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In Touch

ACRE INTERNATIONAL Acre Gospel Mission Prayer Letter March/April 2022

Victor & Audrey Maxwell - *Mission President*



Our world has been convulsed from one crisis to another in recent times. However, it is comforting and reassuring to know that the Lord is building His church in the midst of it all. For us in Acre International, it is a privilege to be engaged in the Father's business in the various areas that He has committed to our trust. We are also blessed to have a wide fellowship of prayer partners and supporters who stand with us in this great work. Be encouraged as you read the various reports. This is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes.

MISSION MATTERS

Monday 21st March at 8pm - Part Two: Dorrie Gunning
Monday 18th April at 8pm - IBEE School Manaus/Bairro Novo Children's Ministry, Manaus
on YouTube and Facebook Acre International Page

Richardo & Sandra - Lanzarote

We thank the Lord that the level of covid infection on the island is now well controlled and the number of covid patients in the hospital has decreased greatly. There are currently only three patients admitted to the hospital with covid, and the ICU remains free from any covid patients. Many of our church members caught covid over recent weeks and months, but thankfully little by little we are getting back to normal.



We are glad to be able to plan for an Acre team to come once again this summer to help us with our summer camp. Due to covid restrictions we were unable to have camp but now, as the restrictions ease, we believe it is possible once again to restart this ministry.



We would like to ask you to pray for the children's ministry. Currently parents are not bringing their children to Sunday School. Since we no longer hold activities on Saturdays, parents of non-believing children are not bringing them to church. Presently there is a good team of servants willing to teach, but there are very few children.

Attendance at the Sunday morning service is good, but very few are coming for the afternoon service. We also ask prayer for this situation.

We were excited to welcome two babies into our congregation, born to two of the families who attend the church. We pray for these two new lives that God would protect them and one day lead them to salvation.

Currently there are six students attending a discipleship course for spiritual growth that will finish this year.

Unfortunately, we still cannot carry out any kind of outreach at the moment, due to covid regulations, but we are looking forward to the day when we can once again restart the prison ministry, visitation to the nursing homes and also the street clubs for the children.

We continue to take advantage of technology resources to be able to offer worship services and prayer meetings by Zoom and YouTube. We have not been able to do the radio programme because the manager of the station is sick. Please pray for his health. His name is Carlos and he used to attend our church.

The news about our son Daniel is very encouraging and he continues to improve every day, and he is continuing with medical treatment, and we see him more animated. Our daughter Andrea is doing well in her first year of university in Tenerife. Our eldest son Yuliam is still working in Germany. We cry out unto God for their spiritual lives.

We are always very grateful for the support of the Acre family and we believe the testimony of the church in Lanzarote remains faithful. Please pray with us that the Lord would add more people to His church here in Lanzarote in these days.



Please remember the Acre Zoom Prayer Meetings
First Monday of each month at 8pm

The codes are - Meeting ID: 4350810967 - Password: 150967

Aroldo & Emmanuelle Areas - Portugal

We are already well into 2022 and Christmas time seems far away but it is still in our hearts as we had a blessed few weeks around Christmas time which was a blessing to our souls. At the beginning of December we distributed at our local marketplace over a thousand Christian calendars that were very well accepted.



We also had a great Christmas ladies' meeting with many attending and a special challenging message was given by a missionary friend, Isabel Jorge, who lived in Mexico for fifteen years. We went to give out the Christmas Baskets to the elderly folk who cannot attend the church anymore. It was a lovely opportunity to have a great time of fellowship conversation with all of them.



We also made some Christmas bags for visitors. The bags contained chocolates and Christian literature with some for the children and some for the adults. The bags were all given out at the different Christmas meetings. The Sunday Christmas service was also very well attended, with unsaved, visitors and church members joining. We felt a great sense of loving fellowship. Altogether, we had a great and blessed time at Christmas despite the covid restrictions.

Now, we are back to a more normal routine, and back to the regular Church ministries and meetings. At the moment there are some unsaved who come faithfully each Sunday. Likewise, we have Christian people who also attend regularly, including three couples and a young family. They are all mainly from Brazil and Angola but we also have some Portuguese. Here are some of them:

Afonso is Portuguese. One day he came to ask Emmanuelle for her help in sorting out a retirement document from a French company. Since then, he has been coming each Sunday, proudly bringing with him the Bible that Emmanuelle offered him. He is from a Roman Catholic background but seems very interested in listening to God's Word each week.

