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The Voice of Evangelical Action (Brazil)



The Challenges of 2021 by John Medcraft

When we ushered in the New Year in 2021 everyone was relieved to leave 2020 behind believing that 2021 would be much better.

However, for us in Brazil the pandemic is far worse this year. We are seeing many more deaths than before with more than a total of 310,000 as I write.

What makes it worse in Brazil is that President Bolsonaro has never taken the pandemic seriously and has never implemented tough measures to control Covid-19, so things are now out of control and the public health system is overwhelmed with people often dying before they can get a bed in hospital.

Thankfully Brazil is divided into 26 states or administrative regions and it is the state governors who have taken lockdown measures much to Bolsonaro's anger.

The president has tried to overturn the governors' wise moves in the courts! Please especially pray for the EAB/ACEV church leaders amidst all this.

3 of our pastors have had Covid and a 4th has it now as I write.

Our churches are closed at the moment. Last year we had some months closed and then some with hybrid services whilst obeying strict social distancing and the wearing of masks.

Now we are back to services entirely online with our main service of the week on Sundays, which you can watch on YouTube at 'acev patos', from 21.30 GMT. On Mondays there is the prayer meeting, on Tuesdays the men's fellowship, on Thursdays the Bible study and on Saturdays the youth meeting.

Parallel to all this our projects teams continue in action with all the necessary safeguards and precautions. In the first semester of 2021 we are building two more toilet/shower units, three more market gardens, one more chicken run complete with laying hens and we are distributing many more goats to needy families.

Later in the year we will drill another well and teach another group of women in our Desert Flower project how to increase their income through baking bread, making cakes and icing them and producing appetizing savories.

The foodbank carries on all year round too as does the daily bread project. So the work marches on despite all the difficulties and we count on your prayers and support.

New Well Inaugurated

The people of Olho D'água Seco community celebrated at now having a deep well dug within their village which will provide water all year round. A thanksgiving service beside the well was attended not just by local villagers, but members from the Tavares, Princesa Isabel and Imaculada churches.

We always have a service to thank God for the well, and so that people can clearly hear the Gospel message. We will be having a six-month follow up to make sure everything with the system is working correctly and understood by the community. We do all this for a cost of £5,000. This well will supply water for more than 40 families, providing copious amounts of water so that it can also be used for Market Garden Projects to further bless the families.



Chicken Run

Aldenora is married to Luciano Alexandre Ferreira and they have 3 children. They live in a mud and sticks house (hut) at Barra de Oitis village in Diamante county.

They are thrilled because they have been selected to receive a chicken run in our 2-Wings project which will be built in their backyard.

The chicken coop is 3 metres x 2.5 metres with wire-netting 1.5 metres high to protect the hens from foxes or wild dogs.

At one end there will be nesting boxes for egg-laying, and this part will have a roof on to give shade.



When the chicken run is constructed they will receive 7 laying hens duly vaccinated. This project is a great help to poor families as they sell the eggs and thus have increased income to add to the government benefit of £59 per month they at present survive off.

Such projects help the poor to help themselves and give them pride and dignity in the process.

TOWN CLEANERS FOOD

The members of Imaculada church decided that they wanted to bless the street cleaners of their town who were taking part in the Sustainable Town Project.

They made an appeal for food and received a lot so they were able to give each person a large box to bless them.

Imaculada church members, together with members of the Sitio Gloria church distributed food parcels that brought happiness for them and their families over Christmas.



Belém and Campina Grande churches

EAB/ACEV has a pioneer church plant at a village called Belém (Bethlehem) in the County of Tavares.

It is the only evangelical Christian witness of any shape or size in the village. It is led by a lovely couple called Naldinho and Vera. They have two children. We have built a little church there.

The family are living in the only house available for rent in the village and that was going fine until the owners said they need the house for themselves, so need Naldinho and Vera to move out.

What do we do as this young church plant, with just a few Christians, badly needs the support of its leaders and teaching from them? We prayed!

Then owners of the house next door to our church said they would be willing to sell their house to EAB/ACEV for £4,400 if we could give them time to build a house for them to live in at their farm which would take 2 months.

We managed to make a down payment of £3,000 and would pay the rest as soon as we could. As the house is next door to the church it will mean we can join the two back gardens to make a nice play area for children's work.

Our church in the borough of Catolé in the city of Campina Grande decided to raise some funds to pay what was needed for the house at Belém by holding an online concert.

The team from the Campina Grande Church, practised hard, prayed hard and shared about the venture. God then surprised them when He provided their goal of £1,400 three days before the event.

On the day they had a bigger audience than they had ever had before on social media and raised £450 towards the pastoral home. Many people have heard the message of the Gospel through the songs of this church band.

We thank God for all of them using their talents to share the Gospel.



Naldinho and Vera



Baptismal Service

Pastor Gersé, from our oldest church at Princesa Isabel, was asked to visit the Filipe Village in the County of Saboeiro in the State of Ceará.

Although it was about a 6 hour journey Pastor Gerse was the closest pastor to this isolated church. They have struggled quite a lot during the pandemic so they needed someone to encourage them.

They also had a few people wanting to be baptised.

Arrangements were made that Pastor Gerse, his wife and another couple that travelled with him would stay at the Pastor's house, but when they arrived there he couldn't put them up as his son and family had turned up.

