



Step report

Argentina & Bolivia



Us in Tartagal (with Liam)

Report #2

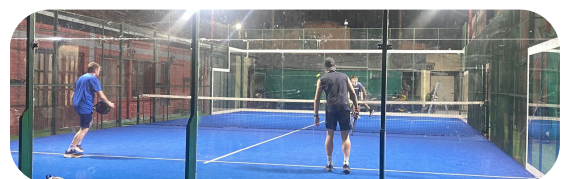
The last couple of weeks have been challenging, hot, impactful, eventful, and emotionally draining!

What we we've been up to

The week beginning 16th March, we made some good progress at the construction site, mostly outdoors, putting up the metal frames. We have all been learning lots of new skills, and have enjoyed seeing how they do things differently here to back home. They certainly have a lot less regard to safety here, despite our 3 hour safety briefing on Monday night! As well as the construction work, two of us also stay home each day to do the cooking and cleaning. None of us have got food poisoning from our cooking yet, and the meals have even tasted good as well!

On Thursday morning, we went to the project a bit later than usual because of the rain. We had a precious time sitting in the church while we were still waiting for the rain to ease off. We sang some Christian songs with the builder Danny, and Oscar accompanied on the guitar.

On Friday we went to the plaza at lunchtime for an annual drumming / dancing competition between schools. The performance was really impressive, but it was a bit of a shock for us all to see the dancing, as it would be seen as extremely inappropriate back home.



On Saturday we enjoyed a trip up to the settlements behind Tartagal. The church runs a kids club there for the local children in these more deprived areas. They enjoyed doing a song and game with us too. In the evening we played football with some young people from the church. Although it was pouring rain, we really like when it rains, as it cools us down when it's very hot weather.

In terms of sports and exercise while being here, we've done pretty well - trips to the gym, running, playing paddle, basketball and football; the girls even went to a cross fit hyrox class with a girl in the church who works at a gym! We have also been doing 2 minute planks and 2 minute wall sits each night. Some nights are harder than others, it must be said!

Our favourite day so far...

On Sunday we were invited by Daniel - the builder we are working with at the church - to his church's kids club in the morning, and his church service in the evening. We ended up spending the afternoon with them as well, spending time with all the families in the community. They showed us around the area, and played volleyball, football, dodgeball and 'Mancha' their version of tag. It was definitely everyone's favourite day so far, and we created so many memories to cherish forever. Their culture, the way they live, the place they live, even their worship style is so different to ours, but something that we so obviously have in common is our love for our saviour Jesus Christ. Although this community wasn't well off at all, they didn't hesitate to share Gods love through hospitality, sharing what they had, and being so welcoming and accepting of us even though we were complete outsiders coming into their community and church.



It's hot!



A special welcome



Loving the interaction

Some struggles we've had this week

- We have been struggling a bit with the heat, especially since our showers sometimes don't work in the evening, and the fan in the boys room broke!
- It has been a bit discouraging for us (especially the girls) at time at the construction site, as we quite often have very little work to do; or if there is work, it's usually the boys that they ask. It has made some of feel disheartened as we feel we aren't able to be useful as much as we'd like to be. We've been

trying to remember that it's all in God's hands, and that He has placed each one of us here for a reason. 1 Corinthians 12 v 12-27 has come up a few times in our team devotionals, and is a good reminder that we all have different skills that we've been given, and the beautiful thing about a team is that we can all work together using our different skills to serve God in the most effective way.

- It is taking a bit of time to adjust to the Argentine way of planning things, where no plans are set in stone until they actually happen!
- Although we have all made a huge improvement in our Spanish after being here for only a few weeks, we still struggle at times with the language barrier, as it is difficult for some of us to have conversations or understand instructions. We are very grateful to Oscar, our team's translator, and to Calum who can also translate for us.

Some things we are grateful for

- We are very grateful for the friends we have made in the church, especially with people our age, and their volunteers that help with the project. It's becoming easier to communicate with them which has been such a blessing.
- We are grateful for the progress being made at the construction site, and everything that God is teaching us through that, for example patience, diligence, and discipline.
- Oscar was able to join the local basketball team. He really enjoyed making connections, especially with non-Christians.
- We are grateful for the Latin Link striders in Salta who have been such a huge support to us throughout our time here. We also bumped into Liam (a short term worker with CMS) who happened to be in Tartagal for a few days visiting. It was nice to see a familiar face :)
- We are grateful for the friendships and bonds we are continuing to build within the team. It's been so valuable getting to experience and learn new things together as a team.



Making connections



Joyful worship



Smiles

Things that have made us smile!

- Getting hugs, and playing with the children at the community we visited on Sunday made us smile LOTS! Seeing how content and happy they were, despite not having all the same luxuries as us, was truly heart-warming.
- Helping out at the church's kids club on Saturday caused lots of smiles and fun times as well.
- The team have shared lots of laughs together, which have been uplifting and joyful.

Prayer and praise points

- Praise for the work that God has provided for us, and all the ways we can help our and serve in the church.
- Praise the Lord for no injuries so far at the construction site!
- Thank God for the new opportunities that we've had this week.
- There have been some misunderstandings and miscommunication with some of our coordinators. Please pray that these would be resolved quickly.
- Prayer for continued perseverance and energy
- Praise God that we were able to connect with the community on Sunday and for the amazing time we had with them. Please pray that there would be more opportunities like this, and that we'd continue to be a blessing to whoever we meet.



Wholehearted mission

Latin Link's verse of the year is from Colossians 3:23, *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord..."* Our 'whatever' can only happen because of your support. Please consider donating to help keep us serving:



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