

30 Years in Brazil

14th of August 1980-2010



Thirty years and we are still excited about the prospects for the church here. On the 14th of August 1980, Mike and Peggy Palk, with children Jonathan and Daniel (Jeff was born here later), Phil and Patti Grassie (their two children, Lauren and Jason were born here), Joe and Linda McKinney, with children Joey, David and Lori, Mike Pruitt, (single at the time and later married to Aureni he met here - three children Joshua, Justin and Jonathan) and Randy and Kathy Short, with children Alex and Anthony, (Amanda was born here) stepped off the plane in Recife, Brazil. They were joined by Charley and Terri Taylor, with children Kamalyn, Charlton and Marissa about 2 months later to complete the team. We along with Mike Pruitt continue in Recife to this day. We were joined by Daniel, the son of Mike and Peggy Palk, a few years ago. Joe and Linda McKinney have been coming for the last few years spending 6 months in Brazil and six months in the states. All of their children and grandchildren now live in João Pessoa, the state capital just to the North of us, and are involved in mission work there. Our of children all live in the states. Amanda lived here for 1 year with her family and during that time our second grandchild was born here. They are Justin and Amanda Moore, Elijah and Emanie. Anthony lives in Charlotte with his wife Kirsten and our newest grandson, Tobias, turns 1 year old this month. Alex is here with us for an extended visit. We would love for it to be a permanent move. The Grassies are in New Mexico. The Palks are in Tennessee as are the McKinneys at this time. The Taylors live in Texas.

A lot has happened in Northeast Brazil in these 30 years. Other teams have come and gone in capital cities North and South. 100s of churches are now planted where in 1980 there were none. 1,000s of Christians now walk with Jesus, and 10s of thousands of people have heard the gospel. As greatly blessed as we feel for having been used by God here we still believe the best is yet to come. We hope you will look at how you have helped and be grateful to God for what he has done and how he has used you in this work.

As we commit more of our life to the work here we hope you will also do the same. We believe that our presence is still needed. Our role has changed significantly here as more and more qualified Brazilians have taken the leadership in churches. The biggest need continues to be the preparing and equipping of Christians for greater and in some cases fulltime service in church planting and maturing ministries. Consider helping us expand our teaching and training program called EBNESR or simply Ebenezer as many call it here. Though not a name often used by churches of Christ in the states it is a Biblical name. **1 Samuel 7:12** "Then Samuel took a stone and put it up between Mizpah and Jeshanah, naming it Ebenezer, and saying, Up to now the Lord has been our help." It means stone of help and was a memorial to God's working with them to bring them to where they were. For me, now as then, our school's name recalls how much God has done in this ministry and the confidence we should have in his continuing grace.

20/20 Vision

If you would like to know more about how you can help us with a new expansion plan we are calling 20/20 Vision I will be glad to send you a copy of our strategy. We believe that the number of churches can more than double in the next 10 years. In fact with no great negative changes in the receptivity of the people I believe there will be over 400 congregations by 2020. Eventually our goal is to have a congregation in every municipality in the Northeast and there are 1,712 of those. Right now we are concentrated in three large municipalities and the balance scattered out over 7 of the 9 states. Our project calls for an expansion that will double our current financial investment. And even though we will be spending more money raised in the states the plan includes a 10 to 15 year timetable of becoming completely independent of all funds from abroad. These goals are tough but they are doable with your help. As EBNESR is one of the keys to the success of this plan so are you.

I know this is a lot of text and few pictures but it is impossible to take a snap shot of the future. That is why we call it a dream. Without your continued financial support, and even increasing support along with aid coming in from new sources this will not happen. Close your eyes and see another place in the world where there are as many churches of Christ as there are in all the Southeast United States. I see that happening in Northeast Brazil. I am going to stop for now but just ask me and I'll tell you much, much more.

Big Gift on the Thirtieth Anniversary of Our Arrival Here

What better way to celebrate? On the very day of our 30th anniversary we had a new outreach course starting. I do not understand what happened. We often plan and begin new courses to teach the Bible through our School of the Bible but never before have we been so effective using the same advertizing methods. Over 80 outsiders had signed up for our course by 2 o'clock Saturday when we began. 50 of those showed up to study a course called simply "Let the Bible Speak." 12 are members of the church in Boa Viagem so we had 62 people present in our class that I believe is the largest class of visitors I have ever taught in my 30 + years of ministry. What a great way to celebrate!



No angle captured everyone but all 50 of our school chairs were full and the over flow used regular chairs.



We experimented with live transmission of video/audio by way of the internet. It worked but not without some bugs to work out. One of our ministry students, Junior Cordeiro, pictured here is very up-to-date on this sort of thing as is Alcides Marques, the school director's son Garry. They are pictured sitting next to the camera and with two laptops controlling the transmission. If you are around a computer with fast internet connection next Saturday afternoon you might want to tune in and see me teaching. The site is <http://www.livestream.com/ebnesr>. We had over 15 watching online yesterday from at least two different countries. We are actually testing this to use with our training courses taught in various extension schools around the country.

Continue helping. Continue praying. There is so much to be done.

Blessings,

Randy