



Greetings from Benjamin Constant!

Right before Christmas, Wilson and I left Manaus on a beautiful sunny morning (5:00 am). We took off full speed ahead in the Cessna 206 6-seater plane sitting side by side for 4hrs, 30 min., flying over 1000 kilometers of pure jungle without being able to say a word to each other, or barely (maybe that's a good thing-ha). The engine of the 206 is loud. Wilson had on his headset, and I wore earplugs. As we approached Benjamin Constant large columns of vapor rose above the jungle floor from the tail end of a rain like some kind of extraterrestrial setting. We were greeted by missionary Bob Hamilton and family.



Tour the sights and sounds of this unique little city with us. The only way to get here is by boat or float plane. The local port is a busy place and welcomes everyone with the hustle and bustle of boats/canoes/ barges, etc. coming and going. It's rainy season here and the river has risen more than 3 meters since we arrived. Downtown Benjamin is filled with little shops, bakeries, churches and mini markets. It's actually cleaner than I imagined (nice surprise). The houses (mostly wood and brick)

are quaint and clean. Many are very colorful and trimmed with gingerbread wood around the doors and windows. Benjamin is a noisy city with all the motorcycles racing through town. 90% of the people here ride motorcycles. Wilson and I are already used to hopping on the back of one to go to and from the house and purchase supplies. We have also done a LOT of walking. Most days it rains all night long and is sunny and nice during the day which has been perfect for working on the house. Some mornings we wake up to a world covered in a thick blanket of fog and EVERY morning we wake up to an amazing symphony of birds. People are very nice and friendly. God has blessed us with so many people from church who have come to help and visit.



Wilson and I worked on the house from Christmas straight through the New Year cleaning, painting and making things functional stopping to enjoy great fellowship at church and special devotional times and prayer with each other. The hardest thing by far was the lack of communication for over a month. On Christmas day we received our first phone call from John and Janet Certalic in WI and we were able to talk to each of our kids and some family a few times in between. The barge with all our belongings arrived 15 days after we got here. Things were pretty banged up and moldy from all the rain but after a lot of hard work cleaning and sanding the house is starting to look like a home!

Our first flight was to the river village called "Sabonete" which means soap. It's a center for seminary training in one month modules for Indians of various ethnic groups. It was a 7 minute flight and otherwise would have been a two hour boat trip. We took Atos and Marcos, spiritual Indian leaders of two different tribes and an older Indian couple. Wilson gave the study Sunday morning on "How do you know the God you serve is the right God?" What a warm welcome we received. Some students shared afterwards with us how hard it is for them to go back to their tribes and face persecution from the tribal chief, the witch doctor, family and friends. They are young. They have such a passion to share God's Word with their people and bring them hope. One young 17 year old was forbidden by the witch doctor to talk about God with groups of people. He decided to go door to door. He also developed his own curriculum with notes he took from classes and is teaching and preaching. Just last week out of the blue his sister committed suicide. Some young men cried from homesickness and also upon hearing that many in their tribe died from hepatitis and other sicknesses. Many tribes have no schools, some have schools up to the 4th grade. Their parents want them to have an education and try to find ways to send them here to Benjamin. Some are able to make it and receive housing (very simple) and support from Marco and his wife who also evangelize them and give them discipleship and training while there are here going to school. Most that try to come are barred along the river and sent back to their tribes. God is already opening up doors through communication and partnerships so we can find ways to help them and bring the Good News of Jesus Christ.



It was a tremendous day worshiping God together. 150 young people passionately committed to Christ and learning His Word. Making sacrifices to obey God's calling. The Indian groups present were Matix, Mauruna, Ticuna, Canamarí and Marubo. Wilson used to fly for missionaries to the Marubo some years ago. There is a woman's dorm (little wooden cabin) and a men's dorm and some slept in tents

(some of the helpers). No one sleeps in this church! At least not during the classes and services!