Victor is a young Christian fellow from the north of Portugal but whose job is around our area. He started to attend last year but suddenly stopped coming. He is now back and willing to learn more, searching in God's Word how to grow spiritually and how to witness to his Roman Catholic parents.

Sofia is a young Moroccan girl from a Muslim background. She is in need of friendship, but she is also quite open to speak about spiritual matters. Emmanuelle sees her regularly and Sofia attends our meetings quite often when she is not abroad visiting her family.

Marisa and her twelve year old daughter Carolina come most Sundays. Just this week Marisa has trusted the Lord as her personal Saviour. We give thanks to the Lord for answered prayer. Please pray for her as she takes her stand amongst her very religious family and friends. These are just a few examples of the various people who attend our Church, people with different backgrounds, different spiritual issues and different needs that we try to help and support with the Lord's wisdom and strength.

With the many visitors and Church members, the Friday Kids and Teens' Club and the Sunday School Class for the six to fourteen year olds are growing but this also brings challenges. The kids and teens are usually from Christian backgrounds yet most of them do not know much about the Lord. So, it is very interesting and stimulating for Emmanuelle to teach them (and to teach them altogether as there are no other Sunday School teachers at the moment).

Many thanks to you all for your faithful prayers and support throughout these months of continued pandemic. We praise our Lord for you all standing with us in so many ways.



Keith & Karen Lindsay

It's good to remind ourselves that in this ever changing world we have a never changing God. I'm reminded of the little chorus we used to sing:

*"God is still on His throne and He will remember His own,
Though trials may press us and burdens distress us,
He never will leave us alone
God is still on the throne and He will remember His own
His promise is true, he will not forget you
God is still on the throne."*

In the midst of coronavirus and looming war in the Ukraine and whatever you are going through today in your circumstances, always remember that He is still the King of Kings and Lord of Lords and that one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that He is Lord!

Thank you again for your faithfulness in prayer and support for the work of Acre across the world.

We trust that as you have read these reports that you will be encouraged to pray on for greater blessing in the coming days. We are very thankful that over recent days we have had many meetings open up again for us. If you would like us to share in your church, please get in touch. Please continue to remember our busy programme of meetings from now into the summer.

Peter Moore - Multi Media/Revive

Work continues on the Mission Matters broadcasts, and we have received good feedback on the videos. The latest video was an interview with Dorrie Gunning that has been split into two parts, the second half to be broadcast in March. If you didn't see the first part, or some of the other videos, I urge you to tune in via Facebook or Youtube. Work continues on further ideas for new Mission Matters videos, and the work to update the mission website is ongoing also. Revive has been continuing and last month I had the chance to speak to the young people who came along in the form of an interview, with Matthew Lindsay asking me some questions about myself, my time at Bible college and how I came to work for the Mission. We have been getting some consistent numbers, with around twenty attending each month. Next month we are going to be trying out a new venue for the first time, which will be the Connect Hall in Dromara. If you could remember this in your prayers this would be greatly appreciated.



As we start to look forward to the year ahead and with travel restrictions easing, we are starting to plan for Mission Teams, the first one being to Fatima in May. It has been a while since we were last able to be there and it is hard to know just how many pilgrims will be there, but we are looking forward to getting back out onto the streets and to be able to spend some time with Aroldo and Emmanuelle in Santo Andre. If you would like to join us on any teams do get in touch. Thank you for your prayers for me in this ministry.

Summer Outreach

PORTUGAL OUTREACH TEAM TO FATIMA
9th – 16th May

LANZAROTE TEAM AND KIDS CAMP
27th June – 11th July

Northern Ireland
SUMMER OUTREACH TEAMS
July/August *(Dates to be confirmed)*

PORTUGAL SANTO ANDRE KIDS CAMP TEAM
August *(Date to be confirmed)*

PORTUGAL OUTREACH TEAM TO FATIMA
10th – 17th October



Mark & Judith - Portugal

We are so grateful for answered prayers for our girls Klara and Laura, they are now settled in their house and getting used to living on their own. We praise God for his amazing provision for us as a family, for a home for the girls, furniture and all they needed to start their life there in Northern Ireland. Laura continues her second year in Jordanstown and now our prayer is for Klara and the provision of a job. She has applied for a few posts, so we just ask God to open doors for her. Thank you for all your prayers for our family in these days.

