



WITTY AND INTERESTING STARTING TITLE

As I was sitting down to write this letter, wondering how to begin, three green parakeets flew past. How cool is that?! We live in a country where ridiculously noisy, miniature parrots fly past your window! We also have leaf-cutter ants, humming birds and escaped pumas. Sometimes, when the ministry side feels tough, it does us good to remember that we live in an amazing country, made by an incredible Creator. Well, that's the end of Animal Planet, but read on to find out about exploding candles, the day that everyone was on strike and why we finally had to get an iron.

ANDREW'S ORDINATION



Lots of lovely family things have happened recently, but this was a particularly big one. After a year and a half here, we had the joy of seeing Andrew ordained deacon. As well as getting a spangly new uniform (hence the need for an iron), he was also given a bible and a 'kneeler', which was a happy reminder that this ministry is based on the word and prayer.

The evening was lovely. There was a crowd from our church in Lomas (we arrived in a rowdy minibus) and a big turn out of the youth from various churches. Thank you for those who prayed for the children. They were up until 11pm (!!) and did an amazing job of being charming in their shiny new shoes. As 1 Timothy 3:8-13 was read out, we were also soberly reminded of the responsibility and

calling of not just the deacon but the whole family. Please do pray for us in the coming weeks and months that we would all 'keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.'

BAPTISMS AND BIRTHDAYS

Our 'terremoto' (earthquake) of a son was baptised a few weeks ago. We have to admit we were a bit nervous but, after various trial attempts in the bath, we were ready for the big day. Andrew preached and lots of people made an effort to come, including some of our non-Christian neighbours. Emilio stood astoundingly still throughout the whole thing and grinned cheerily at the end. I discovered later that it wasn't actually my training that had achieved this, but a blatant bribe from Andrew involving a lollipop. Sigh. A barbecue and numerous cakes followed, including an amazing blue creation from Emilio's Argentine godparents, Alex and Vero. Continuing with the celebrations, we also enjoyed Maia's fifth birthday recently. We daringly invited all the girls from her class and played some classic party games with a princess twist. Parties here are normally done in special venues with entertainers, but we went for a more 'rustic' option at home. I was cautiously optimistic that party training from my mother would be adequate. It was a learning experience... who knew pass the parcel wouldn't transcend cultures?! Still, we had a tepee, a trampoline, fantastic weather and a unicorn cake which almost set Maia's dress on fire. What more could you ask for? Perhaps an events venue next year?!



MORE TEA, VICAR?

Our church has a thrice annual afternoon tea, put on for all and sundry, with the aim of raising money for various things that need doing around the site. The great additional benefit of these events is that people, who would never normally darken the doors of a church building, come traipsing in merrily, beckoned by the lure of all-you-can-eat cake and very tiny sandwiches. (I think we can all empathise with that.)

I was really encouraged by the fact that two mums from Maia's class came – hurrah! I was freed up to talk to them by Andrew, who took all the kids outside to play increasingly raucous games. It was a fantastic turn-out with over 100 people milling about (only 30 of which were part of our congregation). Please pray with us that these teas would be a great way to introduce people to the local church and would encourage people to ask questions about what we believe and why.

BARILOCHE

Living so far away, it's always nice to have visitors. But it's even nicer when they take you on holiday to beautiful places! In March the Amey grandparents came for a three-week flying visit, bringing suitcases full of wonderful things and flinging two of their grandchildren into a state of immense happiness as there was always a spare person on hand to read them a book. We had a lovely time in the south of Argentina and left very reluctantly indeed. We're very thankful for generous parents and some lovely memories.



PRAYER AND PRAISE

- **Praise for Andrew's ordination as deacon. We feel it's a big step to be welcomed officially into the church here. Please pray that Andrew would be faithful and humble in his ministry and that as a family we would point to Jesus more and more.**
- Praise God for five years of a madly delightful Maia. She definitely livens things up for us. We also thank God for Emilio and all that his baptism signifies. Pray with us that they would both be growing in faith and understanding of the gospel as we teach them at home, on the way to school, in the park and so on.
- **It seems a while back, but we're really thankful for way the youth camp in January at Los Cocos turned out. Some teenagers came from Arias, a farming town about seven hours from Buenos Aires, and were really impacted by what they heard. As a result a little team has been going to visit them and disciple them. Please pray for wisdom about how best to support both the team and the teenagers. We'll write more about this in the next prayer letter!**
- Please continue to pray for our 20s-30s group, VYTAL. We had a really great mini-retreat in February, but since then we've had some discouragements. Please pray that we would rejoice in our identity as God's adopted children and not in our perceived successes or failures in ministry.
- **This year we are continuing with the Sunday School during the church services. It's mostly made up of our children, but we have another few who are regular, aged 2 – 9 years. Pray that we would get better at showing the kids the goodness of God and the wonder of the gospel by living it out with them.**

By the time you get this letter, Andrew will probably be off on his pastor's retreat, where he's spending a week with about ten of his fellow clergy. Please pray for them as they spend time together reading God's word that they would be encouraged and refreshed in their walks with the Lord and consequently in their ministries. Pray particularly for Andrew as he seeks to get to know the other pastors better and that he would have time to learn from more experienced heads about life in full-time ministry in Argentina.

Thank you for reading, for your prayers and for your patience in waiting for this letter.

Until next time, 'Onwards to Glory!'^{*}

Andrew, Bethanie, Maia, Emilio and Lucy xxxxx

^{*}paraphrase of 2 Corinthians 3 courtesy of my Oak Hill Monday Fellowship group