



Tim Curtis

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Location: Paraguay



What I do: Building up the body of Christ through writing, translating and producing discipleship training and study materials in the Énxet language.



Empowering people pushed to the edges of life to reach their God-given potential

Dear praying friends,

Once again, the Christmas festivities are upon us as we celebrate Christ's coming into the world. In Paraguay these celebrations coincide with the long hot and humid summer break. In the Chaco region, where many of the country's indigenous people live, this is the time of year when many return to their communities and villages after spending most of the year away from home working on the large *estancias*, or cattle ranches, or in and around the Plattdeutsch-speaking Mennonite towns with their rapidly diversifying economies in the central and northern part of the Chaco.

While some, perhaps most, Énxet people and their Angaité colleagues will have had opportunities during the year to attend church services on the ranches or in the indigenous "barrios" or quarters in the Mennonite towns, many will not have, so please pray for those who will be reconnecting with their local village churches, recharging their spiritual batteries, and pray also for the pastors and church leaders in Makxawaya, El Estribo, La Herencia and La Patria as they plan and lead services during Christmas and the New Year, often well into January. This is a fun time of year for family and friends. There are the usual football matches, but also egg-and-spoon races, sack races, three-legged races in some of the communities, and time too for music and song, and listening to God's Word, and for getting married. Please pray for Énxet and other indigenous families as they meet up again for this Christmas and New Year summer break, and for the newly wed couples.

In previous link letters I have sometimes mentioned the Southern Énxet, Angaité and other indigenous diaspora living in the Mennonite colonies where an increasingly urbanised indigenous culture is emerging, facing new challenges and pressures. Quite a number are prospering economically. Recently I had my hair cut by Ever Bordón in his new barber's shop in the centre of Filadelfia. He and his wife were originally from Makxawaya. They now have a daughter who is growing up in Filadelfia. Ever is the grandson of the late David Rojas, one of the chief political leaders in that community and he is the great-grandson of Anita Severo, who was one of the strong and faithful Christian leaders in Makxawaya who also worked in the Makxawaya clinic under Dr John Prosser, and alongside Beryl Baker, and the late Cirilo Benítez, (cf link letter 52 and SAMS magazines from the 1960s and 70s). When he was small Ever often joined the Makxawaya music groups, made up mostly of teenagers, and joined them on their trips to indigenous churches dotted around the Chaco, with me driving the mission vehicle. Pray for Ever and his family, and others like him, adapting to an urban lifestyle, so different from the hunter-gatherer lifestyle of his ancestors, that he would "continue in the faith, established



San Pedro church Makxawaya at dusk

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**With Jesus
With each other
To the edges**



and firm, not moving from the hope held out in the gospel" (Colossians 1:23).

My big news story is that this Christmas will be my last Christmas in Paraguay, perhaps my last Christmas here for the foreseeable future. I feel that the Lord is calling me back to the UK to live there permanently, and so this forthcoming period of home ministry on behalf of CMS from March to the end of August 2026 will be one in which a chapter of my life is closing and a new one beginning.

For me, this Christmas and New Year has been one of looking back and giving thanks for the Lord's faithfulness over the years. I remember my first year in the Chaco, 1983, when I went to live in Sombrero Pirí (La Herencia) to work in the local Énxet- and Guaraní-speaking village schools. It was not long before I had to learn to ride horses to get to four ranch schools, seven to eight hours' ride from Makxawayá. A few years later I was invited to begin to prepare for Bible translation work.

So what will 2026 look like? I look forward to thanking everyone in my link churches for support over the years during my home ministry. My colleagues on the Northern Enlhet Bible Revision Project, Evencio and Brígido, will continue working under Arnold Boschmann's supervision as team coordinator. In December the team began work on the Acts of the Apostles and Romans. I hope to join them in January 2026 for one last time as consultant. I remain open to the possibility of helping with final checking in 2027 for a short while if I am needed. Please pray for this team; for stamina and for spiritual protection as they continue with this important project, so vital for the Northern Enlhet churches in the Mennonite zone of the Chaco. I hope also to continue to work with Asunción Rojas on the dictionary now that virtual meetings on Zoom and WhatsApp are possible.

In Rio Verde it has been encouraging to see the continuing improvements to the Anglican Centre, where a new meeting hall is being built as I write. Pray for bishop Ronald Irene as he leads the Anglican church in Paraguay, for diocesan administrator Marlene Alcoba and for archdeacon Gustavo Flores in his role in the indigenous mission hub with colleagues Énxet pastor Celino and Angaité colleague Hermenegildo. Pray for the future generations who are being blessed through the ministry of Sunday school teachers such as Guillermo González.

Even though I am winding down my work and returning to the UK, mission doesn't stop! I'd love to invite you to keep supporting mission through Marcio and Noemi, mission partners working in Brazil who urgently need more funding in order to continue to serve God at the edges. Marcio and Noemi are based in Indaiatuba, São Paulo, where they connect with people beyond the reach of traditional church, sharing the gospel in new ways and ministering to people's physical needs. You can read more about their ministry and meet them through their video at churchmissionsociety.org/mnc

Please consider connecting with Marcio and Noemi as you continue to support mission and the coming of God's kingdom around the world together with CMS. For those of you who give regularly, our lovely Church Mission Society team will be in touch in the coming months.

"One generation commends your work to another, they tell of your mighty acts." (Psalm 145:4)

Wishing you the Lord's richest blessing for Christmas and the New Year,

Tim Curtis



Photos from top to bottom: Tim at Ever's barber's shop; Tim and the Northern Enlhet translators; the new building; Tim and Guillermo



Empowering people pushed to the edges of life

It builds my faith when I hear stories from other CMS partners working with people pushed to the edges of life. I hope that you're inspired as you read about Elise and Jon in Thailand who are working to keep families together and children out of care. And about Makol in South Sudan whose life got dramatically saved during a peace rally. You can read their stories, and others, at churchmissionsociety.org/empower

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