He offered them to sleep on the hard church benches! Pastor John told them to find a B & B place as it was necessary they had a bed to sleep on, and that we would pay the bill.

They were extremely relieved! The service went extremely well and 10 people were baptised, so it was well worth the journey.



Mailson

Mailson is a valued bass player in the Patos Church Worship group and has recently preached at the church on the Green Pastures Farm. Like many other young people he has been studying online at one of the Bible Colleges, but this year he lost his job as his company collapsed in the pandemic, and he could no longer afford to pay for his lessons.

John felt that as he was such a sincere brother that we should pay for his studies for this year so he can continue. When he was told he broke down in tears of happiness, looking forward to the next year of study which he thought he would have to abandon!



A Different Wedding Present

Edson and Aparecida are a young couple who came to Christ at our church at Barra de Oitis in Diamante County.

This community of descendants of African slaves is extremely poor. The couple fell in love and wanted to do things properly and get married, but the big question was where could they live?

So for a wedding present some family and friends got together with them to make them a tiny house using mud and sticks for the walls and clay tiles for the roof!

They were thrilled but like most houses in the village it had no toilet or shower.

EAB therefore decided to put them on the list for its toilet/shower project, and when funds became available, behind their house, we built them a lovely toilet/shower unit and the newlyweds are over the moon!

The circular construction is 2.5 metres (7½ foot) wide, has a water tank above and dual cess pits beneath. Inside it has a flush toilet, shower and hand basin and outside has a large sink for washing clothes.

Edson and Aparecida join us in thanking EAB supporters for this wonderful wedding present.



Drought

This rainy season has not brought the downpours we need to fill the rivers and lakes to see us through the 9 months of drought. We have showers but it's one of those years where the rain just comes in in dribs and drabs, and the river bed and lake remain bone dry at Green Pastures Reserve.

This is going to be one of those years where our deep-bore wells will be vital in the drought, as will be our drinking troughs all over the Reserve for the wild life.

We supply water to our neighbours from our well from a tap on the front fence which means people can come and help themselves to water whenever they need it. It is always a joy to see poor people loading up their carts with water in this way.

Market Garden Project

The EAB/ACEV projects team visited our growing Market Garden Project at Barra de Oitis Community this week and was particularly impressed with the progress of Dona Benedita and Senhor Francisco.

Benedita expressed her joy at earning £36 in a month. You might not think that's much for a month but if you realize they didn't have any income before, you will see why she is happy. Francisco loves to show others his plantation of beans, maize, lettuce, guava, mango, bananas, water melon and coconut.

This project really helps people to help themselves, demonstrating God's love and care in tangible ways. The Market Garden Project is now helping hundreds of people giving them a sense of achievement as well as feeding their families and bringing income to the family



GENEROSITY

A wealthy person was so impressed by EAB's serious approach to its projects and work and decided to make a donation to our foodbank. She has donated 45 kg of couscous, 30 kg of spaghetti, 40 kg of rice, 10 kg of coffee, 60 kg of sugar and 30 kg of beans. All glory be to God as this will help quite a few very needy people.



Action Schools Christmas

Covid-19 meant that for a year the school year was disrupted.

Our teachers put in a lot of extra work to provide lessons on-line, as most people know someone with a mobile phone so children could continue their education. Where pupils have no access to the internet the teacher wrote out lessons and delivered them to the children, picking the work up the following week when they delivered the next set of lessons. Over the last few days of term, the teachers have been teaching the importance of gratitude, even in such difficult times as this in the world.

Christmas parties were cancelled but teachers either delivered presents or invited the children, at different times, to school to collect them from the teachers. Food parcels were also given so families had extra things to eat over Christmas as they celebrated the birth of Jesus. We thank God for our children.

What motivates us is the promising future each child will have with a good education. Without that they would probably continue their lives with the pain of unemployment and poverty.



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FUNDRAISING

All our fundraising activities were brought to a standstill when Covid-19 arrived which meant to keep serving the people of north-east Brazil we had to use up our reserves. By God's grace supporters responded and we can now do so much more to alleviate the problems of poverty.

Thank you to everyone who donated so freely to bless others. A special 'Thank You' to all those who bought the Gift Cards before Christmas. We were able to send the money out to Brazil so that the gifts could be distributed quickly, making such a difference to people's lives.



Make a difference with EAB

If you would like to make a donation towards the work of EAB, please send your cheques made payable to 'Evangelical Action Brazil' to Mrs Beryl Gough, 6 The Glade, Langley, Southampton SO45 1ZP.

Alternatively, if you want to make a direct payment from your bank, our banking details are:
Lloyds - Account Name: Evangelical Action Brazil
Sort Code: 30-91-85 / Acc No: 02385564

If you use this option please email eabfinance@gmail.com giving brief details of the donation. Donations can be made online at www.eabrazil.org. Any gift, no matter how small is greatly appreciated and will be used to further God's work in Brazil. If you are a UK tax payer and would like to 'Gift Aid' your donation, please ask Beryl for a form. Thank You!

LEGACIES: If you are interested in leaving EAB some money, or gifts, in your will please contact the treasurer (her details are on the left) and ask for the legacy details.