

Menors' Message

October 2019

c/o GMI • PO Box 9405, Grand Rapids, MI 49509



If you are reading this letter you probably do not know us personally so allow us to introduce ourselves. We are Cleiton and Viviane Menor, Brazilians currently living and serving the Lord Jesus in the coastal city of Pontal do Paraná in southern Brazil. We met serving the Lord in the church and together we cultivated a great friendship and fellowship that led us to get married in 2013. We have been blessed with our three children: Laura and Elisa (4) and Lucas (2).

Our Burden for Missions

Two years ago we became aware of the work of Grace Ministries International (GMI) in a new missionary field—Paraguay. We already knew about GMI and prayed for the missionaries and their ministries, but the news of the new field motivated us to visit because Paraguay is close to where Viviane's relatives live—across the border in Foz do Iguaçu.

On one of our travels to visit the family, we took the opportunity and contacted GMI missionary Alex Gulart in Paraguay. We were welcomed by him

in his apartment along with his whole family. We had an excellent time of fellowship with them and the other missionary family—the Bomers.

The following year I organized the youth group of our church in Brazil to take a four-day mission trip to Paraguay. During this time we were able to get to know Grace Bible Church, the missionary families, and the plans they have for the future—expanding the work and planting new churches. The desire to support that field that had already sprouted up in our hearts increased with Alex's invitation asking us to consider joining them in Para-



Cleiton leading worship at church

Our Background

Cleiton is an accountant and has become a partner in a small accounting office in the city where we live. He was also trained in pastoral theology through Grace Bible Institute in southern Brazil. Since the conclusion of his studies in 2006 he has served as a worship minister, youth pastor, assistant pastor, and ultimately in 2015, he took on the pastorate of the Shangrila Grace Gospel Church. In 2017, with the support of other local leaders, he helped to create Grace Theological Seminary, a Bible school maintained by the local churches with the goal of training new leaders to fulfill the demand of the Brazilian churches.

After giving her life to Jesus, Viviane quickly understood the great value of serving the Lord. She interrupted her nursing studies due to the arrival of our three children but never ceased to study the Word of God deeply. Viviane worked with children and teenage girls being involved in the arts and biblical counseling. She later led the women's ministry of the church.

Our dedication to the work of Christ was and continues to be our greatest point in common.



Viviane during a performance with kids at church



Cleiton teaching at Grace Seminary



Viviane leading a women's meeting

guay. We returned home after that visit but a piece of our hearts stayed in Paraguay.

The Transition

The desire to do missions in neighboring Paraguay had become our main reason for prayer. We found ourselves researching the history of Paraguay, its population, language, culture, religion and, as good Brazilians, we even “googled” its soccer tradition. The decision to leave Brazil as missionaries required more faith than we initially thought. We had to deal with the feelings of leaving behind friends, family, stability, professional career, and the ministerial responsibilities we have in Brazil weighing on us. But God truly answers prayer, and He answered ours. We received support from our family, friends, and especially our local church from where the Lord raised faithful servants to replace us after our departure.

Reasons for prayer:

- Obtaining U.S. visas so we can travel to the United States at the beginning of next year
- Quickly learn Spanish
- That our children will adapt well as we travel and visit churches in the U.S. and then move to Paraguay
- That we raise the support we need to live and serve in Paraguay

The Lord strengthened us and confirmed His plans. He has given us faith to move forward.

In Paraguay

Our first challenge in Paraguay will be to achieve fluency in Spanish. Although Portuguese almost always resembles Spanish, the differences between the two languages are many, both in grammar and pronunciation. Our prayer is that due to the immersion in the culture and the language we will be communicable in Spanish within our first year there.

A large number of Brazilians reside in Paraguay. Many of these are college exchange students attracted by the lower prices in monthly tuitions in Paraguay. We wish to seek ways of attracting them and preaching the gospel of God's grace to those lives.

After learning Spanish, our goal will be to work side by side with the other missionary families who are already on the field to expand the work by planting new churches in the surrounding cities while making God's grace known to the nation of Paraguay.

We will make a short visit to churches in the U.S. to attend some of the missions conferences affiliated with GMI between January and May 2020 and then move to Paraguay shortly thereafter. We hope to have the opportunity and the privilege of visiting your church.

Grace be upon you,

Cleiton, Viviane, Laura, Elisa and Lucas



Cleiton and Alex at a youth conference in Brazil