InTouch

-MAGAZINE-----

Winter 2023/2024



Dates for Your Diary



Zoom Prayer Meeting:

1st Monday of each month at 8pm via Zoom Meeting ID: 435 081 0967

Code: 150967

6th January: New Year Conference

A Tribute to Dr Bill Woods 10:30-12:30 T₃ Conference Centre, Vic Ryn

6th January: Revive Annual Quiz (18-30s)

Connect Hall, Dromara

3rd February: Revive- CEF (18-30s)

Connect Hall, Dromara

8-11th February: Lurgan Missionary Convention

Lurgan Baptist Church

Why not consider signing up to our Praise & Prayer monthly newsletter for up to date news on our missionaries, current and retired.

 $Contact\ jeffrey @acregospelmission. or g\ for\ more\ information.$

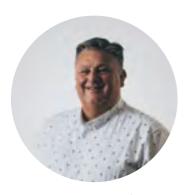
Contact Details

Acre Gospel Mission 52A Halfpenny Gate Road, Moira, Co. Armagh, BT67 0HP +44 7710 506939 +4428 9209 2039

NI Charity Number: NIC108390

If you would like to book us for a meeting please get in touch either by phone or by sending an email to office@acregospelmission.org

Director's Thought for the day



It has been said that the comforting words 'Fear Not' appear in the bible 366 times, one for each day of the year plus one for leap year. But no matter how many times these words of encouragement appear, let us always remember that they are spoken by the Creator of the Universe to His people. He is the One who tells His children not to fear because He can still the raging storm and heal the broken hearted.

These words of encouragement and comfort were spoken to Israel through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah: "Fear not," was the command they were given, which was accompanied with the most glorious promise: "Fear not - for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness".

He is the One Who tells us not to be anxious and invites us to cast all our cares upon Him because He cares for us and promises to be with us forever - even to the very end of the age.

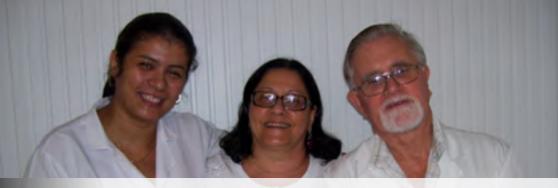
We are not to fear for the Lord has promised in this verse to strengthen all who are His. Jesus amplifies this truth to the apostle Paul when He tells him: "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

The promise continues that as well as having His strength for all we need, He will be an ever-present help in trouble: "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." Indeed, the Lord Jesus Himself promised, "Lo I am with thee always, even to the end of the age."

Christ is our righteousness, Christ is our ever-present help in time of trouble, and His grace is always sufficient for all of our needs. As we step out into a New Year, whether the comforting words 'Fear Not' appear in the Bible 366 times or simply once, let us hold firm on His promises for His Word is sure.

How good is the God we adore,
Our faithful unchangeable friend;
His love is as great as His power,
And knows neither measure nor end.

'Tis Jesus the first and the last,
Whose Spirit shall guide us safe home,
We'll praise Him for all that is past,
And trust Him for all that's to come.



Bill Woods At Home with the Lord

Our friend, brother, and beloved colleague, Dr Bill Woods OBE, went to be with His Lord on Monday, 6th November 2023. We were sad at his passing but glad that his battle was over. He had been on treatment for Cancer for fourteen years. Bill is now at home with the Saviour. Undoubtedly, he heard the Saviour say, "Well done thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Bill went to Brazil with Acre Gospel Mission in August 1960. Audrey and I enjoyed working with him when we arrived in Canutama in 1965. Before we left for Brazil, he had already shared his passion for helping leprosy patients and persuaded us to do a Leprosy Course with him in Harley Street, London.

Every afternoon in Canutama, Bill studied physics, chemistry, and other subjects he needed to enter the newly inaugurated Amazonas Faculty of Medicine in Manaus. It was a courageous step to undertake this medical course in Portuguese. Furthermore, Bill had to take a leave of absence from the Mission to pursue the six-year course. During those years, Bill had to sustain himself financially by teaching, building and the support of good friends at home



After qualifying in 1976, he further studied Ophthalmology in Rio de Janeiro and graduated as an ophthalmic surgeon. He followed that by visiting India to learn reconstructive surgery skills with the famed Leprologist, Sir Paul Brand.

In the following decades, Bill used his acquired skills to treat thousands of leprosy patients who thanked God for his dedication to their cause.

