

**Sue Jansen, Mission Partner, Argentina, April 2007.**

Dear Everybody,

HAPPY EASTER to all of you even though I'm a little late with this greeting! Well, the good news is that I "survived" all the combined and separate Easter Services - 8 in all - for which I was directly responsible for here in this District of the Methodist Church. And praise God, after years of difficulties between the 3 Methodist communities of faith here in BAHIA BLANCA, there was an atmosphere of love and a willingness to walk together in God's love in every Service. Believe me when I say that we have experienced a minor miracle! Hopefully, with God's help and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will be able to build upon this positive new beginning this year as I'm the Pastora caring for the 3 Methodist churches in BAHIA BLANCA and the Methodist Church in Carmen de Patagones as well. I believe that I can encourage everyone to forgive, forget and forge ahead in God's name. The level of my success will depend on everybody's prayers so please let's do the best job that we can in this direction!

Thanks a lot for praying everyday for me and for my work for God here in this part of Argentina. As we know prayer works and, yet again, I know this to be true because, as most of you know, I am living with a very difficult situation in the church where I live and work which is not of my making, and which has been ongoing for 15 years. When I was in the UK in January and February of this year I wondered how I would survive emotionally here this year and God answered my needs and prayers by opening the way for me to have a lot more work! I'm now officially "the Pastora of the District" which covers a huge area. To be honest, I feel emotionally and spiritually liberated. I am unduly concerned about the heavy workload because I'm good at organising myself and I'm efficient. As we Yorkshire folk know "a bit of hard work does nobody any harm!"

As for the climate, we are experiencing unusual weather in many parts of Argentina. It's possible that you have heard on the British News about the flooding in many northern parts of the country. The same thing occurred in 2003/4 and although government money was given to the provinces after the last disaster to clean out blocked drains, install new storm drains etc, most of this work was not done. The money went into the back pockets of corrupt local government officials and contractors. So here we are again 3 years later back at square one! Once again, the Methodist churches in these regions are doing a great job with all the folk who've lost the little that they have for the second time in 3 years. You may have heard about the situation in Neuquén where Frankie, my Superintendent, and his wife, Myriam, live and work. Two weeks ago a schoolteacher was unlawfully killed by a policeman with a history of carrying out violent acts when on duty when taking part in a peaceful march to improve conditions for pupils in the local state schools. Since that day, there have been daily street demonstrations in Neuquén, and Frankie and Myriam are working everyday on the streets - as part of an ecumenical group - trying to radiate God's love to everybody and so bring some calm and peace to a very volatile situation. Please pray especially for them and their team as they take part in this dangerous work. Thanks!

The unusual climatic conditions in the country have caused us to have plagues of mosquitoes and they are not a joke, I can tell you! They love me and if there was to be only one mosquito in the whole of BAHIA BLANCA, I know that it would make a beeline for the Central Church where I live so as to suck my blood! They love the taste of my blood and I'm allergic to their bites so every bite fills with pus and itches like mad for 3 to 4 days. As you can imagine, I wage war with them every summer but by now - the middle of April - with the coming of autumn and cooler temperature, the main armies of mossies have usually died out and we are dealing with the

stragglers. However, not this year! Apparently, according to news items on television, the mossie situation is much worse in Buenos Aires than here but I take small comfort from this info. As I sit here in a cyber café writing you this e-mail, I'm swatting the mossies that keeps attacking my legs and arms which are covered with the best mossie repellent that money can buy here in Argentina! When I get home I shall cover myself in vinegar -yes, the stuff that we usually put on our fish and chips - and yes, I will smell like a "salad" but it does keep the critters off my body for a bit! Therefore, if any of you are planning a visit to Argentina any time soon please remember that this a nation-wide problem, and so please visit your local Boots and stock up on citronella-type anti-mossie stuff as I have found it to be the most effective type here.

Catalina, my dog, was 2 years old at the end of February this year and she continues to delight me in everyway! However, our lives have changed a bit in that Esther, who lives in a small flat in another part of the Church and who is the caretaker, accepted the gift of a black, Labrador puppy in February of this year just before I returned from Great Britain. Part of me thinks that she has made a mistake to do so because she will be 72 years old in July of this year, and she does not have good health and the puppy is male and is huge now and is going to grow as big as his father, Tommy, who I know very well. She's not fit enough to play much with Johnny or exercise him so Catalina and I are working in this direction. Indeed, when Johnny arrived at the Church during my time in Great Britain, Catalina worked as a substitute mum for him as he was missing his own mum, and now they spend hours together everyday playing on the Church patio. Also, once again I'm cleaning up huge amounts of dog poo everyday and getting even more exercise than last year. The latter is very good for me but I'm looking forward to Johnny's digestive tract maturing a bit with age so that I don't have to do quite as much of the former! Micaela, the cat, is coping well with Johnny and is now very keen to be friends with him as she is with Catalina. However, Johnny has a lot of strength in his jaws and I have had to rescue her a number of times from his "games"! I thank God everyday for these animals in my life as they give me a lot of unconditional love and exercise, and they allow me to place my life in perspective. Truly they are a gift from God for me!

Well dear friends, I must stop now and return to the Church because Esther is away this week visiting some of her family in Buenos Aires so I'm in sole charge of the animals, and it's time for Johnny's lunch. It's not wise for me to delay it as he begins to chew anything at hand to assuage his hunger pangs! Also, I'd like to clean my kitchen before going off to make some hospital visits later this afternoon. Once again, thank you all for your love and prayers. God bless and take care!

Love and prayers,

Sue! xxx