

Nathan & Sara Zinck
Niteroi, Brazil



Sara and I moved to Niterói, Brazil almost 12 years ago as newlyweds. Since then we have added Samuel, 7 years old, and Elizabeth, 5 years old, to the mix. Both kids were in school (2nd grade and Pre-K 4, respectively) when the pandemic hit, so our big family transition this year was moving both children to video classes and hybrid homeschooling. Thankfully both kids really enjoyed staying home, although the daily video classes on Zoom were not a favorite. In 2021 we will transition to traditional homeschooling, with both children being taught at home by Sara. We have enjoyed the extra time we had together as a family this year, especially with the kids both at a stage when they are growing and changing so fast!

Overview of the work

The year 2020, even with the surprises, was a great year! This past year the church in Niterói, Brazil celebrated its ten year anniversary. We were able to celebrate this special occasion prior to the city of Niterói entering into quarantine. It was great to look back and reflect on all God has done as well as look forward and anticipate all God will do through this body.

Once the quarantine hit we moved everything online. It has been different having one on one Bible studies, group evangelistic Bible studies, prayer meetings, and small groups over Zoom but at the same time it presented some opportunities for more involvement, especially for some members that live farther away from the church building.

We had hoped to launch a couples ministry in 2020, but the pandemic hit just a couple of weeks before our launch date. We are hopeful that this year it will happen but we will see how things progress (ideally this ministry will begin in-person and not through Zoom).

In mid-September (2020) we were able to return to in-person services but with a limited capacity. It has been great to worship in-person again! A few of the members really missed being able to meet in-person and it has been really encouraging to do this again.

One of the new things we will be doing in 2021 is offering the Crown Financial Course through Zoom. We already have all the slots filled and this group will begin meeting in late February.

Timothy Project

During 2020 we had two participants in the Timothy Project apprentice program. Not having many in-person actives (except for the in-person worship service that returned in September) really changed their experience. They were able to teach one group study for the School of the Bible, they each helped lead a small group (we had two online groups), they prepared small group materials, preached, led singing, and did assigned readings while participating in a mentoring relationship. One participant concluded his stay in mid-December, the other will continue until the end of 2021, and we just received a new participant that will also be in Niterói until the end of 2021.

School of the Bible

As with everything else, we moved School of the Bible (an evangelistic outreach program) online. We had four group classes, all on Zoom. Zoom definitely allowed us to reach a few people we likely would not have been able to reach normally, but we missed the aspects of having this evangelistic outreach in person. It

was harder to develop strong personal connections doing this online. We are prayerful that in 2021 we can continue to reach people with the gospel.

Baptisms

Even with the restrictions of the quarantine we had ten baptisms this year. All but one of the baptisms that occurred in 2020 were the result of studies that began in 2018 or 2019. There are currently five people who have expressed that they are thinking of being baptized. Please keep these individuals in your prayers (their names are in our prayer requests) that they may commit their lives to the Lord.

We are grateful for all God has done and the ways the church has been blessed in 2020 and we anticipate what He will do in 2021.

Story of Hope

Elton and Danielle began studying the Bible with me in April 2019. Both had lots of questions and both were eager to continue to learn. Elton's parents were converted by missionaries on my parent's team in Rio, and for about a years he and I (when I was around eight to ten years old) went to the same church. So we played together and would see each other after that at church area wide events. For many years Elton did not go to church and really was not that interested in church although his parents always encouraged him. About five years ago Elton's father began dealing with some serious health problems. Around this time Elton started visiting the church with his wife and young son. When his father passed away a few months later Elton decided to get serious about his spiritual walk. He began coming regularly to services and soon after this I asked him if he wanted to study the Bible. His response was that he was meaning to ask me if I would be willing to study with him- it's great when God brings people together like this. Elton mentioned that he specifically wanted to study with me due to our shared history and that this provided him trust concerning what I would teach him. After studying for eleven months Elton and his wife, Danielle, were baptized March of 2020. It has been great to spend time with this couple and it has been an answer to prayer to see them give their lives to the Lord.

We never know what God will do through our lives and through our relationships. We can take comfort in knowing that there is always hope that people will be reconciled to Him.