He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields." Matthew 9:37-38 (NLT)



# Borbas' Report Jan & Feb 2021

THE BORBAS:

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## Dear partners in the gospel!

## How are you?

We are so very excited to finally be here in South Florida and start our work as missionaries among fellow Brazilians! We officially started our mission work in January and God's providence has been amazing at so many levels. We are off to a good start and we couldn't be more thankful to God and you all for making what we do here possible. As we always say, we simply want to be God's hands and feet, and an extension of the work of our various sponsors all over the USA. You're here with us in South Florida and we feel the love and the many prayers!!

## **BABY JOANNA**

• Joanna is now 15.5 months (as of the end of February). She continues to grow in stature and in her smarts!! She's had her first appointment with her new pediatrician here in Florida and everything is as it should be. We praise God for Joanna's life every day!

• Joanna is so very clever and she blows us away practically every day with the things she learns and says. She understands both English and Portuguese and is more and more articulated in her speaking. She already says dozens of words in both languages: basic expressions (such as yes, no, please, down, etc), many animals, colors, food, mommy, daddy... She also loves to dance and sing and she finishes the verses to many songs when we sing them to her. Her favorites are "Jesus Loves Me" and "The Wheels on the Bus."

She is loving to attend church with us in Coral Springs and participate in Bible class. She definitely loves her many friends at church!











#### **LET'S START TALKING**

• As you all probably know by now, our main evangelistic approach is teaching English through the Bible, using the LST method.

• We started advertising online using Facebook and Instagram in mid-January. On January 23 we had a campaign in which we handed out flyers in the community (we selected a handful of businesses highly used by the immigrant population).

• The response has been beyond anything we could have possibly imagined! As of February 28, Maikon has 15 students and the other two missionaries from the church in Coral Springs have a couple of others each.

Only two of Maikon's students are advanced enough to use the LST material and have a proper Bible study in English. The vast majority of students are very basic and therefore need more in depth and detailed ESL tutoring. With his basic students, Maikon is using a combination of two different resources: American English File 1 (by Christina Latham-Koenig - Oxford Press) and English Lessons: from the Book of Mark – Book 1 (by Glenda Reece – North American Mission Board). Maikon hopes that his basic students will be ready to have conversational lessons using the LST material within 6-12 months.

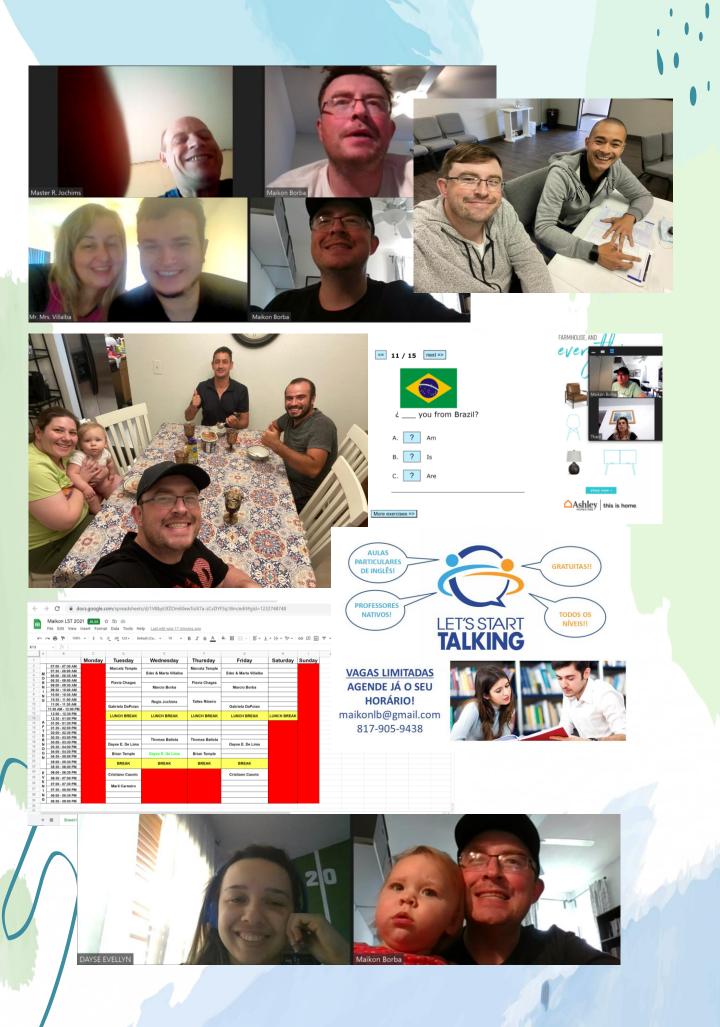
• Because of the pandemic and the fact that some students live a little far from us, not all of them are meeting in person. About half of the students have their lesson online via Zoom. One of these students in particular, Gabriela DaPoian, is a former member of the church from our home state in Brazil who lives in Germany now.

• Maikon has loved to get to know these students and hear their life stories. Even though their level of English is still very low, Maikon has tried to be very intentional in bringing Jesus into conversations. Also, he always has a prayer with each student at the end of each lesson.

• Several of these students have been coming to church on Sunday. We are having an English service at 9:00 AM on Sundays and the students see this as another way to practice English.

