

Project Paraguay

Heart Aflame ...  ... Mind Renewed

In the Service of Christ the King

December 13, 2024

Dear Friend of Project Paraguay,

God can use Christmas and New Year's to renew us, and He has certainly been doing a new work for Project Paraguay and our supporting churches which will bear fruit next year. Christ tells us, "Behold, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.' And he said to me, It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son." Revelation 21:5-7.

As noted in our last letter, this year has been one of the most significant as we accomplished many firsts during our July Missions Trip. Since then, we have experienced two crucial events involving the Paraguayan Government. Jesus tells us to "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." Matthew 22:21. Unfortunately, too often throughout history Caesar overreaches into the things that are appropriately God's. We see this when the State tried to kill Jesus right after His birth (Matthew 2:16) and later forbade His disciples to spread the Good News (Acts 5:29).

On the one hand, we are grateful that the churches under the El Renuevo rubric have finally obtained official legal recognition after much expense, bureaucratic red tape, and years of waiting. The legal status provides a modicum of security as property can now be owned and transferred by the newly recognized legal entity. However, we are also saddened that the El Renuevo School has had to close its doors permanently at the end of November in part because of overreaching government rules and policies.

You see, operating a private school in Paraguay is much tougher than doing so in the United States where Government is constitutionally barred from interfering in Church and private school matters and their employment policies. By contrast, in Paraguay, private religious schools are legally required to provide a retirement pension to its employees, thus increasing the costs of operation. Thus, breaking even as a non-profit is not a sustainable model under such circumstances, but breaking even was the only thing the El Renuevo School could attain.

The School was started as a ministry and it was never envisioned that pension requirements would one day force it to close. The School became economically unsustainable and enrollment decreased by over half from prior years because of competition from recently opened private schools in the same area. As this was happening, the Government-imposed COVID lockdowns disastrously affected School finances. It became clear to the Paraguayan Church leadership that even reacquiring

break-even financial status would still deepen the ever-growing pension debt to the teachers—this was an unsustainable situation long-term, given that the School already owed upwards of \$40,000 in State-mandated pension debt, which was growing by the year. The Church therefore decided to close the School and is now fundraising to pay off the debt.

The other school, Barrio Parque, is doing fine because its model is different and doesn't rely on tuition to operate—only on your donations of \$50 per month per student. Given the experience of El Renuevo, Barrio Parque has structured its school and finances differently to ensure it never gets into a debt situation. However, Barrio Parque School needs additional sponsors in order not to cut back its services next year. Please consider sponsoring a student! (<https://projectparaguay.org/school/>)

The legal recognition and the lifting of the School albatross will free El Renuevo and provide it with flexibility for a new ministry direction. As for Barrio Parque, our new primary project is to rebuild the parsonage at higher elevation as the current building frequently floods and has become unsanitary. Secondly, we seek to help the Ebenezer Church expand its sanctuary which has become way too small because of explosive growth. Eventually, La Roca Church will also need a new sanctuary building. We ask for your prayers and generous contributions for these vitally important construction projects before the end of 2024 (<https://projectparaguay.org/donate/>).

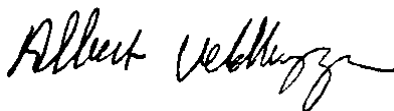
Jesus is making all things new in Paraguay, and even when Caesar interferes, the gates of Hell shall not prevail against His Church (Matthew 16:18). It is precisely at Christmas that we remember the State's utter failure to snuff out the Christ-Child and Christ's cosmic triumph over Evil. Exciting projects are in the works and His Kingdom will grow as you, as God's instruments, are led to pray, contribute, and participate. As always, we are planning a very impactful missions' trip from July 11-22, 2025, and hope you will consider joining us!

The Christmas Season will set the tone for what is achievable in the New Year. Therefore, please consider a big contribution this month! We are thankful for you and your commitment to honor our Savior. We wish you a wonderful Christ-centered Christmas and a successful God-honoring New Year!

For the PP Board,



Gordon Caylor
Projects Director



Albert R. Veldhuyzen
Executive Director



Kean Hyltoft
Finance Director

P.S. Your support for Project Paraguay's work is very much appreciated. Given that we are all unpaid volunteers, these funds go directly to the support of the work in Paraguay. Thank you for your faithful prayers and actions in support of Christ's Kingdom! God Bless.

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