

March, 2002

March was a very rewarding and eventful month for us. We started the month by formally signing the contract for rental of our house. What a blessing to be settled and to be able to unpack all our crates! So many new things after 3 months! We plan on staying here for about 4-6 months. Then we will be moving into the interior for our well drilling work. We have completed all our paper work to live here. We've been fingerprinted several times, once by Interpol (and we only thought they were in James Bond movies!). We have 10 year visas, cédulas, identification cards that say we are missionaries, driver's license, very official looking stamps in our passports, and letters to be able to reenter the country for the next 3 years!

We also had the opportunity to work with the International Leadership Institute who sponsored a conference here in Asuncion. ILI is located in Carrollton, Georgia. They will be sponsoring an International Conference in October, 2002. We urge Cannon to support individuals to attend this conference. The contact is Wes Griffin, 770-832-1244. Subjects presented included looking at the Vision for your church, how to Pray for the Harvest in your church, how to Disciple others, and many more. Al Vom Steeg is a part of this ministry and was a presenter. What a blessing it was to hear from him and share with him. Linda's role with the conference was Conference Coordinator. Which translates – make sure handouts are ready, overheads are ready, prepare PowerPoint presentations, etc. Ed's role was Transportation Coordinator and Sound System Coordinator. Which translates – run back & forth from the bus terminal and make sure the 110 volt things are plugged into a transformer and doing miscellaneous repairs! What a busy, joyful 8 days!

We have also been assigned a different church, Santa Rosa. Santa Rosa is very small with only about 12-15 attending worship service. They currently do not have an adult Sunday School, but we are beginning one this Sunday. Pray for the success of this program and for our success in teaching in Spanish. We will report progress next month. Ed will also be on the rotation as pastor. What a challenge! We've prepared sermonettes in Spanish before, but that was for fellow students in Costa Rica. However, this will be a good congregation to begin with. They do not have a full time pastor, so they are thankful for anyone willing to share the Word with them. Their schedule is typical Paraguayan, which came from the Brazilian Methodist conference: Sunday 9:00 AM prayer, 10:00 AM Sunday School, 7:30 PM Church. This has been a challenge, but we just plan on a quiet, late Monday morning!

Easter we spent in both our new church and our old church – El Central. At El Central, sunrise service was at 6:00 AM, followed by a breakfast of bread and “cocido”. “Cocido” will take us a LONG time to like! It is made with the local tea, charcoal (yes, what you use at your grill), sugar, and milk. We won't subject anyone to try this if you visit! We followed this with a more traditional service at Santa Rosa Sunday night.

The church at Santa Rosa houses a kindergarten which has been quite a blessing for the area. Children can attend for G20,000/month, which is about \$4.00. This is for all day, 7:00-5:00, and includes 2 meals and 2 snacks. Most of the people in the area don't have jobs, but try to send their children to the school because of the Christian format. Some of the children have partial sponsorships. The school was started from the support of Mary Jo Phillips. She and her husband have a ministry in North Carolina. Attached are some photos of the neighborhood and the church.

This month has opened with time to rest and reflect. The paper work for the drill rig has been completed, but apparently there are still some things to finish on the Rotary side of the project since we do not yet have the money. God has His timing, and we are using this time to better acquaint ourselves to our new home and the people.

Blessings to all of you at Cannon.

*In His Service,
Ed & Linda Baker*



Entrance into the Santa Rosa neighborhood



Main Street in the neighborhood



The neighborhood path to the church – most of the access into the barrio are like this (or smaller)



Entrance into the kindergarten



Kindergarten playground



On the left is the gate into the church



Church at Santa Rosa



Parsonage at Santa Rosa Methodist Church