While Bill tirelessly worked and travelled to distant and remote places, often with little comfort, to alleviate physical suffering, he focused on evangelism. Wherever he went, Bill carried gospel literature. He travelled on all the Amazon tributaries that criss-cross the Acre to meet his patients while sowing the good seed of God's Word.

Many Brazilians and British saints are in heaven today because Bill led them to personal faith in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, we do not doubt that our beloved missionary colleagues who have gone before us also welcomed Bill home, and we are sure there will be many joyful conversations of the days gone by in the Lord's work in Brazil.

I'm reminded of one of Bill's patients saying, "Tell your friends in Ireland I'll never see them here on earth, but on the streets of glory I'll greet them with a tight Brazilian hug."

As a mission, we salute the life of this great servant of God. Although Bill's was a sacrificial life, it also was very satisfactory for he served the Saviour who loved him and whom he loved. Good night, Bill. We will soon see you and all our Acre family on the morning of that bright and cloudless day.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" (Revelation 14:13).

Victor Maxwell, President of Acre Gospel Mission

Looking after the King's business

Outreach team to Fátima

From 9th-14th October 2023 a team of people travelled once again to the town of Fátima, in Portugal, to take part in the distribution of gospel literature to the Roman Catholic pilgrims who make their way to the town to take part in the celebrations and masses there, which commemorate the supposed apparitions of the Virgin Mary, over one hundred years ago. Many tens of thousands make their way there each May and October, and sadly, are following after something which doesn't bring them any real hope or peace.



The aim of our teams is to share the gospel message with those who go there, to tell them that it is through a personal faith with the Lord Jesus Christ that will make the difference in their lives.

We were glad this year to have some Brazilians on our team, three of which are known to the mission and have been associated with the work of the mission for a long number of years.



In fact, Pastor Francisco Poderoso has been closely connected to the work of Acre for 67 years. He was just 9 years old when he heard of his need of a Saviour through the pioneer missionary Mollie Harvey, and then when he was 12 years old, he accepted Christ through the preaching of James Gunning.

"To serve God is to look after the King's business, God has saved us and separated us to serve Him", the Pastor writes. "This year, the Lord made it possible for myself, my daughter Cyntia, and my niece Lyane to join the outreach team to Fátima.

We thank God for this opportunity to share the good news of the gospel to those who have a strong faith, but have missed the truth about the message of the gospel, and the love of Christ. It was a blessing and a challenge to give to them pieces of literature containing the gospel, the good seed which can regenerate a life for the Lord. We sow the seed, someone else will water it, yet another will harvest it, and it is God who makes it all possible".

Of her experience, Cyntia writes; "I heard about this work in Fátima and always thought it to be interesting, challenging, and even difficult. In 2017, during a trip to Northern Ireland, we heard more about the work in Fátima, and the challenge came to us to go and join a team and go there. It was in God's timing that this year, October 2023, we were able to go and be a part of the work.

Whilst there, there were moments of sadness, joy, smiles and tears. We could see that the people were saying prayers, making promises, doing devotions, but the expressions on their faces stayed the same, it seems they are always missing something. Of course, we know they are missing the true gospel message. To share the gospel message in this place for me was a unique experience, and reminded me of that verse which says, go into all the world and preach the gospel".

Lyane also had a similar experience in taking up the challenge to go to Fátima, having had the desire in her heart for many years to go to Portugal to be a part of an outreach work there. She recalls hearing of the difficulties and the challenge that it is to share the gospel to the people of Portugal.

"I began praying that God would prepare me, and in 2023 it was possible for us to go. We saw there the great need of so many people, of various nationalities, without Christ, worshipping idols. There were children, young people, older people, saying prayers to something which cannot help them. This certainly saddened my heart. Many people rejected the literature, but also many took it, and we were thankful for every opportunity to testify about the Lord Jesus Christ."

We thank God for our Brazilian friends who joined the team of eight who went from Northern Ireland, and we also are thankful of the help from a young NI man called Shane McGloin, who works with European Christian Mission (ECM) in Vila Real, Northern Portugal.

Again we look to the Lord for His blessing upon this outreach ministry which has once again been accomplished in Fátima, Portugal.

If you are interested in taking part in this work, contact the mission office and let us know of your interest. God willing, there will be another team going in May 2024.



And a new season begins...

Barry & Raquel Henry



It is hard to believe that we are approaching the end of 2023 and within a few weeks we will be setting up again for another Bethlehem Village! Things here since the summer have not stopped and God has been moving in our midst amongst the Portuguese speaking contingent.



