



# Brazil São Paulo 1 Action Team

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## Prayer Letter February 2009

It has been two months since we arrived here at Itaim Paulista and we can hardly believe it. We are fortunate that we are working with a church that has lots of projects going on, including PEPE, CECON and soup runs. The services take place on Wednesdays, Fridays and there are four on Sundays, which, considering they are all in Portuguese, is rather intense.

The church itself is large with a congregation of around 500 people. Services are very diverse, the worship ranging from choir sung hymns to Hillsong songs performed by a band. Naturally, because the church is so well developed, with existing drama, dance and choir groups, it is sometimes hard to see our role within it. Consequently we are looking to become involved in the much smaller sister church in the Vila Any favela. We don't know exactly how to do so, therefore it is a subject that requires much prayer on our behalf.

One of the main areas of our work is with the PEPE pre-schools. We work both in the PEPE at our church in Itaim and the PEPE at Vila Any. In the PEPE at Itaim we are there to support the teachers, which invariably is simply playing with the children. The children have so much energy and



we would appreciate prayer for us to have as much energy and enthusiasm as them (especially when we hear the words "Pega Pega" which means they want us to chase them!). At the Vila Any PEPE we take a greater role in teaching the children. Due to it being the end of the year and the syllabus, our teaching role has not fully begun. As our role increases, speaking Portuguese will become more vital so that is an important prayer point. It is really important that the children receive education not just in basic literacy and numeracy but also in simple social skills such as brushing their teeth and washing their hands.

As it has come to the end of the school year the older children in the PEPEs have graduated. At both PEPEs they held a ceremony to celebrate where the children dressed smartly, sang songs and received their certificates. The graduation is a very special moment for the parents as well as the children as it encourages a positive attitude towards education, making it more likely that the children will be taken to school afterwards. We will miss the children who have left this year and ask that you would pray with us as they start school, that they will be successful there.

Gilmar and Jargi are an amazing couple who run the PEPE at Vila Any. They have not received God's calling to evangelise amongst gypsy communities in other areas of Brazil. This is a huge step of faith and obedience for them as they do not yet have a home or have found schools for their children to attend. They leave early January so prayer for them



would be really appreciated. Also pray as the Itaim Church has not yet found a replacement for them to run the PEPE at Vila Any.

As you can imagine, as none of us had done work like it before, our first two months at CECON, the disabled centre, have been quite an experience. On arrival we were quite nervous, not knowing what to expect or what was expected from us. Our role seems simply to be there. The people at CECON spend the majority of time colouring, and we help those who are unable to do this by themselves. Consequently there have been times when we have been bored. However, we have also been blessed by being able to make friends with some of the people there, especially when we went with everyone to Playcentre. Playcentre is a theme park which, for one day, was opened only to those with special needs and their carers – it was fantastic to see them having a good time. We really want to offer more at CECON, and hope that in February we may be able to start organising some games with them. So we would love it if you could pray that we are inspired with ideas for activities and remain patient.

We have recently begun teaching English for people in our church once a week. Lauren and John teach around ten young girls beginner's English whilst Abi and Emma teach the adult advanced class. As the abilities in the advanced class vary so much they require different levels of material and preferably one on one tutoring. Prayer for ideas for both classes would be gratefully received. Although we have only done a couple of lessons so far we have found them rewarding and a great way to give something back to the people in our church. We look forward to watching our lessons progress in the New Year and building relationships with our students.

Another aspect of our work here is the soup run on Tuesday and Friday nights. This involves us travelling around in a coach dispensing soup to those sleeping on the streets. During this time we get to speak to some of the homeless and have even prayed with some of them. We thought it was particularly special when they received a Christmas meal instead of soup. A lot of the people we meet have drug and alcohol problems; therefore they

need a great deal of prayer. Also, the government is looking to ban projects such as the soup run so that all homeless people can be localised into government shelters; they are not keen to have churches working alongside them. This would be a great shame as the soup run is a way of the Church reaching out to the community and showing them Christ's love.

We are grateful to God for blessing us with so many great friends here. People have been so welcoming and always want to spend time with us. In our free time we have been taken to the beach, the zoo, cinema, shopping and many trips to eat food! We are lucky to have so many friends who can speak English but we would appreciate prayer that our language improves to the degree that we can build better relationships with those who cannot speak English.

As a team we have struggled with our spiritual life/ not knowing what to do in our devotional times and not feeling as 'useful' as we had hoped in Brazil. We have yet to see God's purpose for us here but we are spiritually blessed by the other Brazil team and have really benefited from their support. Subsequently we have now reached a point where we are actively seeking God's face and we are growing closer to God as a team. We are planning to become more involved in our work here and would appreciate prayer for God's guidance in this!

**Laura, John, Emma and Abi**  
*Brazil São Paulo 1 Action Team*

#### **Prayer Points:**

- Growing closer to God as a team and as individuals
- Increased language learning
- Used to our full potential in Brazil