach and taking them to the school. The students walked

the 1.5km along the very muddy road into the main village, with dozens of villagers turning out to help them carry their things. I was relieved that they were all wearing wellington boots! The coach had to park 5km away at the Rio Verde gas station and wait several days before it could be driven into the village.

I had my 55th birthday in Asuncion, and the English speaking



Asuncion at home with his family

congregation gave me an Argentine belt with a wooden buckle made by the Wichi, which reminded me of the verse to “*Stand firm, with the belt of truth buckled round your waist.*” (Ephesians 6.14)

As I write, preparations are underway for the diocesan synod here in Asunción. I will be giving the synod an update on the progress of the New Testament revision.

Points for prayer and praise

- Pray for Asunción Rojas, as he works on 1 and 2 Timothy, and for his wife Cipriana and their family living in Rio Verde and give thanks for the opportunity to share biblical texts with Enxet speaking churches.
- Pray for Makxawaya and La Patria, that the roads would soon be open to those communities after all the rain in May and June. Give thanks for the prompt relief work during the floods.
- Pray for the churches scattered around the Chaco and for their leaders. Just to mention some: Juan Sosa, and Romualdo Rojas in Makxawaya, Agripino Sánchez, Niño Pepe, and Robert Fernández in La Patria, Lucio Romero, Mario Caballero, and Patricio Mendoza in El Estribo. Pray that they would stand firm at a time of increased activity by various sects and different denominations.
- Pray for safety in travel for myself and for my colleague Asunción Rojas as we visit the different Enxet speaking churches and communities around the Chaco, and on our frequent trips to Asuncion, the capital city.

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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