Mark was able to go back in February and sort out the house for the girls which was wonderful.

While Mark was away quite a few of us on site got covid and unfortunately, we had to close the site down for fourteen days. Glenn and a few of the students plus Klara and myself were quite sick for a few days so we thought it better to protect everyone and close the church. Thankfully that was only for one Sunday and we were able to meet together again as a church on the 20th of February. Thankfully we were able to contain it and we recovered very quickly.

Little by little we are able to return to normality as a church and start the different ministries up again. Ladies meetings, men's meetings, Bible studies, youth, mums and tots etc. Our prayer is that hopefully this year we will be able to have Camp Sonshine on site again. After two years it would be wonderful to see those children return for camp again.

We are so thankful that the work here in Vale Judeu continues to grow and we can see God at work. It has been so encouraging to see friends returning after so long because of the pandemic and also to see so many families joining our church from all over the world.

We have been excited to welcome Matt and Kelsea Foreman to our team. Sent as missionaries from Greenisland Baptist. They have joined our team here and are responsible for the kid's ministry at the church. Matt was brought up here at the church in the Algarve and went to Belfast Bible College where he met Kelsea. Kelsea was formerly Kelsea Grey, daughter of Clive and Kathryn and granddaughter of Ian and Clare Grey who were missionaries to Ghana with Wycliffe. They are a real blessing to the team here along with their daughters Sunny and Oakley.

We continue to thank you for your prayers and support for us as a team here in the Algarve.



Jeffrey & Marianna Ferguson - Northern Ireland

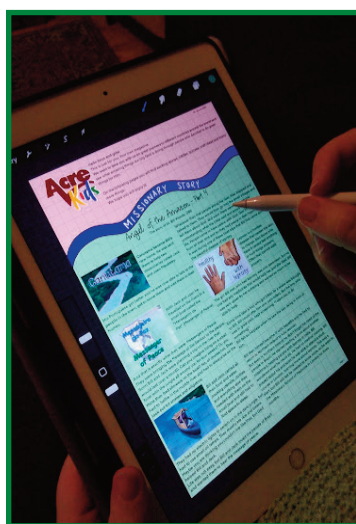
The continent of Europe, the place which we call 'home', has been on the news many times over the years. In recent times, things like Brexit and coronavirus have dominated the news, and now just in the past few days we have seen a new and worrying development with the prospect of war in Eastern Europe. It seems that we move from one crisis to another. It is a timely reminder to us that Europe continues to be a vast mission field, and a continent in need of a Saviour. We thank God for all the believers scattered across Europe today, meeting together in churches, halls and homes, some are large congregations, others just small groups, and in the midst of spiritual darkness all around, they are seeking to bring the light of the Gospel to the places where they are. As a Mission, we have the privilege of being involved in taking the Gospel to a small part of the vast continent of Europe. With workers in Portugal and Lanzarote, we know that the Gospel is being faithfully worked out among the people there. At times progress can be slow, there are many backward steps, there can be many discouragements, but also there are many wonderful examples of how God can take a life, broken and on the path to a lost eternity, and can turn that life around, turning from darkness unto light, and from death unto life. Over the years, our missionaries have had the privilege to be a part of this amazing transformation in people's lives, and so have you. We know that much prayer has gone up before the Lord for the work of Acre Gospel Mission over the years, and we know that prayer is just as much a part of the work and is a vital tool which the missionary can rely on, knowing that as the seed is sown

Jeffrey & Marianna Ferguson *continued*

on the mission field, it is being faithfully watered with prayer back at home. So let me encourage you to keep on praying, prayer is vital for the work, the world needs prayer, our missionaries need prayer, and the unsaved need prayer.

We continue to take opportunities to speak in the local churches, and to share with them about the work of the mission. The people we meet are always very interested to hear more about the work, and it is our pleasure to share with them about what God is doing both in the European work, and also that of Brazil. Recently, I (Jeffrey) have been attending a monthly men's Bible study in the local area where we live, and during the prayer times in those meetings the men have been praying for the work of Acre, which is very encouraging.

