



NOVEMBER 2024

## WHEN HOPE SPRINGS NEW

### *Praises*

- For a successful backpack project that gave school supplies to 450 kids in the Rio Branco neighborhood.
- Our new partnership with Hispanics for Christ, which will help us train and support new church planters.
- Daniel and Marci's mom are coming to visit us for Christmas this year.

### *Prayer*

- God's guidance and wisdom as we seek to expand into new partnerships here on the field.
- Marci as she continues to work toward an MDiv: for time and mental space to do this in the midst of many other things.
- Our seminary graduates who will continue to serve in their respective churches.

*Though you have made me see troubles, many and bitter, you will restore my life again; from the depths of the earth you will again bring me up. You will increase my honor and comfort me once more.*

PSALM 71:20-21 (NIV)

As November rolls around, many of you are preparing for cool weather. I imagine something like having a pumpkin spice latte while waiting for the season's first snowfall. Meanwhile in Brazil, we are busting out iced tea, winding down school semesters, and anticipating the arrival of summer. Even though we live in opposite worlds, one thing we have in common during this season is the anticipation of Christmas. My favorite time of year is Advent. It is a season to focus on the hope, peace, joy, and love we find in our Savior Jesus Christ.

As I think about this past year and the amount of destruction and pain we witnessed when the floods came, I am drawn even more to the hope and restoration found in Jesus. I want to thank everyone for your generous response to our call to the crisis relief fund. With these funds, we have been able to share the hope of Jesus through restoring homes, replacing lost items, feeding communities who lost their grocery stores, helping kids



get back to school by providing school supplies, and supporting local organizations like YWAM and CRU, whose teams have cleaned hundreds of homes and cooked thousands of meals.



One neighborhood of focus is Rio Branco in the city of Canoas, which is home to over 30,000 people. There are two rivers, one west and one south of the neighborhood, that swelled to over 15 feet (4.5 meters) within twenty-four hours and completely engulfed the neighborhood. As the water rose, those who could flee their homes left with just a few items they could carry or fit in their cars. Everyone in this neighborhood lost everything. When you think about a neighborhood being destroyed, it is not just the homes but also the restaurants, pharmacies, and grocery stores. It is the clinics, the social service offices, and the schools, too. After thirty days, the waters receded to reveal the destruction underneath. The smell in the neighborhood was palpable and hard to inhale.



*Dalcin family*

It would be impossible in one newsletter to share with you all the stories from the flood, so I will focus on one family, the Dalcins. Ricardo and Márcia Dalcin have lived in Rio Branco their entire marriage. Ricardo grew up in the neighborhood. They raised their two kids there and ran a local business. Several years ago, one of Ricardo's employees began to talk to him about Jesus. After several discussions, Ricardo accepted Jesus as his Savior. From this time on, he found himself increasingly dissatisfied with running his business. For months leading up to the flood,

he had been praying that God would allow him to be in full-time ministry, so he took the building he had bought for his business and began to hold church services there.

As the flood waters rose, Ricardo and his family sought refuge at a local shelter. Within twenty-four hours, the family had lost everything. As he lay in an open room with 300 people, listening to children cry and the murmurs of people restless through the night, he felt compassion for them. He wanted to help, but how? He didn't have any money. He lost everything the same as them. But God kept telling him to help, so he did. He began to listen and to pray with people, bringing the message of hope in Jesus to those at the shelter. He would go to the pharmacy to collect medication for the elderly and to look for formula for hungry babies. He would pray for a need, and God would provide.



Months after the floods, Ricardo's little church plant has become the center of help for his hurting community. God provided literal tons of food and water that he has distributed. When sharing his testimony of all that has happened, Ricardo said with tears in his eyes, "If I had known that giving up all I had was what it would take to serve Jesus full time, I would have done it months ago."

Thank you so much for your prayers and support. It is always amazing to see how God takes what is offered and multiplies it over and over. Ricardo's family was helped by the Crisis Relief fund, and they are on the ground sharing the love of Jesus with their neighborhood.

02Warm Advent wishes from hot Brazil,

### *Brandon & Marci Jones*

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