We were to start a series looking at what a healthy church looks like, but I was challenged and felt the Lord leading us to put that one on the shelf for now and focus on what it is to grow as a believer. We are currently halfway through the series, and it has become clear that God has been moving within the congregation challenging them in relation to their growth and it has been amazing to spend time with folk doing life together and helping each other grow in specific areas.

We have also felt spiritual warfare, and we now realise how necessary it is to not only walk in discipleship with people but also invest in counselling some as well. We thank God so much for Adrian and Judith Stuart who have experience in this regard having served the Lord for 17 years in Recife, Brazil and have come to be a support to us within the Portuguese speaking ministry. We are planning to set up some teaching modules with them and a few others so that we can have the tools to help those that may need some counselling.

It has been great to see the group grow together and really be a family in terms of looking after each other and walking alongside each other.

The Sunday services are growing and it is great to see so many new faces, from different parts of the area and the world, most noticeably Brazil! It has been a real encouragement to see these people arrive and want to serve with a committed heart to the local church and more importantly the Kingdom. Pray for us as we continue to go to the local streets with our guitars and "Can I pray for you?" t-shirts. Pray that we have some real and meaningful interactions with people, and we pray that we may see the fruit of that in God's timing.

As a family, it has been a time of rejoicing and a trying time in some respects. Matt got married at the beginning of September and is now studying at Cornhill Institute in Belfast. He is doing well and enjoying the studying. Both he and his wife still very much want to do missionary work in Portugal, so pray for them as they look to the future.



Raquel is still recovering from her neck operation, which was a success, and now awaits to see what the doctors will say in regard to her thyroid where nodules have been found. Mum has been diagnosed with advanced cancer and will start treatment soon, and our housing situation is still not entirely certain yet but in all these things, we thank God for His care and His grace.

We have definitely grown over these last months and even though nobody wants to go through trying times, we can praise God for them and what they are doing in us as we look to God and the future and what He has planned for us as a couple and as a family.

As always, we are thankful for each person who supports us financially and in prayer.

Let me end with the doxology we use at the end of the Portuguese speaking service on a Sunday. May its truth root itself into our hearts.

"Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time, now and forever. Amen." Jude vs. 24-25



Vale Judeu is a small village in the Municipality of Loulé. It is located three kilometres from Vilamoura and approximately eight kilometres from Loulé. It is a village with few inhabitants, whose main occupation is agriculture, as it is a rural area.

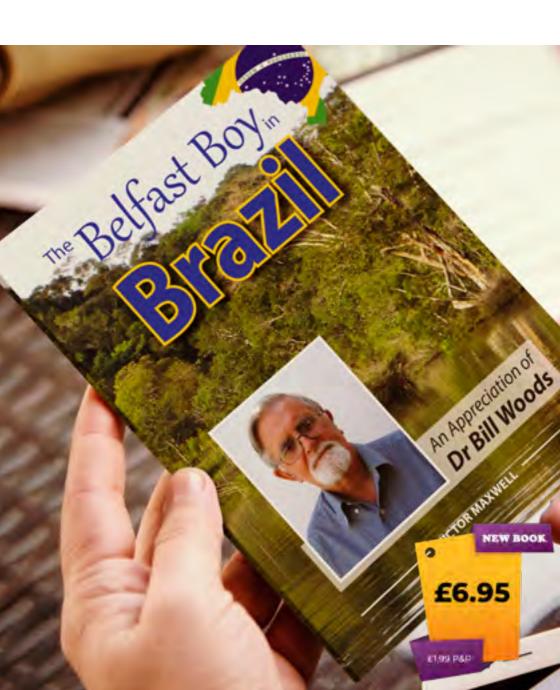


Please pray:

- For the Bethlehem Village outreach.
- For the new sermon series, that God would continue to move within the congregation.
- For continued growth in the numbers attending the Sunday services.
- For Matt and Kerry as they start their journey together as a married couple and for Matt as he studies at Cornhill.
- For Raquel as she continues her recovery from surgery on her neck.

The Belfast Boy in Brazil

A new book by Victor Maxwell





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If you are interested to receive our Kilds-magazine in the future, let us know and we will send if directly to you.

Send us an email with your address to acrekids pacegospeimission.org

Meet the missionary:



Notrie: Raquel Henry

Date of Birth: 07.01.1973

Place of Birth Angola

Scruyy in Portugal



Helle I was born in Angola, a country on the southwest coast of Africa which was a former portuguese colony.

