

Newsletter: Chris and Alison Hawksbee in Paraguay

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14 January 2015

Associate Mission Partners with the Church Mission Society (CMS) and the South American Mission Society (SAMS), UK & Northern Ireland.

Dear Friends,

A happy New Year to you all, and thank you for your continued prayers and support for ourselves and the work we are involved in.

This last year has been one where I have upped my involvement in preaching and Bible teaching. I still provide development advice when and where it is needed. There are Non-Government Organizations who help out in some of the communities I visit and also local government, the latter being very restricted last year to lack of funding from Central Government. I am in regular contact with Esteban Galeano in El Estribo, to see what is happening and support him. He is very capable in managing their projects. He is involved in his local Church in the village of Karanda. At the end of last year Pastor Agustin Maidana and I did Bible teaching in that congregation. We invited the church leaders from the other villages to come and join us. They appreciated it very much, so we intend to include them in our circuit this year. We would like the church leaders to meet regularly for sharing and fellowship. Their own ordained pastors haven't been good at doing this.

El Estribo is closer to our base in Rio Verde and 12 klms from the asphalt, whereas La Patria is 80, and the soil is very clayey so it gets very slippery for driving on when it rains, plus there is a toll point at the entrance and when it rains they close it. There were a couple of times last year when we weren't able to get there after traveling 340 klms for the occasion. Frustrating and expensive. La Patria is a larger settlement, that covers 55,000 acres, and the internal roads aren't too good at times. I asked Agustin to see if he would be willing to stay 3 days at a time, so that we could cover more villages on a trip and so all the villages churches can participate. We would do the teaching in 3 villages in different areas so that those close by can attend. He has agreed to that. He spends 10 days a month in Rio Verde, where he has been visiting the Church in Yatnata village, which is the Sombrero Piri Community, where Alison and I lived and worked from 1982/1988.

Please pray for the strengthening of the churches in their walk and love for the Lord Jesus. That they may stand firm in the Gospel. There are various religious (denominations) groups who come in with their styles of ministry, which can cause confusion and division within the churches. Many of these groups consider the Anglicans as Catholics, because liturgy is sometimes used in the services. The Anglican Church in Paraguay is very "low" and evangelical. But many groups just assume things without asking about the Churches' Statement of faith. We welcome groups who want to come and strengthen the local churches by bringing sound teaching and showing the genuine love of Christ. We invite them to come to the central office to present themselves and their proposed activities and bring their statement of faith and that the Anglican Church can share theirs with them, and so work for the overall good of the local congregations. Sometimes there are

members of local congregations with their own agendas, who want power and don't want to submit to their local church leadership. It probably all sounds too familiar. Our role is to bring practical Bible teaching to the local churches, even if they are from other groups and try and bring a sound basis of understanding of "what the Church is". And to be peace makers.

Sorry that the previous paragraph is a bit long winded! But we face many situations of this nature. We would like to present beautiful Church groups to our Lord when He returns for His Church, of which we are a part. So, **we ask for your prayers** for wisdom, understanding, grace, love and gentleness in this work. We ask for Christ's anointing for teaching His word and ministering in His power to the real needs of the people. We also need to include Makthlawaiya in the circuit of teaching. I am encouraged as I visit the local churches by their faithfulness and desire to learn more.

A Pastor called Alfredo Miranda and his wife have been accompanying Pastor Lucio Romero in El Estribo for about a year now. Unfortunately Lucio's ministry hasn't been very good. This has been the case for quite a while now. In December one of his sons committed suicide. Anyway, Alfredo and his wife have also been training people from 6 village churches in Sunday school teaching. It is important to get the new generation kids versed in the bible. **Please pray** for this, and the materials needed to start this off on a good footing. Eventually we want each congregation to buy their own materials. Alfredo has expressed his desire to join Agustin and me to be part of a team who can minister in the several communities and the local churches. I warm to this idea, but need to get permission from the Bishop first. Alfredo is from a group called "Jesus responde al mundo" (Jesus responds to the world). I think they are Pentecostal, but I have witnessed his ministry and I believe we can work together for the glory of God.

Peter Bartlett, the Bishop laid off two pastors from the payroll in December. This was due to lack of financial support for them from overseas. This possibility had been announced to their congregations a couple of years back and that they should be supporting them. Despite this, it has hit both pastors heavily. They are still pastors. **Please pray** for them.

Other involvements over this past year have been, preaching at the San Mateo church in Rio Verde "every 5 weeks", also at St. Andrew's chapel (English) as part of a team ministry, Alison often leads, and we both preach when we are on the rota. During January, I have been leading a Bible study that is instead of a service. We have been reading a book by Watchman Nee, called "The Body of Christ: A Reality". It has been very challenging. I recommend it.

Please continue to pray for Victor Gonzalez who visits Rio Verde for extended periods, visiting mainly the Paraguayan people, but, who also visits people in Sombrero Piri (Enxet Ameri-indians). He is working as an evangelist. He is also a builder and is allowed to take on work whilst working in Rio Verde with the Church.

Also, pray for Tim Curtis and Asuncion Rojas and the completion of the revision of the New Testament in Enxet. Tim hopes that the Bible can be printed early this year. He has been working on the Old Testament (new translation into Enxet) and revising the New Testament (Enxet) that has been in use for a good number of years.

Alison has been on a visit to the UK this January and catching up on visiting our grandson, Jonathan. She is enjoying a break from teaching at St. Andrew's College.

Jonathan is Samuel and Floras' son. Samuel has changed jobs and moved to Huddersfield. He is working in post doctorate investigation work. Hannah is working at All Souls, on their ministry team. She works with students. **Please pray** for Benjamin, who has been doing an internship at the British Embassy here in Paraguay. This ends this month and needs to decide whether he accepts their offer to continue working with them or look for another job. Their pay offer isn't brilliant.

This last year, we were able to build 4 one roomed houses in Rio Verde for poor church members with the support of Mission Paraguay, and a Chapel in Colonia 24, which is a village in La Patria. I had 4 Irish men come as volunteers. One was a builder, another a carpenter, another a farmer and the last a mechanic. I appreciated all that they were able to do and for good company. Mission Paraguay is lead up by David Orritt from a church just outside Liverpool, and he is very involved in raising funds for small projects in Paraguay. He works very closely with SAMS, Northern Ireland.

Thanks for all your prayers.

Our love and New Year greetings,
Chris and Alison.

Please advise distribution amendments to:

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Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ13 9HP
Phone: 01626 832758, or email: stevemandyk@hotmail.com

House improvement, using adobes. Some likely candidates on the top. Nearly completed adobe house below.





1. New adobe brick house (left), old house (right)



2. New & old houses & Chris' vehicle



3. Another older adobe brick house, plus old house with the kitchen where the chap is stood



4. Pastor's house in la Paciencia



5. Typical latrine we have been making



6. Colonia 24 Chapel. Original roof, new walls, doors, windows & floor



7. Colonia 24 Chapel. Original roof, new walls, doors, windows & floor



8. Colonia 24 Chapel builders Celine & Jose + a church council member (centre)



9. Colonia 24 Chapel. Chris (centre). Builders Celino (white T-shirt), Jose (green shirt)