

Brazil

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MISSIONS



The Brazilian mission, the first for WELS in the Portuguese language, was begun in 1987 with five missionaries. Its first work was done in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, in the south of Brazil, alongside the small independent Lutheran church that had asked for help from WELS. Several years later one of the missionaries went to reside in the city of Dourados, Mato Grosso do Sul, which is in west central Brazil. A former Lutheran pastor and friend of the congregation in Rio Grande do Sul had asked to have WELS also work in this city.

There were many changes of personnel over the years and different programs of outreach were tried. In 2009, WELS budget constraints forced World Missions to divert financial support elsewhere. Three men had just graduated from the seminary program. One missionary had retired in 2006, but stayed on in a volunteer capacity. Today, the Brazilian Lutheran Church is self-supporting and an independent mission partner of the Latin America missions team.

Today there are two congregations and one preaching station. The congregation in Gravataí, Rio Grande do Sul, is served by Pastor Elcy da Costa Stark, a graduate of the seminary program. His wife Noeli aids him in his work. He teaches school to support himself while leading the congregation called “Jesus, the Savior”.

In Dourados, the congregation “Star of Bethlehem” continues to be led by volunteer Missionary Charles Flunker, aided by his wife Beth. Alongside him works Evangelist Gilberto Andrade da Silva, who preaches and teaches while also driving a truck to support himself and his family. Two young men are in leadership training classes.

Gilberto also spends a week every other month in the city of Presidente Prudente, in the state of São Paulo. There five communicants and other attendees, a group of about 22 people, have a communion service and Bible studies. Gilberto continues to visit and do outreach while he is there.

Church Statistics:

Baptized members: 150

Communicants: 110

Volunteer missionaries: 1

National pastors: 2

Evangelists: 1

Students in leadership training: 2

Praying for Brazil

Please pray for our independent mission partner, the Brazilian Lutheran Church, as they continue to reach out with the gospel message. We ask for blessings on the national pastors, evangelists, and volunteer missionary as they serve the people of Brazil.