



Andrew and Lisa Peart

Link Letter no. 14 | December 2022

Contact details:

lisajweedman@hotmail.com
andrewpeart@protonmail.com



Location: Bolivia



What we do: Partnering with the local church to engage with the community in pioneering mission through generous, creative hospitality

¡Feliz Navidad desde Bolivia!

Dear friends,

Preparing for the Advent season, it's easy to become overwhelmed by the things I want, think and need to do. On reflection, 2022 has been a pivotal year for us, one which began with a short, but impactful family trip to Lake Titicaca. Connecting with each other and God through his creation was a beautiful, fresh start to the year as we walked the ancient Incan paths, asking the way of the Lord, encountering rest in his presence, a presence we would not have access to without his son Jesus' birth into our world as Emmanuel, God with us. My hope for this Advent is to focus less on our own preparations, and allow the Lord, through his Holy Spirit, to prepare us – our hearts and minds – for the unshakeable joy and peace the birth of the King of Kings brings to us as we celebrate Advent and share the hope we have in Christ with others.



Anayah and Lisa cycling through Santa Cruz's blocked roads during the civil strike

As many may know directly from us or through CMS Prayerlines, Bolivia has been going through yet another challenging time, due to the government announcing there would be a two-year delay in the census originally scheduled for this year. This has a huge and direct impact on life here as the census determines electoral seats, how and where the economic resources are distributed and much more. We have just completed five weeks of a national strike – “paro”, meaning stop – an attempt to call for the attention of the government through roadblocks and the closure of school buildings. We are ok, praying for a peaceful consensus on the census and for the safety of the Bolivian people, especially those we serve alongside and disciple. We are slightly frustrated to be stuck at home on computers and phones rather than meeting in person – especially the girls, who have not had a full year of in-person school since before the last 21-day paro in 2019! Having said this, we have been enjoying cycling, walking on near-empty roads and connecting with neighbours in our new community.

Join us as we pray this prayer from the devotional app Lectio 365 – so poignant for leaders in Bolivia and worldwide:

God, I pray for political leaders today. Bring prophetic voices into their lives. Help them to lean on divine promises rather than human policies. Empower them for bold, confident and righteous leadership. Amen

This year, we celebrate our seventh Christmas in Bolivia. As the years go by, it never feels quite like Christmas to us in 40 degrees and 95 per cent humidity. However, some family holiday traditions help us tap into that feeling, even if it means a constant mopping of our brows! One which journeyed with me when I moved “across the pond” from the US to the UK in 2000 and have shared here in Bolivia is baking and decorating

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



Christmas cookies. Although making them in this climate can be tricky, I've learned through the failure and mess of a mushy dough stuck to the counter our first Bolivian Christmas, that flouring the countertops using more than the recommended "dusting" of flour, and lightning speed rolling and dough cutting techniques work. Sharing with our Bolivian friends is an integral part of the tradition – the girls have cookie decorating class parties where we bake, decorate, and deliver cookies to neighbours and our church family. In years past, we've shared the cookies Messy-Church style in the local park, and last year the girls and

I led a workshop in our church on how to make, bake and decorate Christmas cookies. Not MasterChef-worthy, but joyful, fun and very sweet! A simple yet intentional way of bringing people together. We plan to offer the workshop again this Christmas.

We'd love prayer for the upcoming events and new initiatives we are involved with:

Our Christmas Eve church service will be held outdoors again. This will be extra challenging as we must clean up the park first – the strike has meant no one is tending to it!

We are creating a 24/7 prayer space in our church, which will be accessible through the community garden (see below). Our daughter Liliana, inspired by a painting of Jesus we saw in a monastery on Caldey Island, Wales, has used her gift of creativity by painting a beautiful version of it on canvas. Once the strike is lifted, it will live in the prayer room – at 100cm x 100cm, it's slightly too big to transport by bicycle, distance aside!

The Financial Freedom for Families (F4) course that Andrew and Raul plan to lead on 30 November, sadly may not happen due to the national strike. Having been postponed several times, we ask for prayer so that we would not be discouraged, but rather trust in God's timing on this – we know it will happen.

We are also super excited to share that we're in the beginning stages of designing a community garden in the grounds of our church. Seeking to be Jesus in the community, we hope to provide a calm, creative space in the midst of the busy and vibrant urban setting of our church location; our hope is to listen to and engage with the community, providing space to encounter and share the transforming love of Christ in fresh, organic and tangible ways.

Thank you for your faithful support!

May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts this Christmas.

Bendiciones en Cristo,

Andrew, Lisa, Liliana and Anayah xx



Photos from top to bottom: Those who could, made it to church, arriving on foot, bicycle and motorcycle – the faithful 11!; Liliana's Jesus painting; Christmas cookie workshop at Cristo Luz del Mundo; a sweet time of fellowship in our church



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