



Alf and Hilary Cooper

Link Letter no. 42 | April 2024

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Location: Chile



What we do: Working to see churches planted and multiplied in Chile and beyond through pastoring La Trinidad de Las Condes church.

Dear praying friends,

I write on Easter Sunday and can only rejoice at God's untiring love and goodness towards us! First, your faithful and constant prayer, for which we thank God and yourselves, so very much! We often receive requests for short videos that give you our status and prayer requests and we imagine, with joy, you praying for us. Those prayers are being answered wonderfully! Our church was again very full in the morning services as it has been over the past few Sundays. Our Bible studies have commenced with over 300 students again. We have just finished the first Beginners' Group of the year with over 25 students and are about to start our second (using the *Vida Abundante* SEAN materials we have chosen for initial discipling). So, over these moving days of meditation before the Last Supper, then the Cross and now the Resurrection, we are ever more convinced of and committed to those central Christian historical events and we see in our everyday ministry how the power of the Holy Spirit is active like no other force for human change! We put all this down to prayer under the grace of God. Thank you!

We are now looking forward to our next Marriage Encounter weekend (12-14 April) that continues to be the main attraction for modern unchurched couples to La Trinidad. Hilary and I will lead it again so we covet prayer for the 30 or so couples as well as the follow-up that continues over the following months.

At the end of May we are heading back to Oxford, but this time with a difference! As you all now know, no doubt, I was awarded my PhD after submitting corrections in January, for which we praise God! Our next trip to OCMS is mainly for the 28 June graduation ceremony. We would love you all to be there but there is quite a strict limit and spaces are reserved for family. However, it is a shame to travel so far without visiting some of our family and churches as well and doing some deputation for CMS and that is why we are spending June in the UK. We are sorry to say, however, that the few Sundays available for visits have already been snapped up by some very enthusiastic churches. However, perhaps we could fit in some weekday visits. Contact us directly! For those who do not receive a visit this time, we expect to be coming next year for a longer period.

You have heard us talking of the Rancagua mission, a city two hours' drive from Santiago. We had been developing the work there for several years and are now glad to say that we were able to install Angello and Anita Salse as leaders there on Sunday 3 March. Angello is in the process of ordination and that should soon



Members of La Trinidad church
waiting for the sunrise

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



be a fully functioning parish. Now, we are going for a new mission city, an hour away from Rancagua: Santa Cruz. We have already sent several mission teams that have begun services there, as several who have been members of La Trinidad, or been through Marriage Encounter, are living there. Our pastor Juan Luis has family there so he visits twice a month. May that soon take shape like in Rancagua. Once a church is planted and well nurtured, it will bring the gospel to generations, as your old English churches teach us!

Some people ask us how we get so many people into Bible study (mentioned above). We hold a study fair during March where we lay out the many diverse courses available, starting with *Vida Abundante* and the SEAN courses, but also Alpha and all the other studies at higher levels. Our ELIM (Escuela de Líderes y Ministros Laicos) aims to train leaders and lay ministers. These form our Bible Academy and we usually *call* the leaders we want to train to these courses. During these fairs that are laid out outside our services, members sign up as we exhort them: "Everyone must be studying the Bible in some course or other!"

Hilary is laying on wonderful teas as we continue our ministry of hospitality. This involves bringing to our home any and all who are needing pastoral refreshment or guidance. Recently we have also entertained angels, ex-mission partner children like Emily Hervey and her husband Dean. It is so good to hear of God's faithfulness to our former colleagues here in Chile, whose children now testify to the many works of God through their ministries down the years. God is good!

Alf has been part of the *Plataforma Evangélica Nacional (PLENA)* that encompasses around 80 per cent of Chilean evangelical churches. At a recent conference in Chillán he was asked to be part of the Communications Commission. This has opened the way again for opportunities to speak into Chile's very needy society from the evangelical church. Recently, for example, we went before the constitutional tribunal, speaking up for our constitutional rights to freedom of education. This would allow for Christian schools and teaching and defeat the motion that all education be entirely state-run (allowing for confusing social and sexual teaching at a very early age). We are awaiting the results.

So, sharing with you all this Easter in your various ways of commitment and service to Jesus,

We bless you,
Alf and Hilary



Photos from top to bottom: What an OCMS graduation looks like; Angello and Anita Salse; Angello Salse's installation at Rancagua; Emily Hervey and husband Dean



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