As a team we also took part in a recent missionary discovery day in a local church, where we took over the afternoon Sunday School and with three separate 'stations' we shared with the boys and girls about food and culture, language study, mission outreach, a time of crafts, and finished with a Bible story. We believe the children went away with a greater understanding of what life as a missionary looks like, and maybe it will ignite a passion in their young hearts to one day follow that same path, to take the gospel to far off lands.



Marianna continues to write and edit the kid's magazine, and a number of children have subscribed to receive it via post.

The story of Bill Woods, which has been a blessing to write about and share with the boys and girls, is coming to an end and so she is planning for the next editions and for the material needed. We have also been enjoying being involved in 'Revive', the youth work of the mission here in Northern Ireland, and we are looking forward to the next meeting in March.

On a personal level we want to thank you for your prayers and support for us as a family. Marianna is now twenty-five weeks pregnant, and all is going well. We ask for your prayers for her in these remaining months of pregnancy. We recently took a trip to Germany to visit family there and were so thankful for this time, and for the hassle free trip, which before we so easily took for granted, but now see as a blessing from the Lord. Thank you and God bless you all.

Glenn Bowden - *Portugal*

Hello from very sunny Portugal.... I just want to start off by saying thank you for all your prayers and support over the years, they have been such a great source of encouragement and blessing knowing that you stand with us as I serve here in Portugal.

It has been such a very strange couple of years trying to deal with the ups and downs of navigating covid. With so many times having your events and outreaches cancelled days before they were meant to take place and putting in all the time and effort only to have the government cancel everything you had put your heart and soul into, can be so challenging. That has happened to two Sonshine Camps, and also two years of Bethlehem Village, and it can leave you feeling discouraged, and down hearted. But we read in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus." And so, we need to push forward and put our trust in our God and His good purposes. This past Christmas was one of those times. Three days before Bethlehem Village was to happen, we got word that it was to be cancelled. We had everything set up and ready to go, and we had prepared hundreds of bags that we would normally hand out over that weekend. So, we decided to take those bags filled with Christian calendars, gospels of John and chocolates, to our neighbours here in Vale Judeu, and we received a wonderful response.



So many people came out to greet us, and people stopped their cars to ask about Bethlehem Village and why it wasn't happening. I couldn't believe how much this event had meant to the people around us, and everyone took bags, some even to give to their relatives and friends. Please pray that our Christian witness and the gospels of John would leave a lasting impact on our neighbourhood. We are planning a spring fair in April with kids' activities and a coffee morning, please pray that many would come in and we can continue to build on these relationships. Also, as a result of our outreach we now have two neighbours coming along each Sunday to our services, a man from Sweden, and a lady from France.



Please continue to pray for Camp Sonshine Portugal 2022. Applications are coming in thick and fast over the past few weeks since our applications went live. So many kids and young people from many different backgrounds and nationalities have applied. We are so excited to get our summers back to normal and God willing, this July for three weeks, will be such an amazing opportunity to get to share the Gospel with so many young lives. Please remember us as we start to plan and put things in place for this coming July.

Another thing which has been a source of great joy is our youth each Friday night. It has been packed out, with so many South Africans, Russians, Romanians, and Portuguese each week, coming with open hearts and an excitement to hear God's Word. We have had so many opportunities to share the Gospel and answer so many difficult questions with some of these amazing young people and we are continuing to pray to see God move in their young hearts. We're so grateful to our students from ITLC who serve at the youth meeting each week, what a blessing they have been. Unfortunately, we had to call off the youth meeting for two weeks because of covid, as half of our students caught it at one of our youth events, but God willing we will start again soon.

ITLC Portugal has been inspirational, and I'm so thankful for so many lecturers who are passionate about seeing God's word not just hitting the students' minds, but also hearts, and hands. What a blessing to see so many young adults wanting to go deeper in their faith and being serious about wanting to use their lives in service to Him. Please continue to pray that God would raise up leaders and preachers in order to see revival here in Portugal. Please pray for Ethan who is going on to London next year to study Biblical Counselling, also Shannon who is thinking the same, for Jamie who is feeling led to mission work in Spain, for Luis, Matt, Jonathas, and Kerry, and the pastoral and mission work here in Portugal. Please continue to pray for more vision and the raising up of young adults who would seek to share the Gospel either full time or in their workplaces.

