

Medical Mission Report

July 23-August 10, 2021

Our Missions trip to Paraguay this year was accomplished despite facing a lot of obstacles due to the impact of the Corona Virus. The necessity of taking the required Covid tests twice before leaving the US (because the first test didn't meet the required deadline) added additional costs. Furthermore, 3 people dropped out early and due to delays in processing passports, one more person had to stay behind--only 3 people completed the Mission. We learned that Copa Airlines now is charging an additional fee of \$46



for a second suitcase resulting in extra charges for the team members.

Even though both Albert and I had been tested before our flight and both vaccinated, the Paraguayan government still required a 5 day quarantine and yet another test in Asunción after the 5 days. We were also required to take a second test 3 days before leaving Paraguay--each test cost \$82.

The period from the 23rd of July to the 1st of August, the day Joselyn our nurse arrived, was used for information, planning, and getting re-acquainted with our brothers and sisters in the churches. It has been 2 years since our last team due to the COVID pandemic travel restrictions which made worldwide travel impossible. One of our initial tasks as we reached Asunción was renting a car and getting acquainted with the members of our latest church affiliate, Ebenezer. We also met with the two doctors who were going to assist us with our upcoming medical fair--Dr. Luis Miño and Dr. Daniel Riveros. Dr. Miño is also an elder of Ebenezer Church and the Director of the new Ebenezer Medical Clinic—we attended the inauguration ceremony on Saturday, August 7, 2021.

Albert was our driver all around the Asuncion area and we relied on Google Maps GPS which worked surprisingly well. However, the GPS used coordinates as there are not many road signs are this created certain interesting situations as the GPS telling us to go through soccer fields and other areas without roads. We had previously always used Paraguayan transportation to transport the team, but because of our reduced size, it was more practical and less expensive to rent a vehicle.

After picking up Joselyn Salguero, our nurse, on Sunday, August 1st, we soon began working on the core part of our mission. Many people in the US had bought and donated a big quantity of medical supplies as well as medical instruments used to measure blood pressure, oxygen, and testing blood sugar levels. We also purchased some supplies in Paraguay and some instruments such as a weight scale.

Dr. Miño and his team had also received demonstration meds from companies that he used. Furthermore, the mayor of Villa Elisa, a friend of Dr. Miño, donated an examination bed for the patients.

Monday, August 2nd: We met at El Renuevo to distribute pills of various kinds into clearly marked envelopes in quantities of 30 or more from the original containers. We were following recommendations and instructions from Dr. Miño. This task took up a great portion of our day with help from many people.



We learned from this experience that it might be better next time to buy the meds in smaller containers for direct distribution. Also, supplying some funds for direct purchase in Paraguay may be appropriate. Bulk-sized containers that have to be broken down creates extra work and increases the risk of mix-ups.

We conducted medical fairs at three locations. Barrio Parque (Tuesday, August 3); Ebenezer (Wednesday, August 4); and El Renuevo (August 5). Each fair was divided into three stages:

Stage 1. Initial examination and check-up which included weight, height, blood pressure, oxygen, and blood sugar levels were done by the nurse. She used the small preprinted cards we created to fill in the results of the individual check-ups.

Stage 2. Consultation with the doctors.

Stage 3. The distribution of the meds and multivitamins to patients.

We constructed our height scale with paper and tape at each location--we will come up with a better



solution next time. We also ended up buying more multivitamins because the supplies ran out at the first two churches. Buying multivitamins in Paraguay seems to be as or more expensive than in the US, so it is not a bad idea to concentrate on bringing small bottles of multivitamins for the next trip.

We also learned that having a second nurse with us to distribute meds and vitamins to the patients, after receiving the handwritten note from the doctor, would be very helpful. Often the doctor himself or the nurse had to do this task wasting valuable time away

from the patients.

Dr. Jennifer Finelli had pre-recorded specific targeted videos for the patients to listen to while waiting for their Physical, but it would have been more effective to have speakers attached to the computers and also projecting the videos onto a screen.

Albert, Joselyn, and I were invited to various functions and had the opportunity to meet new brothers and sisters as well as reconnecting with old friends.

Joselyn stayed with Ignacio and Noemi Mendoza while Albert and I stayed with Pastor Miguel and Pinchi. It needs to be mentioned that since my last visit in May, Pastor Miguel built a new bedroom with bath for our exclusive use. It was impressive that he accomplished this project within three and a half months.

Friday, August 6: Right after breakfast our team was honored by the students of the El Renuevo School who performed Paraguayan dances. It was beautifully done by two students and very captivating with applauses during and after their performances.



After their dance, the team members were asked to give personal testimonials.

On Saturday, August 7, the team was invited to participate in the inauguration of the Medical Mission of the Ebenezer church. This mission will be open every Saturday to serve the church and needy people. Dr. Miño, who is the Director of the Medical Mission, had earlier invited us to his home for a delicious special grilled fish and steak dinner.



The team was also invited for meals at the homes of Narciso Britez, Cesar Franco, Pastor Maureira, Pastor Sosa, and Charlie Mendez.

During our stay, we enjoyed breakfast at El Renuevo at 7 am each morning and dinner at sister Liliana's home. The lunches were mostly at other church members' homes with one or two exceptions at sister Liliana's house.

On two Sundays, July 25th and August 1st, Albert and I had the great opportunity to participate in the food program that reaches out to the indigenous people living around Barrio Parque Church. This is made possible from funds the Project Paraguay Board has approved.

Albert and I met with a Paraguayan lawyer and we inquired regarding residency requirements in Paraguay for the benefit of both of us and Jennifer/Brian Finelli, who are considering establishing a



medical mission focused on the indigenous peoples. Furthermore, we have signed a contract with Pastor Miguel to purchase a lot of land from his family and have started the process of building a house that potentially can house at least 10- 12 team members in the future.

Pastor Miguel's "can do" attitude made it possible for us to observe dump trucks unloading rocks used for the foundation, right before we left the country. We are praying that the Lord will guide us and bless this project. Money for this project is privately funded by Albert and Me.

Our first Medical Mission accomplished what it was meant to do--helping several Paraguayans who normally don't have access to regular check-ups. The three day effort resulted in almost 150 people receiving free checks ups and free medication. We have learned from this one how to be better prepared for our next one. The Lord blessed our efforts and we are thankful.

Next year, we also anticipate that construction will begin on La Roca Church. We are praying that it will be possible to assemble a team for that purpose while also conducting vacation bible school and a medical fair.

Albert and I, Lord willing, are preparing to go back in January/February for an interview regarding our Paraguay residency application, so please keep us in your prayers.

In His Love

Kean

