

News from URUGUAY

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ at Pine Grove

The Lord has been so good and faithful down through the years, but He used His people to surprise us with the extent of His love. We went to meeting as normal, for the Breaking of Bread at 10 am, but as we drove up it drew our attention that there were two or three times more cars, and they were all clogging the front access. Then I saw the gate to the yard wasn't open, so no cars could enter the inner parking lot. Instead there were tables set up with table cloths. Only then did I suspect something was set up for our 50th. We were greeted with clapping, shouts and hugs, and for sure, three times more people than normal – each of the four assemblies we serve were present, plus my brother Rob, Cecilia, Delia and husband Alejandro from Mercedes. There were several from Montevideo that had been invited who have had significant ties to us down through the years. Andrew and Leticia were present with their daughter, Annie and on their last furlough the fact of our 50 years was talked about at MSC, so there we met Randy and Sherri Hoffman.



We enjoyed a lovely Breaking of Bread which was followed by comments by the various visitors sharing stories of the past. Many were humorous, others significant. There were laughs and tears and many pictures, but a healthy emphasis was kept on God's faithfulness and glory. Brother Randy then spoke from Exodus 17:1-7 and John 7:37-39 – and Christ's invitation: "If anyone thirst, come to me...", an invitation to salvation and also to fullness of life as we abide in Christ. He challenged us on John 15:5.



There were gifts of flowers, a hand-written wall text, a superb sketch of us by the brother who did the translating and a very unique plaque from MSC, which is at the top of the letter, with several pictures, one of which was our letter of commendation by Rexdale from 1974 and another of the first time that we appeared in the 1975 prayer handbook. The plaque had 1 Cor.15:58 engraved on it, the same verse

Rexdale's letter had written at the bottom, and others too, mentioned during the meeting. We greatly appreciate this letter from Rexdale which is emblematic of their faithful loving care and prayers. The brother who translated the message also translated and read the letter for everyone to hear.

Finally the give-away tables came into good use as everyone had contributed with a little something and the assembly barbecued some meat and sausages. Then of course the desserts and a big cake and a home-made fruit salad. Like the family picture on the right, others were taken with each of the assemblies, and another with some of the first converts (others are now with the Lord).



What a celebration of God's faithfulness and of His giving life and growth to the seed that has been sown down through the years and cultivated to maturity. God is glorified.

What else happened in January and February? Haha, plenty went on as usual, with the normal camps and tent meetings. But the big surprise came on Jan 1st when Ken had a little more than an upset stomach. Tests revealed a gall-bladder attack and showed a couple of stones that are 1,8 cm. plus many little ones. It gave a second kick about ten days later, so things are being arranged to have it removed soon.



The end of January we enjoyed a quick visit from Jim Fleming and Marlon Govender of Emmaus. These visits are encouraging to the various promoters and correctors of the correspondence courses and this time highlighted the use of the internet application. During 2023, the 14 Uruguayan promoters gave out 792 courses and corrected 256 of them for about 200 students. Thank you for your generous gifts of \$230.00, and for being an important part of our 50 year story.

Ken and Eunice