May the Lord bless you for partnering with us in the Gospel.

Barry & Raquel Henry - Portugal

Hello to all from the south of Portugal. It only feels like yesterday that we were celebrating Christmas, and we are now coming to the end of the second month of 2022! How time flies. Our Christmas was one to remember as we all fell victim to the now infamous covid virus! Thank God that the symptoms were light, and we all recovered reasonably quickly. Matt escaped it until about two weeks ago when we had to close the church grounds due to the fact the Bible students all got the recent variant and were all put into isolation. We thank God once again that all the students recovered and are all back to their normal selves again.



We have a lot to thank God for as we look back at 2021 and look forward into 2022. We unfortunately were not able to put on Bethlehem Village in December, but we made sure that we didn't waste our opportunity to get into the community. Some of the Portuguese speaking congregation, along with the Bible students, went out around Vale Judeu to hand out the bags that had been made up to give out during the three-day event of Bethlehem Village. We got some great opportunities to talk to some people and it is evident that Bethlehem Village has broken a lot of barriers in regard to the locals.

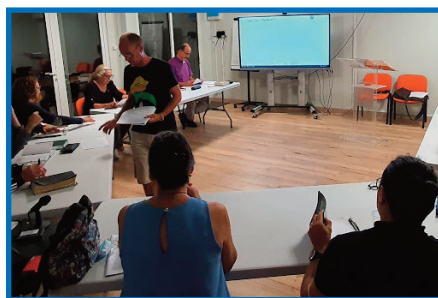
Our discipleship movement within the Portuguese speaking congregation continues and we have seen God move in people's lives, in regard to their walk, marriage and relationships. We are so blessed

to have with us for over a year now, a couple from Northern Ireland (Adrian and Judith Stuart) and who were missionaries in Recife, Brazil working alongside us and using their gifts amongst the Portuguese speaking family. Both of them have held various workshops for us and Adrian has now been responsible for our prayer meeting on a Friday.

We will be starting a new study every last Friday of the month, called "Investigating Christianity" which is to help those who are studying to reach out to their neighbours and friends and create environments for sharing the Gospel.

Our Mateus is in the middle of his second year at ITLC and praying about his future, both vocationally and relationally. His girlfriend, Kerry, is also a student at our Bible school and both have a heart for working amongst the Portuguese speaking people of this country. Please pray for them as they seek wisdom for their future together on both levels. God willing, we will finally be able to have some baptisms during the month of May before it gets too hot. We have a good number of youth and some men who have shown their willingness to be baptized, so we pray that all things will allow for us to be able to do this. We, as a family would as for prayer in regard to two situations. Firstly, this week I start my Masters in Biblical and Theological studies with Dallas Theological Seminary. I will be studying from home and then flying into Belfast twice a year for intensive classes. Please pray for diligence and discipline in regard to this. Secondly, please pray for our housing situation. We are in temporary accommodation at the moment while we wait for our house to be completed, but things have not gone well, and we are no closer to the end as we were back in October. Our time in the current house is temporary and we really feel that we need the stability of a house of our own. We are leaving it in God's hands, but it is only normal to now and again, begin to worry about it.

Raquel continues with COMACEP and is really showing her gifting in regard to this precious work in the schools on a national level. Please remember her and the team and what they do. It is an amazing



opportunity that we have in getting the Gospel into schools, but there is so much behind the scenes work that goes on. As always, we thank you all for your financial support and your precious prayer support. There have been many days that we have felt them when we most needed them! We continue to thank God for all of you and pray that we may be able to meet face to face with some of you in the near future. May God continue to bless you all greatly in Christ. In His precious name we send our love.

MY RESPONSE

- I would like to receive your monthly prayer letter / magazine
- I would like a gift aid form
- I have enclosed a gift of £..... to help present the Gospel message to the millions of people in Brazil, Portugal, Lanzarote and Northern Ireland.

Name.....

Address.....

..... Postcode.....

Email.....

Please send to:

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