



ONE PEOPLE



What a blessing!

We had a Covid outbreak in the congregation and I knew that there weren't going to be very many people there for church on Sunday. The service started with just a few people. During the service, a man I didn't know walked in. I noticed that he wasn't singing or speaking any of the liturgy.

After the service, greeting the handful of folks who showed up, I introduced myself and asked his name. Then he asked me, "I think you speak English?" His name is Vara and he is a Lutheran from India who has recently moved to Uruguay and speaks no Spanish! He works with a large Indian company and took busses for hours to get to church.

It was such a blessing to be able to receive this dear brother in Christ. This is one of the reasons we must be planting churches all over the world—to reach new people and also to catch those Christians who are moving around in our smaller and smaller world.



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There's a lot going on!

A lot has happened in the last few months..



Left Church members and Pastor André and his family waited at the airport for Pastor Phil and Deaconess Rachel Jaseph, our new missionaries! **Right** Pastor Maicon talks to members from Chapicuy, Salto, and Montevideo who attended the formal dedication of the new church there in Chapicuy. **Below** LCMS sent a communications team to take pictures and write stories about what has been going on in Uruguay. A weird pastime of mine is to take pictures of people taking pictures, so I snapped a photo of LCMS' Erik Lunsford taking pictures along the river as the sun was setting.

I know it has been a while since our last newsletter, so I want to do a quit update and then over the next several months we will do a series of more detailed updates on the projects going on around Uruguay.

We have had a number of major events these past few months. We had the arrival of a new missionary couple from the LCMS, Pastor Phil and Deaconess Rachel Jaseph. Phil previously served as a GEO missionary in Africa and is a recent graduate of Fort Wayne. Rachel has already served as a missionary deaconess in Peru and the Dominican Republic. They will spend a year living in Montevideo and getting to know the team, the city, and our various ministries before moving east of the city to continue the work that we have started in Costa de Oro, Canelones department.

In the northern mission, we had twin celebrations—the dedication of the completed church building in Chapicuy and the dedication of a new ministry center in Salto. Pastor Maicon Schieferdecker, Alliance Missionary pastor from Brazil, will be working out of the Salto center to plant a new church. The LCMS Communications team was hear to cover this event. Look for an article and great pictures of Uruguay in the Winter edition of *Lutherans Engage the World*.

Angie just finished another year of teaching in the bilingual program at San Pablo school as well as doing individual and group English classes as part of our outreach program. We look forward to expanding both of these programs in the new year. English is a great way to build relationships with Uruguayans.



We have had a large number of immigrants and expatriates, both here for work and traveling, and we are exploring the idea of having an English-language "international" ministry. Our first activity will be a Christmas Eve service in English. While we won't be changing our main focus on reaching the people of Uruguay, we want to serve the people the Lord is sending to us and use our gifts and abilities however we can to share the Gospel.

Family News



Maggie was confirmed here at San Pablo Church in November. We are very proud of her and the number of friends she brought along with her.

PLEASE PRAY FOR US:

- Give thanks for growth—baptisms, confirmations, new ministry places, and new workers in the mission.
- Pray for the 26 young people who were confirmed at San Pablo. They will face a difficult and hostile society as Christian young people. Pray that the Lord keeps them faithful to their confirmation vows.
- Pray for the Costo de Oro mission, that we will continue to reach new people, and that we will soon find a place to rent to continue to grow the ministry.
- Give thanks for the dedication of a permanent facility for the congregation in Chapicuy and the dedication of a new ministry center in Salto. Pray for Pastor Maicon's church planting efforts in the region.
- Pray for a good summer of outreach activities and healthy attendance.



(Left) Their first first day of school in 2012, Elias in 1st grade and Ambrose in Pre-K at Calvary Lutheran School in Baltimore. (Right) Their latest first first day of school together, Elias a junior and Ambrose a freshman at St. Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, Missouri.



Kids just keep growing, no matter how much I tell them to stop!

BIG KIDS

It is coming to the end of the school year in Uruguay and the end of the first semester in the USA.

The boys back in the USA are finishing up the semester and have finals this week. Having Elias there helped a lot with adjusting to a new school and Ambrose has done well his first semester. He played JV soccer and is in choir and doing voice and piano lessons. Elias excels at music and ran cross country in the fall. Trying to get these tall boys to play basketball, but they aren't interested.

Callie just finished seventh grade here in Uruguay. She loves art and design and is really good at Science and Math. Maggie just finished sixth grade. She's a little more of an athlete, playing team handball

and other games. Both of the girls are always doing lettering or some art project together at home when they have free time. If they aren't together, they are usually reading.

NEW YEAR

This year will hopefully see us re-starting the downtown mission (we have a couple of places with whom we are negotiating right now) and opening a place in Costa de Oro. Angie is expanding the English outreach and taking on more classes at the school—they even asked her to teach math in Spanish.

I will continue also as Area Facilitator, and focus on evangelistic outreach in downtown Montevideo as well as training new leaders for the church here.

For now, we will enjoy Christmas and being together as a family during summer vacation. Christmas blessings to all our friends, family, and supporters back home.

We know we would not be doing this important work without your help.

For your prayers, support, and encouragement, THANK YOU!

Yours in the True Light,

*James, Angie,
Elias, Ambrose, Callie, and Maggie
John 1:9*



To support the LCMS through the work of James and Angie Sharp and family, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

or

Mission Central
40718 Highway E 16
Mapleton, Iowa 51034

There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at lcms.org/service. Click on "Service Opportunities."