I had only lived there for two years when we had to flee to Portugal because of the colonial war. Our house was bombed several times and it wasn't safe anymore.

Shortly after we came back from Africa my aunt became a Christian and started talking about Jesus to my mum, who then decided to try and find a church. When I was six years old, we started attending a small evangelical church close to home and settled in very quickly.

A few years later we went to a picnic organized by an organisation called "Word of Life". During a time of sharing the Word of God, I realised Jesus was my Saviour and I accepted his gift of Salvation.

I became very involved in church life, especially with the music. I played the organ for years and later started singling with the worship team. I also attended several bible camps each summer. My church had a nice youth group and many of them my became my best friends throughout the years.





in 1995, in my last year of Coilege, I applied for a Erasmus exchange programme and chose to go to Ireland. It was a short trip, only 3 months long, but God had huge plans for me including meeting Barry on a Sunday morning, at church! The following year Barry came to Portugal to be with me and we got married a couple of years later.

Now we live in the Algarve and have three children Matt, Dave and Becky.



I love the small islands off the coast of the Algarve. Ilha da Culatra is my favourite! We cross by boat, and spend most of the time on the beach. No cars, no rush!

I also absolutely love sea food! Anything with cod and prawns!!

I've been a music teacher for many years, but in 2018 I was invited to be part of Comacep, a branch of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance, that manages the subject of Religious Studies in the Portuguese public schools.

Evangelical Religious education in school is optional. Students have to enroll in the subject and it only happens if there are at least 10 students interested. If we get enough students I then try to get volunteers to teach the class.

I love everything about it! It's very challenging though. From getting volunteers, training them, placing them in a school, to then doing all the administrative process with the schools. It is a huge task and we are a team of just three full time teachers, who manage the project, and a group of helpers, who work voluntarily. Across Portugal, we have more than 200 teachers working in the schools.

There are still a lot of challenges connected to this job. Sometimes schools don't want Religious Studies to happen and they don't tell the parents and students about the applications. Sometimes they don't want volunteers there and only accept qualified teachers and then sometimes they push the subject to the very end of the day so the students are so tired they don't want to attend the class.







We have many stories that really encourage and bless us.

This year I felt very encouraged by a group of Brazilian students who came to study here at the University in the Algarve. I spoke to one of them and invited her to come and help at one of the primary schools. Not only did she accept it but she spread the word and two more enrolled and are now teaching in other schools. We hear lovely stories from our volunteers too. There was a little seven year old Chinese boy in one of the schools. His parents told him to stay in school until closing time as they couldn't pick him up any earlier. He saw that there was a Religious Studies class happening and asked if he could attend. He now goes to every class and is learning about God, Jesus and the Bible!

My vision



Portugal is changing very quickly and there is a huge need for the children in the country to reconnect with moral values and to know that there is a God. After the revolution in 1974, Religious Education was taken out of the schools which meant that boys and girls no longer heard about God. Many Portuguese children just don't hear about Jesus at all. Not even in their homes. Portugal is a very Roman Catholic country but it is all just tradition and culture. No real belief, no real hope. We pray that with this work we can spread the Word of God among children and young people.

Thank you for all your prayers!

day in the life of a Portuguese student

My name is Clara Martins Calão. I am 12 years old and I am from Portugal. I want to show you how a day in my life looks like.

On a school day I wake up around 7:00 a.m. and get my breakfast. Usually I eat pancakes.



My day in school starts at 8:15 a.m and finishes at 4:10 p.m.

I get to school by car with my parents and siblings.

The first thing I do when I arrive in school is go straight to my classroom.

