

May 2002 Adventures

Answered prayers are the first order of business. We asked for prayers for our Sunday school program. We first moved our "Sunday" school program to Thursday. We also changed the name to Thursday night adult Bible study. The term "school" seemed to keep people away who felt school was only for children & youth. Also, Sunday mornings is when most women are preparing food for the family, or doing household chores. We finished our Bible review and started with the book of Matthew. Since the people here have very little Bible knowledge, just working through notes from a good study Bible brings new light to the word. We have several on-line resources and our central church has a limited, but useful library. We are up from our former 2-3 students/week and have averaged 10 per week! Praise God!

Ed has continued to preach. He is now on a rotation of preaching two times a month. This has definitely improved his Spanish! Speaking of Spanish, we started taking Spanish lessons again. As I mention to others, students in school in the US take English for 12 years plus courses in college. One year of Spanish in Costa Rica just lets us know how much we don't know. For May, we took private lessons, 3 times a week, 1 ½ hours per class. June will see a decrease in lessons as our schedule changes and more mission teams come.

The first full week of May we had CHE training. CHE is an acronym for Community Health Evangelism. This program is administered by Medical Ambassadors International. We have had CHE training before, April 2001 in North Carolina. However, this course was taught in Spanish. We are anxious to see how this program will effect the people here in Paraguay.

Mother's Day in Paraguay is always on May 15th, and is a national holiday. Our church celebrated the day on Sunday, May 12th. What a blessing our church experienced this day! Our kindergarten director and church appointed "obrero" (person who helps the preacher) canvassed the neighborhood to invite everyone. Our children from the kindergarten presented a song, we had dancers from the Sunday school, and even a short skit in which Ed participated. We had close to 100 people in our little sanctuary! Every mother received a present. We look forward to Father's Day next month.

This month we've also introduced several folks to Southern cooking. We had 2 ladies who are friends from the Central Church here for a southern fried chicken lunch one day. Later in the month we invited all of the leaders of our church in Santa Rosa (this is only 7 folks) over for southern fried chicken, gravy, mashed potatoes, butter beans, biscuits, and chocolate pie. They enjoyed every bite! Fried chicken and mashed potatoes are common here, but gravy, biscuits and pies are not. Also, butter beans they use in salads, not to eat alone as a vegetable.

Attending UMW has been interesting for Linda. Her first meeting was on Saturday, May 18th. We both left for the 4:00 meeting, having only 1 car does have it's disadvantage. When Linda arrived, the 2 other ladies looked at Linda and said nothing. Finally Linda said, who has the program, at which time they indicated she did! Linda did a quick devotional from the old Testament about Mrs. Lot. We both learned 2 lessons – always assume you have the program, and always have a program in your back pocket!

We have used some of the funds we received from Cannon's communion services to buy supplies for the children's Sunday school. Also, we took photos of each child at the kindergarten, and these will be used to make Father's Day cards. We try to find ways in the community that we can financially help, and letting the people know these gifts are from you at Cannon.

*In His Service,
Ed & Linda Baker*



Children from the kindergarten in Santa Rosa



Dancers from Mother's Day celebration



Full congregation at Santa Rosa for Mother's Day



Ed's Paraguayan theatrical debut



We wanted you to see the Paraguayan logo for the Methodist Church. Notice the Paraguayan map in the background, and the thumb print behind the cross. The thumb print indicates that the Methodist church here in Paraguay has it's own identify.