

Link Letter No.2 May 2011

Dear friends,

Once again another three and a half months of home leave has come to an end all too soon. I arrived back in the UK on January 5, avoiding the big freeze that was the subject of many a conversation, but finding January and February very cold after the summer heat of Paraguay!

It has been good to visit so many friends around the country and to enjoy so much warm hospitality from everybody, being constantly regaled with fine meals and Christian fellowship.

Bishop Henry Scriven kindly met me at Heathrow airport on my arrival and drove me straight to Tewkesbury, which has been my parent's home for a number of years. I found them both well and living life to the full, very much involved in the local country churches, leading services and worship. Dad is still enjoying playing the organ, and Marie the piano.

During my first Sunday in the UK, I was able to attend the magnificent Epiphany carol service at Tewkesbury Abbey which I found profoundly moving, with its majestic organ music and heavenly choir, and a congregation of seven or eight hundred people worshipping there.



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Tim Curtis
CMS mission partner
Paraguayan Chaco

During January I attended the People in Mission Conference at Windmill Farm near Oxford, which was a great way to meet new CMS mission partners working in Africa and Asia, as well as to see some reassuringly familiar faces from Latin America.

I kicked off my church visits 22-23 January with a visit to Holy Trinity, Redhill, before moving on to St John's Eden Park on 29-30 January. I spoke at several missionary prayer groups, at St Andrews Oxford, and St Lawrence Morden and enjoyed a walk around Wisley Gardens and an excursion to Guilford cathedral. I also travelled on a number of cross country trains, first of all to near Hull, for my visit to All Saints South Cave, and then down to Patchway in Bristol; then more trains to St Wendreda's March, and St John's Elmswell, near Bury St Edmunds.

During one of my visits to CMS headquarters in Oxford, I heard the Chilean miner Jose Henriquez and his wife give their moving testimonies, with Alf Cooper, CMS mission partner, acting as interpreter.

I visited St Lawrence, and Emmanuel Morden on 19-20 February, enjoying a London Philharmonic Orchestra performance of Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for violin and viola, and Mahler's Song of the Earth at the Royal Festival Hall. A real treat!

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There was also a new link for me at St Lawrence Long Buckby, near Northampton, which I visited for the first time. Several years ago I had the pleasure of welcoming the Rev Clive Evans to Rio Verde, in the Chaco, where he stayed as my guest having come down the Trans Chaco Highway from Bolivia on a bus, so it was good to stay with him and his family here in the UK.

Following on from Long Buckby, I spoke at midweek meetings at St Mark's Cheltenham, one of Dad's former churches (Tom Curtis, who was a SAMS mission Partner 1977-1986), then at St Barnabas, St Paul's Cray, then at St Andrews' Bedworth and All Saints Bedworth near Coventry, and then on the weekend of 12-13 March, at another of Dad's former parishes, St Mary's Chipping Norton.

I stayed in the beautiful Cotswold village of Churchill as the guest of Annette Chapman, whose husband Rodney had been my housemaster during my years at Kingham Hill School. Annette invited me to attend a guitar concert at All Saints Church given by the Australian guitarist Craig Ogden. I was particularly thrilled when he played a piece by the Paraguayan composer Agustin Barrios Mangore, "Una Limosna por el amor de Dios" – "*Can you spare any alms for the poor for the love of God*". The concert was part of the 99th Chipping Norton Music Festival.

From 16-21 March I was at St Andrews, Oxford, preaching at the morning services on Sunday 20. I stayed at the home of Donald and Elizabeth Hay, to whom I am especially grateful for letting me use their home as a second base. Elizabeth has kindly spent a great deal of time in the last few months arranging my link visits. In Oxford I was able to meet up with my godmother, Margaret Moll, who took me to lunch at the Mitre restaurant on several occasions. I also enjoyed browsing in Blackwell's bookshop, and stocking up with a number of books to take back to Paraguay.

What better place for the home ministry visits to draw to a close than the beautiful city of Bath where I visited All Saints Weston, from March 24-28, being whisked away briefly, to

attend the CMS Swanwick "Adelante" Conference for just one day.

Prayer points

- Please pray for the people of Makxawaya. During March I received the sad news that Anita Severo had died in Makxawaya at the age of 102. She had a fall last year and had been more or less confined to her bed for some months. She will be tremendously missed in Makxawaya where she has been involved in the life of the church and community in a major way. She worked in the Makxawaya clinic for many years up until the early eighties.
- Please pray for Enxet Bible translator Martin Rojas and his wife Mariana who have been mourning the loss of one of the twins at the end of February this year. The twins were born prematurely. Martin has been on compassionate leave with Mariana in Makxawaya, but has now rejoined the team in Rio Verde. The surviving twin, the baby boy, is in delicate health. We would value your prayers for Martin and Mariana and their family.
- We give thanks for the publication of the book *Journey* into the Paraguayan Chaco. The team has now been asked to translate this beautifully illustrated book into the Enxet language. I need to mention that the team has not actually done any translating in the English version as stated on the inside of the front cover. The translation team presumes that the Enxet words have been left as they were originally written by the author.
- Please pray for me as I get back into the swing of things on the translation project with the checking of the drafts of 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, and Proverbs, and readjust to life in Paraguay after my time away.

With all prayers and best wishes, and a very special thank you to all those who have made me feel so welcome during my 2011 home ministry.

Tim

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now." (Philippians 1: 3-5)



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