

September Prayer Points

Those who do not have time to read the stories may get the prayer requests and main points in less than a minute by scanning the portions in bold italics.



The construction site as it looked two months ago – and how it appears today!



Dear Friends:

We have now completed the second month of hospital construction on the slab that was poured a year ago on top of foundation walls that were put in six years ago on land that was leveled eleven years ago. As you will see from the pictures in this report, the block work has been completed to roof height throughout the building and now we are finishing the brickwork. That is moving slowly as we have almost 50 arches to complete. We expected by this time to begin installing the galvanized steel trusses for the roof, but the arch work has delayed this step by a few weeks.

Mike and Hilda Stolk have returned to South Africa for a two week break during which time they are actually hard at work serving other friends (which comes as no surprise to those who know them). This has put oversight of construction on my shoulders once again which for this

brief time I am enjoying, though it means other tasks such as this report have not been completed in a timely manner!

Please thank God for continued progress of the construction work and pray that no mistakes will be made as I fill in for Mike.

Last month we requested prayer that God would provide funds to cover the \$20-30,000 shortfall we were projecting in completing this phase of construction. We are grateful and pleased to report that since asking for your assistance we have received \$44,500 for the hospital from a number of supporters, an extraordinary income in our exper-



A recent aerial photo of the property from the east

ience for only one month! In addition, since asking people to pray, we unexpectedly saved several thousand dollars in building costs and in customs charges on the importation of our last container of building supplies. We now have more than enough money to completely finish the exterior of the building, and so I have started dreaming of importing the electrical material needed to install the interior lighting for the hospital. With lights we could actually begin to use the building! How thankful we are for those who pray, for those who give so generously and sacrificially, and for God's grace bestowed on all He stirred to help us!

Please praise and thank God for His great kindness in supplying \$44,600 for the hospital in the past month, more than enough to finish this phase of construction!



The construction crew poses for a photo on the evangelistic pavilion.



Work devotions at 7:30 a.m.

Besides the usual Grace Missions workforce of eight men, we have 70 men on the construction crew, many of them Muslims, who listen to our daily Bible reading. Having a much larger "class" makes the exercise an even more rewarding one. After 32 months reading chronologically through the Old Testament with the regular workers, we finally started the New Testament this month and have just finished Matthew 18. Please pray that as we get to the heart of the gospel in the coming two weeks God may open the eyes and ears of some of these men. I regularly remind the Muslims that at Grace Missions we read the sacred writings every day because Isaiah says in the Natsiu (prophecies) that God strongly supports those who respect and tremble before His word, and that the Njile (gospels) are acknowledged by the Koran to be part of the sacred writings. So far there have been no complaints from the Muslims and in fact 49 of the workers, some of them Muslims, have already

bought Bibles from us to read at home!

Pray that this evangelistic opportunity among the 70 construction workers may continue and that God would use it to accomplish the salvation of at least a few of these men.

The church work continues to progress slowly. We still have only about 25 worshippers on a typical Sunday, but those who come are advancing spiritually. I thank God for our leaders, **Brothers Arnaldo and Gustavo**, who are stalwart,

unflinching believers, strong in the Lord in both doctrine and spiritual practice. And we are blessed with several other fine teachers among our number who feed the flock well. **Brother Xavier**, another member, is growing rapidly through correspondence courses offered by a quality Brazilian Reformed seminary. Four men from the construction crew have visited our services and Bible classes this month, though only one, **Senhor Pedro**, has persevered. He has no previous Christian experience but listens attentively to the messages, and we hope God is working in his heart. We have three other visitors who also look like they may stick. One of them, **Senhor Mendes**, is a seminary graduate and pastor who left his apostate denomination and humbled himself to sit under the Bible teaching of our uncredentialed but sound leaders. He is being discipled with the mutual hope that he will be able to join the church. However, Arnaldo, who is discipling him, is having a hard time persuading Mendes that salvation is not through works. Besides Mendes two other men, **Leonid and Breznev** (both named after the Soviet leader in power when they were born in Mozambique's former communist days) are being discipled with the expectation that they can eventually join the church.

Please thank God for continued signs of spiritual life in the church work, though we long for greater numbers and greater manifestations of grace. Pray for God's hand to work in the lives of Xavier, Mendes, Pedro, Leonid, and Breznev.

In concluding this report, I thought I would answer a few questions about the hospital construction that some of our friends may be wondering about.

Leader Arnaldo



Leader Gustavo



Brother Xavier



Mendes



Leonid



How much is this project costing?

Total expense to present - \$575,000

Total spent on the main building to present – ***\$260,000***

This includes the roof, paint, and exterior public lighting not yet installed

Cost of two sanitation blocks - ***\$5,000 each***

Evangelistic pavilion - ***\$7,000***

Grace Missions residence/guest house - ***\$86,000***

All other expenses to date - ***\$212,000***

This includes property costs, taxes, borehole and water tower, water and electrical

installations, boundary wall, roads and drains, eight acres of landscaping, and ten years of maintenance and wages for needed employees.



190 roof half-trusses await placement

How is this being financed?

To date we have received no grants at all, no government funds, no gifts from philanthropic organizations. All has been supplied from contributions designated for the purpose from individual friends and occasionally churches. Friends who contribute are not wealthy businessmen, factory owners, or heads of companies. ***To our knowledge, every one of our contributors comes from that segment of the working class which earns only what the labor of his own two hands can produce. In the face of these realities we can only stand back in awe at what is happening through a consortium of weak men with limited human resources, but a limitless God who says, "Is anything too hard for me?"***

The east wall nears completion



Workers build the arches on the clinic wing



What about those arches?

In the tropics, high ceilings and wrap-around verandas that shade external walls are important in reducing the inside temperature of buildings. Without shaded walls, a concrete building here releases heat like a furnace all night long, keeping the occupants inside miserable even during the hours of early morning when the temperature outside is ideal.

To shade the external walls, circling the hospital is a veranda enhanced with 47 brick arches which are proving to be more labor-intensive than I expected. Like a mother who after holding her new baby forgets all about the preceding labor pains, I completely forgot the



trial the ten arches in the Grace Missions residence had been from being so pleased



with the final results. So as plans were being drawn for the hospital I thought it would be nice to decorate that building too with brick arches. However, when after two weeks of struggling with the present job I began calculating just how much those arches were costing us in labor, I suddenly remembered doing exactly the same thing nine years ago with the arches in the residence, and for the first time recalled that brick arches are a pain to erect, especially here

where no one has experience with face brick (brickwork that has to look good the way it's laid because it isn't going to be covered over with plaster).

To my dismay, I realized it will take sixteen block layers together with their helpers a whole month to finish all the arches. Thankfully, labor is inexpensive here where block layers earn \$4.00 a day and their helpers make \$3.60. So besides holding up construction of the roof by a few weeks, the brickwork is going to cost us a month's wages for 32 men. But then that is "only" \$3,000 for what would cost a fortune in the States where brick layers probably earn two to three hundred dollars a day. Perhaps it is not such a bad idea after all to take advantage of this opportunity to produce an esthetic result that would be unaffordable to us if attempted in a developed country!

By His grace:
Charles and Julie Woodrow