

Dear Everyone

Greetings from chilly San Francisco. Unlike the last few years, we are having a winter this year, albeit for a few days at a time, and we are grateful for our wood-burning stove to heat the dining/living area on colder evenings.



July has been a month of trips, which is why this newsletter is coming out rather late. The middle two weeks of July is school winter break for us in the Southern Cone. The first week we were at our Latin Link Southern Cone team conference, in the town of Termas de Rio Hondo, Province of Santiago de Estero some eleven hours by bus north-west from here. The programme was very relaxed. There are always items for discussion and some business decisions which must be made, but we were able to emphasise the importance of face-to-face contact as we shared devotionals together, and each member showed a powerpoint presentation catching us up with each other's lives and ministries. We enjoyed a visit from Suzanne Potter, Latin Link's current international team leader, who is based in Guatemala and was able to be in Argentina for the conference and some days before. And we also made the most of downtime together in the hotel and the surrounding area – photos.

We arrived home from the team conference, and forty-eight hours later some of us were on a different bus nine hours south-east to Buenos Aires. Joni and Hazel spent five days in and around Rafael Castillo visiting Pastor Ramon and his family, and Hazel preached in his church on the Sunday evening.



Ramon's church-plant is progressing nicely. He is currently investing time in the members of a newly-convened leadership group who are meeting regularly for Bible study/discipleship activities. They are also hosting regular evening socials in the houses of different church members and encouraging folk to invite family and friends to chat over a meal. In the little shop-front where the Sunday service takes place, they are gradually raising and spending money on different resources – new chairs and some new tech equipment so they can show video, powerpoint etc and put up the words to songs. They are also working on an idea to create a movable partition to divide the space, which would give them the flexibility to have two activities running together, e.g. a children's activity during the service, or two study groups.



The district of Rafael Castillo seems to be weathering Argentina's financial difficulties better than we might have expected; we found the town centre bustling, and the previous wreck of a train station has undergone a much-needed overhaul. Downtown, the centre of Buenos Aires is a picture of contrasts, with the affluent luxury shopping and banking districts mixed with severe poverty, particularly evidenced by the many beggars, street-sellers and rough sleepers, as well as increased visible police presence in some areas.

Now we are very much back home, and school has started again this week for the long second half of the year. "Big Brother" remains with us from Sunday evenings until Friday afternoons and this is likely to continue at least for the rest of this academic year, so we are busy juggling timetables for the three boys, as well as our own activities. Hazel is leading bible study today, and writing her sermon for this Sunday. Martin is up next week. Thank you for all your prayers and support. We hope you have a good month.



Joni & Daniel

Hazel X Martin

