

This letter was typed by Rev. James Hawkins and included a handwritten note from his wife, Frances, at the conclusion.

Caixa Postal 603
Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul
Brazil, South America
December 2, 1965

Dear Friends,

"The harvest truly is great but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2b) This verse more than any other is responsible for our being on the mission field today. We give thanks to God for this wonderful privilege of being a part of the mission personnel here in Brazil, for you who are sustaining us by your prayers and interest, and to Tabernacle Baptist Church (Macon, Ga.) for supplying our needs. We continually thank God for your interest and concern.

We arrived in Porto Alegre three months ago today and our first three months have been filled with activity. Promotion Day on the last Sunday in September confronted us - almost too quickly to do the many necessary things in preparing for the day. And now we are rehearsing for three Christmas programs: one at Tabernacle Church of Goodwill, plus the preaching points at the two chapels--Vila Matias Velho and Vila Elizabeth. When we prayed for full-time work, the Lord answered our prayer.

In our move from the city of Campinas, state of São Paulo (where we attended language school for one year) to Porto Alegre, we had quite an adjustment to make - more than from the States to Campinas. In Campinas there were many missionary families and many other American families there because of the industries such as General Electric, Singer, Westinghouse and others. The influence of so many North American families was felt in the city which was much like cities in the U. S. A. There are fewer Americans here and widely scattered. We are living at the church in Miss Pearl Bigler's former apartment of two rooms, plus one bedroom formerly used by the Brazilian family who occupied the rear apartment. When we arrived we stored our furniture in the basement of the church until I could make some repairs on the living quarters in my "spare" time. Daily demands of the church work leave little spare time, thus we still have about half of our furniture in the basement. However, by the time you receive this letter, we should be using both apartments which will give us a total of five rooms--living room, combination study and bedroom, two bedrooms for the girls, combination dining area and kitchen, a shower and bath. Very adequate for our present needs and we are all happy to be living at the church.

Glenda and Heather attend Colégio Batista which is an excellent school. They are out of school for Summer vacation during Dec., Jan. and Feb. They are doing excellent work (all in Portuguese, of course!) and both are studying piano again. They are fine MK's and have made a wonderful adjustment, for which we are very thankful.

As you probably know, Jimmy spent June, July and Aug. with us and we had a wonderful family fellowship again. He is a freshman at Georgia Southwestern College in Americus, Georgia, and returns to Macon to his grandmother's every weekend. His trip to Brazil made him aware of the importance of mail. He has written every week since he returned to the States (and naturally this helps mom and dad's morale!) We try to think of the happy days we spent together this year, rather than thinking of how long it might be before we get together again, and appreciate sincerely Tabernacle making this trip possible.

For the past month Chapel Matias Velho has had record enrollment and attendance of more than 100. Chapel Vila Elizabeth is still our newest work and only has about 23 in attendance. Sunday School is held at 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoons in these chapels. Tabernacle Church is having 150 and more. On Tuesday night for Bible study, 40 to 60 attend. Prayer meeting on Thursday night is fairly normal for Baptist groups; it is our smallest group. Each Sunday morning people begin arriving at 8:00 a.m. Teachers who are not present by 9:00 are marked tardy. By the Sunday School hour at 9:30, almost every pupil has already marked up with the secretary and is ready to commence the first hymn when it is announced. Only a few are ever tardy. After a full Sunday, we have our teachers and officers meeting after church on Sunday night at 9:00. (Try it if you have no other time.) We have a fruitful time of previewing next Sunday's lesson, and of discussing helpful suggestions or problems. There in your church, do people give excuses as to why they cannot teach a Sunday School class? Do they say I cannot read or write? We have some teachers who cannot read or write. It is encouraging to see the willingness of some who serve even with handicap. One teacher has her daughter read the lesson to her, and then she teaches the class the following Sunday. The Sunday School at Tabernacle of Goodwill is the envy of many other pastors in Porto Alegre.

In Training Union, no parts are read from the quarterly. When a candidate wants to become a member of Training Union, he signs his name to a list of things expected of him, including giving parts without reading from the quarterly. Surely Miss Pearl's efforts to establish a firm foundation have been rewarding.

Christmas has always been quite an event here. Heretofore, every member of the Sunday School received a present, and everyone present received something. The Christmas program usually consisted of poems, recitations, special songs, and at times, the Christmas scenes. A ~~brief message on the significance of Christmas was included.~~ After the program, presents were chosen by the members on the basis of frequency of attendance during the year.

Our present needs are: 1) more evangelistic effort to reach the lost for Christ; 2) more workers for the total harvest; 3) immediate maintenance on much of the church property (Miss Pearl's health did not permit her to attend to the many administration tasks and property maintenance too. Frances, Glenda, Heather and I wonder how she did all we are now doing!); 4) organize the men for service; and 5) activate the youth missionary organizations. Pray that the coming year may be a fruitful year for the Lord as we seek to do His will here.

May your Christmas season be a happy one in which you celebrate the birth of Christ our Savior, and the New Year be filled with happiness and service for Him.

Sincerely in Christ's Service,

James, Frances, Glenda, + Heather
James, Frances, Glenda and Heather

Note:

15¢ for airmail to Brazil arrives in 6-10 days

5¢ for regular mail arrives in 6-8 weeks

We're so happy y'all can be together again. We're hearing very good reports of Ernestine's new work and think Tabernacle is very fortunate to have her wonderful leadership.

Continuing to pray for us and our work. We're very happy here, but miss Jimmy especially during the holiday season. It's good that we're kept so busy. Love, Frances