



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.

Dear friends,

Greetings from Rio Verde!

I am writing on a hot dusty August afternoon, towards the end of what has proved to be a very mild Paraguayan winter. Although we have not had rain for several months, everything is still fairly lush and green owing to abundant rain earlier in the year.

I had a very busy and exciting June, with a trip to Buenos Aires for the Misión Indígena meeting with my colleagues Elvio Cabañas and Hermenegildo Torres. We met up with indigenous representatives from Northern Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Peru. Elvio represented the Southern Énxet Anglicans and Hermenegildo the Angaite Anglicans.



Elvio and Hermenegildo at Asunción airport on their way to BA.

As instructed by the delegates assembled at the Indigenous Anglican Congress in Salta last year, a draft of a constitution for Misión Indígena was produced by the smaller group meeting in Buenos Aires. They decided to change the name of the group from Misión Indígena to “Sínodo Indígena”. The aim is for the indigenous churches to play a fuller role in the life of the Anglican churches of the southern cone of South America. The Anglican churches that are located in the Paraguayan Chaco region are almost all made up of indigenous Énxet or Angaite members and have much to share with the wider church along with their indigenous brothers and sisters from other South American countries. I recommend you read **CMS's Reflections from three indigenous leaders** (as part of the Anvil journal in May 2023, you can search for it on the CMS website) in which Paul Tester, CMS manager in Latin America, interviews Elvio, Mirna and Joel, all of whom were present at the meeting in Buenos Aires.

We were grateful for the amazing hospitality of Ariel Irrazabal, who arranged for us all to stay in a guest house belonging to the Augustinians in Buenos Aires.

During our stay there was a short time for sightseeing, including a visit to the palatial Anglican Cathedral in Buenos Aires founded in 1830, the Plaza de Mayo, where the Casa Rosada is located, and nearby Puerto Madero, with its shops and restaurants.

Then on 22 June the Anglican Church of Paraguay held an extraordinary synod in Asunción to elect a new bishop. My role was to provide logistical help bringing in the Chaco delegates from La Patria, and taking them back on the afternoon after the synod. I was not a delegate this year, and so did not have the right to vote, as I have occasionally had in synods gone by. Ronald Irene was chosen by the synod as bishop-elect by an overwhelming majority.

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



Rev Ronald and various members of the diocesan team attended the 117th anniversary of San Pedro church in Makxawaya, which was held a fortnight after the extraordinary Synod. Retired Archbishop Greg Venables preached the sermon. The service was well attended and the church building decorated with balloons. The previous week I had worked with Asunción Rojas preparing the order of service for the celebration, which was mainly in Énxet. Asunción continues to work on the Énxet dictionary, and on various other discipleship training materials. We have worked on an Énxet translation of the draft of the Misión/Sínodo Indígena constitution.

In August I resumed work with the Northern Enlhet translators Elvio and Brígido, and team coordinator Arnold, revising the Psalms and the book of Proverbs.

I celebrated my sixty fourth birthday at the beginning of August. I was treated to three birthday cakes. The first came from the diocesan office. The second cake was made by Alison Hawksbee when I stayed with Chris and Alison in Asunción, and the third with the translation team in Filadelfia!

During the first half of August, much needed repairs were carried out on five of the Anglican Centre's underground water storage tanks, which had developed cracks and had lost most of the water stored earlier in the year. In the building with the bunk beds a new wooden wall was built to create a separate section for women guests. Victor González will be returning to the centre, after being in charge of the "albergue" or shelter in Remansito, near Asunción, which is now to be closed. Víctor is also to have pastoral oversight of San Mateo church, Río Verde, which will be opened again for services in the near future. At one stage the building was due for demolition as it was considered too close to the new section of the Trans Chaco Highway that now runs through the middle of the little town of Rio Verde. Fortunately the Highway was altered slightly and so the church and various other homes and buildings were spared.

On a personal note, I have appreciated the friendship and fellowship of Cornelio and Mari Ester Valenzuela, who spend a good deal of their retirement on a plot of land in Rio Verde, about 2km from where I live. In the past, Mari Ester has helped with the Sunday School at San Mateo church, and we all get together for a meal and time of prayer when we they come up to their home in Rio Verde.

"Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labour is not in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Thank you for your prayers.

Tim Curtis



Photos from top to bottom: Rev Ronald and wife Nicky at the Synod; San Pedro Makxawaya's 117th anniversary service; Northern Enlhet translation team; With my birthday cake from the diocese.



Going further with Church Mission Society

Adelante: Saturday 23 September 2023. A hybrid event – in-person and online – to celebrate, learn about and pray for mission in and from Latin America. Book at churchmissionsociety.org/Adelante

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