



Newsletter (Jan 2021)

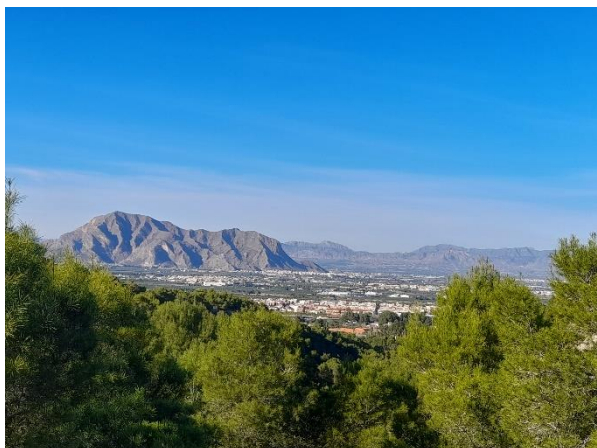


Walk like a Penguin!

Unprecedented snowfall in much of central Spain has led to some unexpected problems for a population more used to sunshine. The evening news recently ran an article explaining to those unused to walking on icy surfaces that they should only venture outdoors in sensible footwear, and as the headline stated they should: *Walk like a penguin!* In other words, to move forward in such treacherous conditions while remaining upright, one should proceed with a steady cautious waddle, like a large penguin.



I think for all of us, this past year has felt rather slippery underfoot. None of us were prepared for the conditions we've faced. Moving to Spain in the midst of a pandemic and the final days of Brexit, has certainly felt at times like skating into the unknown. As in the UK, getting anything done has been made harder this year with government offices limiting appointments, movement restricted, and rules changing on a weekly basis, depending on the latest Covid rates. That combined with the need to get all our paperwork in order prior to 31 December meant a busy and sometimes stressful few months arranging appointments and getting approval for residency. I'm pleased to say that all documentation has now been approved. I just await receipt of my official residency card and driving licence at some point in the next few months.



In addition to visiting government offices, the main focus of my time at the moment is on gaining fluency in Spanish. My calling here is to witness to the people of Spain, which means firstly being able to converse clearly and confidently. We are fortunate that we live in an area with few 'expats' so most people don't speak English and are very patient with my linguistic efforts. My studies will continue intensively for the next few months.

With Covid restrictions church activities are primarily online and I have been pleased to join on zoom with Orihuela Baptist Church for Bible Study & prayer (all in

Spanish of course!). It has been lovely to be able to participate online, but this has made it difficult to really get to know people individually and at times it can be quite hard to follow the conversation. I am really grateful for their warm welcome and look forward to better days ahead with less restrictions.

All in all, it has been a positive beginning. There is much still to learn to adapt to life here as Spain, with regards to both language and culture, also over the next six months we will continue to face Covid restrictions which will make mission more difficult, nevertheless, it feels good to have begun.

Here in Alicante, we have been fortunate to have missed the snowfall, though it has been unseasonably chilly. As I've enjoyed the cool winter sunshine of the past few days, I have been contemplating that advice from the evening news. Over the next few months, I will aim to move steadily forward, quite possibly my steps will be a little uncertain, perhaps a little penguin like, but I trust that God has bought me here for a reason and I will aim to steadily follow his calling.



Prayer Points

As the mission here begins, your prayers are very much appreciated.

Please pray for:

- Language learning – fluency to communicate the Gospel message.
- Connections within the community – getting to know the right people to begin mission work.
- Building good relationships with the church in Orihuela and a good support network here.
- The role out of vaccines and that life will 'get back to normal' so that people can meet together once again.

*My thanks & Blessings to you
Laura*



***The Lord says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life.
I will advise you and watch over you. Psalm 32:8 (NLT)***

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