

Greetings from Paraguay!

While many of you have been enduring the cold and trying to drive in the snow, we have been enjoying the Paraguayan summer. The temperatures here have ranged from the high 80's to around 105 degF.

School is on summer vacation, making it the perfect time to have the youth camp for all the Nazarene churches in the nation. The photo is of the attendees of the youth camp. We were privileged to attend the camp, and Margarete was asked to serve as the camp nurse due to her experience working as a nurse in the United States.



During the opening service, several young people gave their testimonies. These youth had attended their first camp the previous year. One young lady described God's change in her life as "putting the batteries in me." This young lady now serves as a youth leader in her church.

God has incredibly blessed the Paraguayan Nazarene Youth, as they have seen impressive growth over the past few years. We had 175 who could attend and more who wanted to attend but could not because there was no space. Please pray with us as the national youth leadership searches for a larger facility for the camp next year. The youth leaders would love to find a place they can afford but that is also large enough to handle everyone who wants to come. Some more photos from the youth camp....

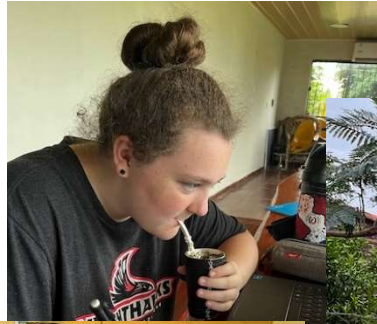


During January, we received an invitation to travel to the capital city, Asuncion, to meet with the leadership of our work and the leaders of the work in all of South America. We immensely enjoyed getting to know our leadership better. It was also an opportunity to meet several of the other missionaries serving in Paraguay and a number of the local pastors.

This trip was our first experience with long-distance public transportation in Paraguay. The bus going to Asuncion was very comfortable and spacious. Due to a misunderstanding, we got our return ride on a different bus line that had air conditioning but was so crowded that some people ended up standing for hours in the aisle. We were fortunate to have gotten on early enough to have seats.



Thank you to each of you who have prayed and given to help supply a vehicle for us. I just received news yesterday that the money has been transferred, and the paperwork has been started to transfer the car. We pray that God will speedily guide the paperwork through the Paraguayan bureaucracy. Optimistically, we hope to have the vehicle in 7 to 10 days.



We view ourselves as learners as we live here in Paraguay. Whether learning about the slow trail of official paperwork, the languages, how to do ministry, the youth camp, riding the bus, drinking térare, or how to cook some local dishes, we must never stop learning.

We have already been in Paraguay for about 70 days. This means that we will have to renew our tourist visas soon. Tourist visas are valid for 90 days and can be renewed one time. We have been waiting for paperwork from the United States government that is required to apply for a resident visa in Paraguay. We received news that our son, who lives in the States, had finally received the paperwork. Yesterday he let me know that the paperwork has started its trip to us. We thank God for getting this paperwork moving. Once it arrives here, we will have to learn about the process of submitting the papers in all the correct places to receive a residency visa. The information I have located indicates that we should plan 3 to 5 days in Asuncion to get everything submitted. Please pray that God will guide us and give us wisdom throughout this process.

A small crocodile in a fenced area at the youth camp!



We invite you to pray for these requests...

- 1. Pray for wisdom for the Paraguayan youth leaders as they plan youth camp next year.*
- 2. Pray that we will continue to see Paraguayan youth energized with God's Spirit.*
- 3. Pray that God will continue to help us as we learn Spanish and Guaraní.*
- 4. Pray that God will call and empower native pastors.*
- 5. Pray for us as we apply for residency visas that God will prepare the way before we get there.*

We thank each of you that takes the time to pray for us. We know that the kingdom of God sees growth when His children pray. Your support in all aspects of this work is of great value.

If you have questions or want more information, please get in touch with me at: tstearns@samnaz.org. If you would like more information about supporting us and the work in Paraguay, that information can be found at: <https://give.nazarene.org/category/region/south-america/tmstearns>

A photo Margarete took of the moon as seen from our driveway.

