

It's been a strange start to a new year, but we know God is still at work here, healing and changing lives. Since we've been back, our little town of Benjamin Constant has been on severe lockdown for the entire month of February. Only one family member can go out to shop for food and although we have a 7:00 pm curfew, they have been confiscating motorcycles all day long! They ask where you are going and what you are doing and if it is not essential business, they take your motorcycle away! There is a R\$300,00 fine OR you can wait until next month to retrieve it! Boat traffic is stopped, other than barges with essential items like food. Churches, non-essential businesses, and schools remain closed. We have had to postpone and try and reschedule weddings, conferences and baptisms. In some cases when we had to cancel ministry trips to visit Pr. Coordinators to encourage them, give them orientation and try to make new plans they have been able to come to us! 😊

Why so severe? Since we are in the Amazon, they take their lockdown orders from Manaus, which is having a horrible crisis. Several of our friends and acquaintances in the churches there have gone to be with the Lord just these past two weeks, as a result of COVID. Benjamin has had an increase in cases too and several more have died recently. There are currently NO oxygen tanks in Benjamin, the hospital is extremely low on medicines that come by barge and because of the crises in Manaus, they are not sending any one there. So, we wait and pray and try to hang low as ordered. We have been on lockdown 3 weeks, although they may decide to extend that order. Churches and other Christian organizations have rallied together to provide more oxygen tanks for Manaus.



**PERU** has been no better. One of our key pastor coordinators, Pr. Edgardo, had to be flown from his river village to Iquitos for treatment. His oxygen levels were so low he shouldn't have made it. We praise the Lord he is already recuperating.



**Pr. Edgardo and Corina**

In the midst of all of this, we praise the Lord Wilson is still able to go to the hangar, continue to put our ministry tools in order (like washing the plane and boats, working on the marina, etc.), maintain contact with pastor coordinators of the church plants in Peru and Brazil to encourage and orientate them and encourage and work on sermons and seminars. I continue to work on children's ministry materials so that as soon as the doors are open, I can begin to distribute ministry kits and resources. I just finished children's lesson plans for the MAJOR PROPHETS, another request from a local pastor's wife.

The village churches are still up and running. The church in **São João** just celebrated their **2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary**. We began meeting with the people in this village four years ago to hold a Bible study on a lady's



front porch bi-weekly. What a joy to see this church growing and the people excited to worship the Lord. The sign the girl is carrying into the church says: "The Lord has done great things for us. For this we are grateful."



**Pr. Borges**



On this their second anniversary they are officially inaugurating the church! We were excited to see that Pr. Borges and his ministry team were able to help the villagers paint the church. Wilson and I had hoped to participate, but Pr. Maurilio went in our place. We are too “visible” around here and have already been accused by lead organizations of taking COVID into certain Indian villages. We have not entered the areas in question for the past 3 years because the doors have literally been closed to any Christian activity. With the severe lockdown in place, and since we are still considered “outsiders”, we decided it was better to stay put! We continue reaching out to villages via phone contacts, prayer and occasional visits when they come to see us. We also make visits here in town.

We had the special privilege of hosting **Pr. Hélio, from the Ticuna Indian village called Feijoal**, and two of his church leaders overnight, so Wilson could reschedule the dates and consolidate the plans for a **leadership training conference that will be held in their village the end of February**, Lord willing. Pr. Hélio is Pr. Coordinator over nine church congregations located in surrounding villages, six of which we partnered together to help establish and build the churches.

I was thrilled to be able to give them two Sunday School kits (3 ½ years teaching materials each), explain how to use these resources and explain how to work out a “round robin” system to share them with other congregations in their area of ministry. **During the conference, Wilson and Maurilio will give seminary and discipleship training and I will hold separate classes to train children’s ministry workers and teachers.** The man on the left is a village schoolteacher and administrator who loves the Lord, has a heart for children. He is excited to help distribute these resources, hold regular meetings with the Sunday School teachers, helping to orientate them along the way, and send reports from time to time.



This month, I finished the children’s Bible lesson plans for the **MAJOR PROPHETS** and am working on more lesson plans for the book of **REVELATION**. It’s awesome to know that the Sunday school curriculum I finished the last few months is already being used in one of the local churches in their weekday Bible clubs, which is taught in homes with smaller groups of children.



Our days are rarely “routine”, even amidst the pandemic. There are always projects, shopping trips, visits, and occasional surprises along the way. The health department called recently asking for an emergency flight to pick up a seriously ill man in Palmeira do Javari and bring him to Benjamin Constant. He was in a small clinic in his village, 350 miles away and no one was able to go. We praise the Lord that we were here, and Wilson was able to get him to a hospital.



*God numbers our days. He has chosen to take home several more of our friends and acquaintances throughout Brazil recently, as a result of COVID 19, to reign with Him forevermore. Just this past month, He has also welcomed home two of our faithful and loving friends, prayer warriors and ministry partners, Arlys*



*Coy and Marni Stelter. They have fought the fight, finished the race and kept the faith and have been awarded their crown of righteousness as they have longed for “Christ’s” appearing. 2 Timothy 4:7,8. They were both an integral part of our family and we all loved them dearly. Arlys’s enthusiasm for life was contagious. A gracious host, she always greeted us with a warm smile, hugs and a homecooked meal. She had a true passion for serving others and being God’s witness to all those around her. The joy of the Lord was also Marni’s strength. Marni had a passion for reaching others for Christ, often handing out*



*Gospel tracts wherever she went and prayed fervently our country. Both women had a passion to be spiritual mentors for their families and to uphold missionaries around the world in prayer. What a joy it has been over the years to share in life’s journey together with these two amazing women! We will dearly miss them but rejoice in the Lord that they are in His presence worshipping Him forever more! You will remain in our hearts until we see you again.*

We know Marni and Arlys not only brought our daily lives and activities before the Lord in prayer they also prayed for our future ministries. Their prayers will continue to bless us. Wilson and I want to thank you for your continued love, prayers and support! You may not realize how much we lift you up in prayers too. We need each other! Isn’t it amazing how God has designed us to uphold one another and work TOGETHER?! We are really looking forward to seeing you sometime this summer (Sept.-Aug.), Lord willing, even though our time will be short.

God bless and keep you in His care, Love and hugs,

Wilson and Lori

Wilson and Lori Kannenberg  
C.P. 41  
Benjamin Constant, AM 69630  
Brazil, S.A.  
www.wilsonandlori.com



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may be sent in our name to:  
Mission Aviation Fellowship  
P.O. Box 47  
Nampa, ID 83653

**Phone:**  
011-55-97-99171-2100  
011-55-97-99171-1516

**E-mail**  
wilson\_kannenberg@hotmail.com  
lori.kannenberg@hotmail.com

**Birthday:**  
Wilson 08/10/55  
Lori 03/25/58

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