

American Faith Leaders Meet and Pray With Brazilian President-elect

As soon as Jair Bolsonaro was confirmed as president-elect of Brazil on Oct. 28, the media rushed to his condo in Rio de Janeiro for the first official announcement. With his wife by his side and other friends, Bolsonaro said that, before doing anything, they would pray.

Senator Magno Malta (also a gospel singer), thanked God and prayed for a new time for the nation.

That was a first in Brazil's history. In fact, the role of evangelical figures in this election was historic, and prayer was common throughout Bolsonaro's campaign. As many pastors and evangelical leaders gathered around the candidate, polls showed that although his victory was deemed unlikely, he would become Brazil's next president.

Two months later, Bolsonaro's name is well-known outside Brazil. Now, he is receiving prayers not only from Brazilian pastors, but from other countries as well.

This week Mario Bramnick, president of the Latino Coalition for Israel, led a team of evangelical leaders to meet with the president-elect as well as Brazilian political and religious leaders in Brasilia, where they met future cabinet members including Damares Alves, the pastor nominated as the secretary of human rights.

Bramnick believes Damares "will do an amazing work as secretary, fighting for Human Rights and religious freedom in Brazil and abroad."

On Dec. 20 Bramnick, along with American pastors Jim and

Rosemary Garlow, founders of Well Versed Ministries; Ramiro Pena, president of Ramiro Pena Ministries, along with his wife, Orphalinda; Albert Veksler; and Brazilian Pastor Josue Valandro, had an opportunity to meet Bolsonaro and pray with him. Pastor Pena gave the president elect an Israeli prayer shawl, thanking him for all his support for Israel.

Veksler, director of the Jerusalem Prayer Breakfast, said of Bolsonaro: "We are thankful for President Bolsonaro's stand for Jerusalem and his friendship with Israel.

Jim Garlow says, "We are very thankful for the opportunity to stand with President-elect Bolsonaro in solidarity with him. Evangelical Christians in the U.S. are very aware of his role in the new political scenario in South America and are praying vigorously for his health and the prosperity of the nation."

Rosemary Garlow echoed her husband's sentiments.

"Evangelical Christians of America are honored to visit Brazil and to stand with the elected government at this crucial moment," she said.

"We are very thankful to be here and to pray for Brazil. We love this nation and its people," Ramiro Pena said.

Bramnick says he believes Bolsonaro and Brazil will move forward with God's blessings.

"We strongly believe that the hand of God is upon President Bolsonaro and that God has a tremendous purpose for the future of Brazil."

Valandro, who leads Igreja Batista Atitude in Rio, which Bolsonaro's family attends, said, "I am very happy to be with my brothers and sisters from other countries, showing that we are walking in unity, and we deeply believe this opportunity to pray with leaders from the USA and Israel has a prophetic meaning."