Wilson and I have met with several pastors in the area (one couple from Palmeiras which is a 7 day trip by boat and 1 1/2 hour flight), Indian leaders, missionaries and also town leaders (God even blessed us with an invite to the new mayor's birthday party.) It's exciting to see how God is providing details, willing servants and ways in which we can begin serving those in this region. Keep praying for God to open doors. The doors are closed to the Gospel here but not to health care and other specific needs (water filters and such). Christians are being stopped on the river and sent back and others are not getting permission to go in and help the people. Just the other day a group of Christian doctors were denied access. Many believe NOW is the time and that God is preparing to move mightily in this area. Until the new pastor arrives (who will stay in our house soon along with a few church leaders from Manaus), Wilson has been doing most of the preaching on Sunday nights and Tuesday nights and talked to a youth group last Saturday night. It's a blessing to be a part of the family of Christ here in Benjamin!



Last but NOT least is the answer to one of our specific prayers about a place to build a hangar and land the plane. Benjamin is a very hilly land, the river banks are steep and the river is wide with a lot of current which does not lend itself to making a ramp to get the float plane out of the water and into a hangar or for housing the plane in a floating hangar. We have been praying for over a year that God would provide a place for the plane. The Baptist floating hangar is on a tributary that dries up for several months. It is old and would need a lot of repair and even if we fixed it up we would probably have to take it to the other side of the wide river in front of Benjamin and have someone live there. The Indians offered some land, but

we would need to get amphib floats and Indian mentality says that after a shore time the plane would "belong" to them. We needed neutral ground! So, Wilson talked to a man who has an ideal piece of land one mile from our home situated on the river bank with access to road and electricity AND it just so happens that the container that was donated to us by Operation Amazon to be used for our office and to store tools and such was unloaded from the barge on a hill about 500 meters from this piece of land (which would mean we wouldn't have to drag it much further... it's already there!) The man wanted \$110,000.00 for this land (very normal price for port territories). Do we have money... no, but Wilson wanted to offer \$60,000.00 so he prayed and asked God that if this is the land we should have the man would come to him and offer this price. The very next day he returned and asked for \$60,000.00 and he threw in a piece of land across the street big enough to make a house for the other missionary pilot or have a place for a guard for free! So we are asking you to pray with us and trust God for the means to purchase this land. In September it will be dry season and the river will be low grounding the plane where it is at the floating hangar. We are praying that God would help us acquire this land soon before we are grounded. Wilson already has possibilities of flights lined up and partnerships with a few organizations and missions here. Wilson is giving 16 hours flight for the owner of the land as part payment and is seeking help to raise \$7,500.00 among the missionaries here and others. This amount needs to be paid by the 15th of February. Then we would need to make monthly payments of \$2,500.00. With God all things are possible! Maybe God will call some of you to help answer this need. We don't know how it will be met but are trusting God to work it out.

Wilson and I both want to thank you so much for your specific prayers for us. God provided safety flying over here and He gave us LOTS of strength to work on the house and unpack, etc. (even though after one month a got a stomach bug for a week). He is giving us family among the brothers and sisters in Christ here in town and among the Indians and missionaries. He is helping us stay connected now to our own kids, family and friends. We sure do miss you all but feel blessed at the same time to have you in our hearts and lives and to be here doing what God has called us to do. He is showing us contacts, sending us help for all sorts of things and giving us guidance each and every day. Today Mike, the other pilot will come and stay with us about a week and talk over strategies and ideas for ministry and how we can partner and serve together. We KNOW this has all been possible through your faithful support and prayers. We love hearing from you, keeping you in our prayers and serving here in Benjamin Constant together with you!

Love and hugs from us,  
Wilson and Lori

Hi everyone! We did get some responses of those wishing to help acquire the land for building a hangar for the float plane on the river front here. I am sorry I forgot to include information on how to send funds. That's always tricky since it's so hard to get funds to this far away place.

**In both cases Please specify that your gift is to Wilson Kannenberg for the land for the hangar in Benjamin Constant.**

**1) If you do not need a tax deductible receipt you can send funds to:**

Les Bluhm (our brother-in-law)  
W197 S7544 Ridge Rd.  
Muskego, WI 53150-9231  
Les cell – (414) 510-5690

We don't always have access to our account here, and Les let's us know what is coming in and from whom so we know where to apply it.

**2) If you need a tax deductible receipt you can send funds for the land to:**

Operation Amazon  
P.O. Box 303  
Morton, IL 61550

(309)-696-9415 or (262) 754-8833

If you have any questions you can call these numbers for Operation Amazon. We will also be partnering with them here in Benjamin!

We want to thank you so much for your love and prayers and for all you do to make this ministry possible!

God Bless, Love and hugs, Wilson and Lori

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