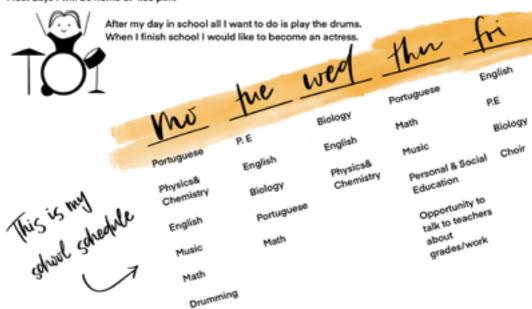




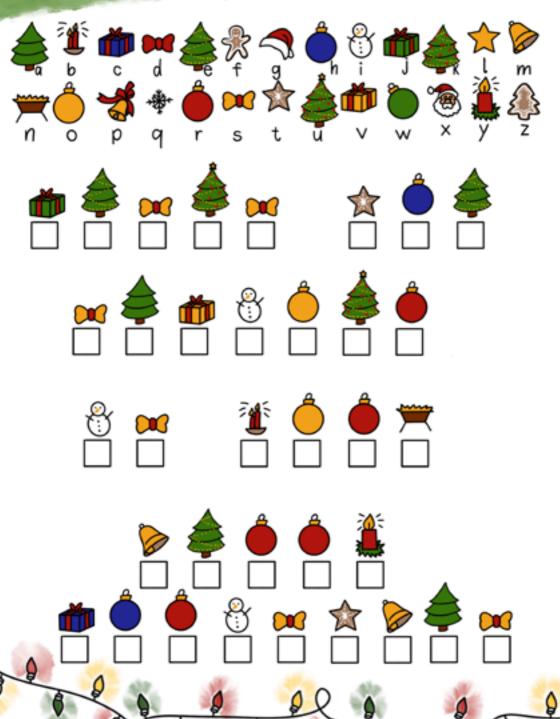


My favourite day in school is Wednesday because I don't have classes in the afternoon. My favourite subject in school is English because I like to learn new languages and it is a really interesting language.

During my breaks in school I usually hang out and chat with my friends. Most days I will be home at 4:30 p.m.



Christmas quiz







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Campo Redondo, Brazil

Pastor Iran



The work at the church at Campo Redondo continues well, and despite the difficult times we all experienced throughout the Covid pandemic, we are slowly getting back to the place we were at concerning attendance at meetings

During this last year we have been encouraging the members, with family oriented bible studies, and studies on the gospel. We have two radio programmes that go out on our local radio station, one hour each day on Fridays and Saturdays. On 21st and 22nd of October, we held the anniversary services for the church here in Campo Redondo, the speaker was Pastor Adriano Mentes, and many people attended, including many visitors, and it was an encouraging time.



Our children's ministry team has seen improvement, with some new people coming to help, especially at the work in Conjunto Lauro Maia, on Saturday afternoons. We also have meetings here in this town every Wednesday evening. Our young people's work has been doing well, under the leadership of a couple called Nil and Lara. There are about twenty young people who attend regularly. Our whole family is involved in this work, whether it be with the music, or teaching a Sunday School class. We continue to help the other congregations, and we thank God for the fact that they are now under their own pastoral leadership.



In Malhada Vermelha, things are going very well. Pastor Francisco Marques and his wife Celia have taken up the work in this church and have been working hard in the community, souls have been saved and people have been visiting the church. They have also had the help of a missionary called Franciane Maraisa, and he has been helping with visitation in the area and also with the children's work every Saturday evening. He has also been conducting some meetings in the homes of the church members.

The congregation at Lajes Pintadas is under the leadership of Pastor Marcio Maciel and his wife Luziania, and they have been doing a great work there. Again, souls have been saved, and Pastor Marcio has been doing visitation and gospel meetings in a place called Bom Destino. They are planning the construction of a meeting room for the children, with two bathrooms, and are hoping that work could start on this before the end of the year. Luziania has also been involved in the ladies work, which has been going really well. On 22nd October a young man called Lucielison accepted Christ, and now he comes to the meetings along with his wife and young son.



The congregation at Serra do Doutor has also been going well, with Pastor Marcelo and his wife Cristina leading the work there. Evangelism, bible studies and house meetings have all been well supported, and they've also been running meetings for married couples, with a number of unsaved couples coming in. At a recent meeting, Dona Pureza, the neighbour of Pastor Marcelo, trusted the Lord as her Saviour.

The Lord has blessed us with a great team of Pastors here, who work with all sincerity to see the word of the gospel spread around the local areas. We thank God for all He is doing in this area, and we thank you for your prayers for us.



Campo Redondo is a municipality in the state of Rio Grande do Norte in the Northeast region of Brazil.

The approximate area of the municipality is 213 km² and it has a population of 10,217 inhabitants.



Please pray:

- For the children's ministry team.
- For the work in Malhada Vermelha, Lajes Pintadas and Serra do Doutor.

Lajes Pintadas, Brazil

Pastor Márcio



We arrived at this new mission field on 7th December 2020, with the expectation of beginning a new reality for us as a family, and with the certainty of learning new things, as we began our work with the Missão Evangélica Amazônica (MEA).

