



MAY 2025

COMMENCEMENT

Praises

- Another graduation, celebrating three more people answering God's call to proclaim the good news of his Kingdom here in Brazil.
- Strengthening partnerships with a new seminary and new outreach ministries to refugees.
- Another academic year winding down with four family members in school doing well.

Prayer

- For our new church-planting network to help many area churches plant new churches in the Porto Alegre region.
- For safe travels and new connections as Marci and Brandon travel to São Paulo for a theological conference this month.
- For the visit of a team from the Gathering Baptist Church in Kansas City, Missouri, to go smoothly as they help at Chain of Love and give a worship workshop in Canoas in June.

"Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

ISAIAH 43:18-19 (NIV)



Brandon giving the seminary graduates a charge from the Bible.

In Brazil, New Year's Day is still January 1, but the year doesn't really begin until after Carnival, which included some new beginnings for us. In early February, we celebrated the graduation of the last three students from the Pastoral Formation program of the seminary in Porto Alegre. These

ceremonies are often called a commencement because while they celebrate the end of one journey—education—they also recognize a new beginning as one is now more prepared for their next steps.

In March, Brandon had another new beginning by teaching his first class with a new partner to our mission, the Independent Baptist Theological Seminary of the South (STBISUL). Their campus is in the metro region of



Brandon's class at STBISUL.



Porto Alegre and has students preparing to serve as pastors, leaders, church planters, and missionaries. It has been a joy to get to know these new students, as well as the leaders and staff at the seminary. Our mission continues to look for ways to grow this new partnership by incorporating Kairos Brasil into their graduate-level programs and helping start a satellite campus on the border between our state in Brazil and Uruguay. This will help train church planters and leaders in both countries in the region, which is among the least reached in all South America.

One of the students at STBISUL, Tania, works with Venezuelan refugees in one of the poorest neighborhoods of our area. As Marci and our partner, Lyndell, got to know Tania, they were invited to join her for a Bible study in the neighborhood. Several young couples



A Venezuelan refugee mom with her baby, receiving their gift.

attended, many of whom brought their toddlers and babies as well, which prompted Marci to think of ways to come alongside and encourage them. The next week while shopping, Marci came across dozens of toys on clearance. Thinking of the Bible study, she bought as many as could fit in her car to give to the Venezuelan moms. Tania was pleased to report how much fun it was to hand them out!

In April, we joined the rest of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world in celebrating Easter. While there are several times a year when our church sets up a photo station for special events, it isn't customary to do so for Easter. But being the North Americans that we are, after the worship service, our family took a selfie at home. Easter is always a highlight for us, as we have a special



Bible study with Venezuelan refugees.

meal and play unique games, while our house is decorated for the occasion. In recent years, Monica and Olivia have taken over the decorations and the games, and it has been fun for Marci and Brandon to see them blossom in their creativity. Long after the games are over, we leave up the decorations that remind us every day that "He Is Risen!" And so we always have Christ in us, our hope of glory, who is constant whether we are in a season of storms, floods, or even new beginnings.



The Joneses on Easter, plus Chico the cat.

As always, we could not be doing what we do here without your partnership. Thanks for your prayers and your support.

Blessings,

Brandon & Marci Jones

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