

February, 2015

Dear friends and supporters of ELS Helping Hands:

I just returned from my monthly visit to "United by Faith" Lutheran Church in Linares, Chile. In January we had Vacation Bible School, an outdoor church service at a park, English classes, adult instruction classes. The weather was quite warm with temperatures going as high as 95 degrees. January is summer in Chile.

While I was in Linares I made some visits to various offices in the city in order to make some headway on a big project, the construction of the church building. Member of the church, Erika, and I visited government and municipal offices to get certificates that show that no taxes are owed, that the already existing construction has been approved, and that the property is really owned and registered in the name of the church. We needed to do these things because the members want to beautify their church and make it bigger and more practical. On Sundays we are often squeezed in with all the seats occupied. Our church members in Linares want to witness to their faith by offering an attractive place to for many to come and worship.



Current front of Linares church building.

The major work will be extending the building out to the right of this picture.



The construction project will turn this yard into part of the sanctuary.

This current church construction project in Linares would include: adding a church bell tower (steeple), raising the ceiling, and extending the church building to make it bigger. They have raised their own funding for the bell tower and are planning to build it as soon as possible. They have raised almost \$2,000 which is enough to build the bell tower and have a start on the other parts of the construction.



"United by Faith" is a small but active congregation. It is growing and has a desire to reach out into the community. It has become better known in the last year due to programs in cooperation with Kingdom Workers, an organization of our sister-synod, WELS, in the U.S. that supports the work of ministry with different kinds of projects. The project in Linares is to supply English teachers to the municipal schools of the nearby community of Longaví. Arron Landgraff and Seth Hansen, both from Michigan, worked with this program in 2014. In 2015 three others will be arriving to work in this program. The English teachers assist the congregation in outreach and support for the congregation's activities.

The construction project in Linares is bigger financially and physically than anything the "United by Faith" congregation has done before. The following is a budgeting chart for the work of construction on the Linares church.

Materials for the structure (cement, metal rafters, windows etc.	\$12,718
Architect fees & construction license	2,000
Labor for specialists (Members will do as much as possible)	\$10,150
Total	\$24,868

In consultation with the ELS Board for World Outreach, and with the Board's approval, it has been decided that it would be good to raise some funds to help the Linares congregation with this project. With each of the Helping Hands contributors sharing, we would like to raise half of the costs or more.

Our four congregations in Chile are all involved in projects to clean and fix up their properties and make them more attractive for members and visitors. In particular the congregation, "The Lord's Vine," in Puente Alto is doing some painting because some external paint peeled off during the winter. Also in Linares, members are working on repairing some weathering of the siding. It is wonderful to see hearts and hands join together to beautify their places of worship.

If you can help with this Linares building project by giving a special offering through Helping Hands, it would be much appreciated.

Thank you for your prayers, support and interest in our world outreach.

God be with all of you,

Missionary Timothy Erickson