Our first contact with the church came through the prayer meeting on the next day. It was a great opportunity for us to see each of the church members and to view their characteristics, and of course they also could do the same about us. Our family quickly adapted to the new way of living, and we began to get to know the people of the church and the town, and to understand better their vision and plans in the spreading of the gospel.



After a period of time it started to become clear that the town was mainly influenced by two religious factors; Catholicism and Spiritualism. This made it more difficult in terms of getting alongside the people of the town, but we continued on.

When we arrived here, we discovered that there had been a small work started in a place called Bom Destino. Meetings were held in the home of a lady called Dudinha, but she was an unbeliever. Even so, we continued with this work, proclaiming the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.



This work depends a lot upon the weather conditions. During periods of heavy rain, it is impossible to get to this community. After the last rainy season, when it was possible to make our way there again, we were met by a couple called Alrânio and Janaína, who told us they had the desire to have the meeting in their house, which they had just recently built.

Their house was a lot bigger and so we accepted this invitation, and they have been a blessing to the work there in Bom Destino. One family from the area (Lucielson and Cassia, and their daughter Barbara), have started coming along to the meetings, which are held every two weeks. As yet, they have not made a decision for Christ, but we believe that God is working, especially in the life of Lucielson.

We have been able to be engaged in other forms of outreach also, such as the outreach at the dia dos finados (day of the dead). On this day, we go to the local cemetery, and give out literature to those going to the graves. We want to share with those who are going there to be at the graveside of their loved ones, the living hope of the gospel. Many of them stop with us and ask questions concerning eternity, and of course others come and criticise what we are doing, as the enemy continues to work against us.

After a period of observation of the church, we discovered that many of the church members needed to learn more about the Christian life, they needed an awakening within their spirit and their life. And so we created the week of prayer, and the first week of the month is dedicated to prayer, with timely themes which help people to learn more about their walk with the Lord, and encourage people to go deeper in their faith. And so this is the work, and we pray that God continues to help and bless in every way. We thank you also for all your prayers for us, may God bless you all



Lajes Pintadas is a municipality in the state of Rio Grande do Norte in the Northeast region of Brazil

The region has a population of 4,763.



Please pray:

- That we would quickly adapt to the new mission field.
- For opportunities to get alongside people in the area.
- For the continuation of the work in Bom Destino.

Várzea, Brazil



Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.

1 Timothy 3:1

Dear friends, we thank and praise God for each of you who have prayed for us, and for what God has been doing here in Várzea.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, we have been doing evangelism from house to house, and unfortunately some of them no longer want to study the bible with us. However, we continue going to the homes. We praise God for those who have trusted in the Saviour, José, Joabe and Severino, and other unsaved people have been coming into the church recently.



The meetings in the church here in Várzea take place on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. On Fridays, we go to the small congregation in Goianinha, which is about 25 kilometres from Várzea. In Goianinha we have two converts, José and Joyce.

On Sunday mornings we have between six to eight children who come to the church with their parents, who are not believers. On a Tuesday night we visit with one of the mothers in her home and do bible studies with her, showing her God's plan of salvation. Her name is Ceiça.



We also do a work among the children out on the streets, in two different parts of the town, please pray for each child that comes along, and for the parents who sit nearby listening, that they too would hear and respond to the gospel message. Pray also for more workers to help us with this ministry amongst the children.

Some of the ladies of the church have been doing visitation to other ladies in the town, taking the gospel message to them, and they have also been visiting with other women from our congregation, to encourage them and read and pray with them. We also have a small food bank in operation, where our church members donate some basic food items, and we are able to help one lady and also a family, both currently passing through some difficulties. Through this we have also been able to share the gospel with those whom we help with the food baskets.

It is our privilege to serve the living and true God here in Várzea for the past thirteen years, and in those years we have seen the mercy and grace of God upon our lives, and the lives of those in the church fellowship here. Thank you for your prayers for the work here, and we ask that you continue to pray for us and for the work in Várzea. God bless you all.



Várzea is a municipality in the state of Rio Grande do Norte in the Northeast region of Brazil.

The population is 5,515.



Please pray:

- For the church in Várzea.
- For the house to house evangelism.
- For the unbelievers who have been attending the Sunday services.
- For the childrens outreach.

NE W YE RENCE AR

A Tribute to Dr Bill Woods

6th January 10:30-12:30

T3 Conference Centre

Vic Ryn

Moira Road, Lisburn

Refreshments served at commencement



My Response

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