• We are currently in conversations with brother Carlos Guzman (a member of the church who lives here in Boca Raton – he's originally from Chile but lived in Brazil for many years) to help Maikon with a weekly Bible study in Portuguese which will be aimed especially at the LST students whose English is too basic. This way, all of our students will be given the chance to learn English as well as the Bible.





## WORK IN THE CHURCH IN CORAL SPRINGS

- We are so happy and feel very blessed that we have found the church of Christ in Coral Springs. The Yegros and the Hendrixes (the two missionary families there) have welcomed and received us with open arms.
- We're so glad that we have joined their team and have been able to jump in and help in the work they've been doing among the Hispanic population here in Broward County.
- We meet twice on Sundays, there's a service in English at 9:00 and a service in Spanish at 10:30. Tati has been teaching one of the kids' classes (ages 6 and up) and Maikon has been helping during the service with prayers, preaching, etc. Maikon has had to speak Spanish every Sunday and he's even preached in Spanish a couple of times already!
- During the week, we have three Bible studies: Wednesday evening in Spanish with Mauricio Yegros, Thursday evening in Portuguese with Maikon, and Friday evening in English with Riley Hendrix.
- Our LST students have been invited to come to the worship service in English on Sundays and also the Bible study in English on Friday. Several of them have come at least once and quite a few have been attending faithfully most weeks.
- Overall, we have tried our best to help and encourage each other. We are especially glad that our three families get along really well and have become friends. God is good!



## **BIBLE STUDY IN PORTUGUESE**

 In the second half of January we started our weekly Bible study in Portuguese.

• We meet at the church in Coral Springs on Thursdays at 7:00 pm. The study is also broadcast live via Zoom and Facebook. We chose to meet at the building because the space allows for better social distancing.

• At the building, we have about 12 people who are attending regularly. Not all of them are Brazilian, though (the other two missionaries from the church in Coral Springs as well as brother Alex Sanchez have attended also to help and encourage us). They all speak or understand Portuguese to some degree.

• The online audience has been growing and several people from Brazil are participating via Zoom. Many others have been watching via Facebook Live.

• We are studying the book of Acts and we are using the Discovery Bible Study, which is a wonderful discipleship method. The focus of this study is to reconnect with members of the CoCs who have participated in Portuguese language CoC's in the US as well as many other brethren in Brazil. The Guzmans and the Martins, have been attending.

• For the first 30 minutes we have a meal together. Every week either Tati will cook something or we'll get pizza or sandwiches at Subway. The idea is to offer everyone a chance to fellowship with one another. Also, because of work and traffic, most people wouldn't be able to attend the Bible study if they first had to go home to eat dinner. This way, they're able to come straight from work for our Bible study. We love it because we are feeding people both physically and spiritually!



### CONTACTS IN THE COMMUNITY:

• Forming new relationships with people is still quite challenging because of the pandemic. However, we continue to be very intentional in meeting people within our community. We are trying to become regular customers in Brazilian stores and bakeries. We also have been taking Joanna to parks and playgrounds so that we can meet other families with young children.

• Three of our current LST students are people that we met at two different Brazilian bakeries near our apartment.



#### **EXPLORING SOUTH FLORIDA**

• We have loved to explore the area. We have taken several trips to local parks and beaches. South Florida is really beautiful and we reinforce the invitation for you to come see us here!



## **OUR APARTMENT**

• We believe that our apartment is finally ready. We can't wait, as soon as the pandemic permits, to be able to host small groups for Bible studies in our living room. Also our spare bedroom is available for families to come spend some time with us!



## NEW VISAS

• We haven't heard yet from USCIS about our visas. Our cases have been received on September 9, 2020 and are still being processed.

• We only have legal status until May 31, 2021 – which is when Maikon's work permit expires.

• Our sponsoring church in Arkansas is communicating with Senator Cotton's office in Little Rock and trying to see if the process can be expedited somehow.

• Please shower us with your prayers concerning this issue as we can't stay out of status. If this happens our lives here in America will be severely troubled and the good work we're doing in South Florida will likely have to come to a halt. There's even the possibility of us having to leave for Brazil and stay there indefinitely until the new visas come.



## **SPECIAL PRAYER REQUESTS:**

- Three main things are causing us a lot of stress and preoccupation:
- Please continue to pray for the pandemic in Brazil as things are at their worst down there. As you may have seen on the news, Brazil is going through the most difficult situation since the beginning of the pandemic. We can't help but worry about our families and loved ones. Being so far away is really hard because we feel like there's not much that we can do to help.
- Tati's grandma is still bedridden, and her situation hasn't improved.
- Our visa situation being unfinished is making us very apprehensive. We need our new visas to come before we go out of status. We also don't want to have to leave the country right now that we have just started our work and things are moving along.
- Even though we're happy and pleased with our partnership and work with the church in Coral Springs, we know that we could still benefit from another couple/family that could come and particularly help us with the Brazilian work. Since January, we have been talking to Paul Dawson, a former missionary to Brazil. He and his wife, Cheryl, are interested in moving to south Florida and joining us in our work here. Our supporting churches have been meeting and we're together praying and trying to decide whether this would be a good fit. Please, help us pray that this is indeed God's will and if it is that everything may fall into place.

After leaving everything behind in Brazil in 2016 and after 4.5 years of intense preparation, we feel so happy and blessed that we are finally being able to do what God has called us to do! Thank you for allowing us to be here in South Florida and to do our mission work!!

In Jesus,

The Borbas