

Hannah and Tim Latin Link

Serving Marginalised Communities in Brazil and South Sudan

Dear friends,

Sorry that we didn't send out a newsletter last month. After our move and a good but tiring Latin Link Brazil conference, we decided we needed to take more rest and recuperation time at the end of July/beginning of August, and our newsletter was a casualty of that decision!

Sabá

We want to devote most of this newsletter to telling you more about Sabá. Sabá is a quilombola community situated in the hills about 20 minutes north of Custódia city centre. It's a community characterised by strong family links, mutual aid and cooperation, hard work, but also lack of access to basic services and employment. Most families rely on subsistence agriculture, selling small surpluses to local markets. They are limited in what they can produce by lack of access to water. A small number of people find employment in the city as builders or moto-taxi drivers, and a group of 20-30 men travel to a neighbouring state for six months in the year to cut sugarcane, leaving their families behind.

There is no school in the community, but a daily bus takes dozens of younger children to school in another community, and perhaps 10 older children to the city. Many drop out early because of the difficulty of access; others have completed secondary education but been unable to fulfil their obvious potential because of lack of opportunities. There is no health post in the community and the sick have to make their own way to the city, often spending all their disposable income on travel and treatment. Family benefits also have to be claimed in the city.

Despite the difficulties, residents will tell you they wouldn't want to live anywhere else. In fact, we've met some who've moved away for work but come back because they missed Sabá so much. Sabá is beautiful, and the sunsets are amazing. Life may be hard, but there's land for everyone, and people stick together and help each other. Family is always nearby. It's safe, and there's plenty of space for children to run around and play.

The influence of folk catholicism is obvious in Sabá, although the institutional Catholic church is rarely present. Thankfully there is very little hostility to the evangelical church and both we personally, and the Betel church, have been welcomed with open arms.

(see next page)

September / Setembro / Lal '18



Please be praying:

- Give thanks for the team helping in Sabá, and pray that their initial enthusiasm would be maintained. Pray that they understand the need for and prioritise attending the weekly prayer and training meeting.
- Give thanks that a good number of teenagers are attending on Friday nights. Pray that we would have a good number of girls as well as boys. Pray for committed team members to come alongside us and develop in confidence so they can continue the work when we are away. Pray that the teenagers would grow in knowledge of God.
- Give thanks for the successful renewal of Tim's residence.
- Thank God for those supporting the Abye Teacher Sponsorship Programme. Pray for others to join so it can be extended and expanded.
- Pray for Hannah's work as the Short Term Coordinator for Latin Link Brazil, most of all that it will bear fruit and that more missionaries will be sent and received well from and to Brazil.

We are leading a team from the main church in Custódia planting a church and serving the community in Sabá. Between 5 and 10 of us go up to Sabá every Saturday, leading a church service attended by around 15 adults and 10 children. We're currently studying the parables of Jesus. On Wednesday nights we hold a meeting in our house to pray for Sabá and train the team from the main church. On Wednesday mornings we visit houses in Sabá. The leader of the quilombola association, a strong advocate for his community, is coming with us to make introductions on our behalf. This is a huge blessing, as every door is open to us, something we know is not true for every missionary working in quilombola communities. He and his family have already become good friends, and he attends the weekly service regularly.

The purpose of these visits is to get to know residents, and hear from them. We want to know their dreams for their community, and how they'd like the church can work together with them to realise them. Where appropriate we also pray, share and read the bible with them. Based on their ideas and what they and we have to offer, the church will develop further activities sometime next year.

Soon we hope to be able to announce the start of a project which has been in the pipeline since before we arrived, following discussions between the community and Pr Neto. This will be a holistic development project delivering vital infrastructure in Sabá. Watch this space!

Teenagers

When we arrived in Custódia, Pr Neto asked us to head up the teenagers' ministry in the church. They had not had anyone to do this for some time, and most teenagers had drifted away from the church. We started with a pizza night, and are running activities every Friday night. Around 20 are coming, including those who had drifted away from church and some of their friends who have never been to church. It's mostly fun activities, but we also do short bible studies using the *Letra Viva* methodology we used in Gaibu (hopefully this is a fun activity too!). Please pray that others would come alongside us in this work; we'd like a team to do this work even if the other team members don't feel comfortable leading activities at first.

Introducing Latin Link Brazil's new Short Term Coordinator

Hannah was elected as Brazil's new Short Term Coordinator at the recent team conference. This means she will be responsible for sending and receiving missionaries between Brazil and other countries, who will serve for up to 2 years. Please pray for her as she gets to grips with this new role, seeks out and promotes opportunities and, together with others from Latin Link Brazil, revises and updates our sending process.

Thanks for your support and prayers. Love & solidarity,

Tim, Hannah & Rita Nyanabyei x



FAQs:

Where are you living now?

This year we moved from Gaibu, near Recife, to Custódia, 6 hours drive west of Recife but still in Pernambuco state. Custódia is within Northeast Brazil's semi-arid *sertão* region. Here in Custódia we work with the *Betel Brasileiro* denomination with a focus on outreach to quilombolas in Sabá.

Who are quilombolas again?

Quilombola communities are predominantly Afro-Brazilian communities formed as an act of resistance to slavery and racist oppression, often hundreds of years ago. It is estimated that there are over 5,000 quilombola communities in Brazil. Quilombolas are considered an "unreached people group" in Brazil.

When are you next going to South Sudan?

We plan to go to South Sudan in late October/November. On the way back we will be at Hannah's sister's wedding in Oxford, and will spend Christmas with family. We hope to see some of you then, but it won't be a full-blown "Sending Country Assignment", so unfortunately we won't be able to see everyone.

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