

The EMU Newsletter

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

Volume LVIII

May 2015

Number 5



Ken & Joan Jensen
Director

ALONG THE WAY . . .

It is not often that I choose my articles and complete their layout in this Newsletter before composing "Along the Way." And I think I know why: there is scarcely any room left for my verbosity! So I will try "bullet points" - a new format for me.

- All 9 Farmers and their luggage arrived together in Greenville, SC, on April 3. We saw Jeremy for a few hours one morning but have yet to be with Bonnie Ruth and the kids. They are currently visiting supporters, but they will be back in Greenville for the Board meeting.
- The Board meeting will be held on Saturday, May 9. There will also be a luncheon with the Board members' wives. Several of our missionaries will be attending the luncheon and give a short report of their ministries.
- Ted Allston and his son, Jonathan, had a profitable visit to Morocco to teach some church leaders before spending a couple of days doing survey work in Tunisia.
- The Kanes continue their furlough. It is beginning to look like most of their stateside time will be spent - as it already has been - nursing sick children. They seem to be catching up on all of the USA viruses and bacterium they missed while in

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IMPRESSIVE IMPRESSIONS

by Steve Erkens, assistant director of EMU International

One of the privileges that I have working with EMU is visiting our missionaries on their fields of service. It is one thing to Skype them or visit with them while they are in the States on furlough, but it is another thing to see them serving in their normal ministry setting. It also helps me to know how better to pray for them, and it makes my prayers for them more personal.

My recent trip to Mexico is a good example of this. I just returned from a 13-day trip to see the ministry of Marco and Gwendolyn Nuñez. Marco joined EMU in 1995 and planted a church in Cancún about 18 years ago. Marco invited me to preach for the Easter services at his church, as well as see the ministry. I had the opportunity to preach 6 times during my trip - 4 times at Marco's church and 2 other times at churches that were planted by men sent out from his church in Cancún.

When people think about Cancún, they often think about the nice beaches and resorts, but there is another side to the city. Part of the city's population live in poor conditions that would seem destitute to those of us living in the States. These people make up about half



Steve with recently saved Marcos, his wife Sandra, and children, Joshua & Hohann of the Nuñezes' church of around 100 people.

There are a number of things that impressed me about their ministry. One thing is that the church's growth has almost solely come from new believers. Marco baptizes a handful of believers

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(l-r) Steve, Tomas in Playa del Carmen, Marco in Cancún, Vicente in Valladolid, Toño in Puerto Morelos, and Christian in Cancún

The Return To Order

by Gabriel Gomez, pastor of Gethsemani Church in Montevideo & Bible Institute director

We are glad that we are finally back into our school-year routine! March is the month when we plan our schedules and get organized, so now everything is in order: the house, the church, the school, work. When we have stability, order, and organization, things just go better. God gave us His own example – as He always does – He is a God of order.

The first Saturday of March we had our annual assembly at the church. Someone from each of the different ministries (evangelism, Sunday school, ladies' group, teen group, choir, building maintenance, etc.) presented their 2014 report and their plans and goals for 2015. We also discussed some important issues about the whole church. We especially had to decide what to do about the roof over the back room. Perhaps you remember our mention of a hail storm last year that crushed the roofing sheets. Now when it is raining outside, there is more water inside than outside! Thankfully it hasn't rained too much since January. Although we don't have all the needed money (around \$2,000), we have some money that we were saving to buy a new van. The church decided to use that savings to repair the roof and then try to replace the van funds as soon as possible. Some weeks ago, \$100 (American currency, not Uruguayan!) appeared in the offering plate. So we are very thankful to the Lord for moving hearts and providing for this need. There have been other offerings for this project, and in spite of the fact that we don't have all the money yet, we can start the work. Nevertheless, we need your prayers for wisdom because we (the church men) will be ripping off the old roof (that's the easy part) and building the new one (that's the difficult part). We only have a Friday and a Saturday to do it. This work is scheduled for May 8 and 9, or 15 and 16. The roofing sheets are not available in the store yet.

Other important things that occurred in March and April:

1. Evangelism at Rivera: All the mission's churches participated in helping Calvary Temple of Rivera with their evangelistic campaign. (The pastor is my older brother Hector.) On our way to Rivera, Pedro Donzé and I went to Tacuarembó to visit the church there as Junta representatives. Then we drove north to Rivera where we stayed from Wednesday to Sunday. We did different types of outreach activities in order to have more opportunities to talk with people on the streets. Going door-to-door does



The congregation of Gethsemani Church of Montevideo in March 2015

not yield results nowadays. God gave us a great time and some very good opportunities to witness. The sowing has been done; now we rest in the Lord to see spiritual results.

- 2. Bible Institute and FEBU started a new school year:** We have been working through some changes for the Bible Institute with Pastor Ovidio Acevedo and another pastor from the Mission, and there has been a good response. Seven students started the semester in Montevideo, and we also have students in Treinta y Tres, Tacuarembó, and Durazno. In total we have over 20 students attending the Bible Institute. One interesting thing is that there are several couples in Montevideo and in the Interior who are taking classes together. For FEBU I'm in charge of the finances, so I can't give details about the students and the courses.
- 3. Easter activities:** We started the Easter activities the weekend before Easter. We went to an important intersection in the city to sing and preach the Gospel. (Juan Gonzalez illustrated the message.) Then we had special meetings on Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday (morning and night). The problem in Uruguay is that most of the people are on vacation that week, and Montevideo is very quiet. Our teenagers and the choir prepared special music, and an unsaved mother of a girl from our group came to see her daughter Valentina. She was very impressed with the music. Pray for her and for her daughter. The daughter is hearing the Word of God with a tender heart, but only her grandmother is a Christian. Her mother allows her to come, but her father is not happy with the idea, and sometimes it is a source of conflict in the home, which is a concern to her.

4. Ladies' meetings: The ladies have had their first meeting of the year. On April 25 they will have the second, but it will be at an older lady's home with a smaller group. This Doña has not been able to attend church because of her husband's health. This is a new project for the ladies' group. They are trying to provide more fellowship for those people who cannot attend church services and other activities regularly.

5. Bill Hill visited our church last Saturday for a couples' meeting. We had about 60 people in attendance. It was a great time. Some of the couples from our church helped by preparing some games, food, and making souvenirs. Rosanna had to translate, but in spite of a very long day, she was able to do okay.

6. Finally: Rosanna and I will be driving to Tacuarembó this afternoon. I will be helping with the preaching because this church doesn't have a pastor now. I will also be teaching the men some classes in Homiletics. I called last Friday to ask if it was okay for Rosanna to go with me, and the reply was, "Yes! We can have a ladies' meeting, a children's open-air class, and she can also teach in Sunday school!" May the Lord give us a good trip. It rained all last night, and bad weather is expected again today.

Before leaving you, I want to ask you to remember these issues in prayer:

- 1. Roof replacement:** We give thanks for the resources we have and ask for wisdom in planning and repairing the roof.
- 2. Teenagers' discipleship:** Pedro, Rosanna, Marcos, and I started one-on-one Bible studies with each of our teens for a month or two. We want to see them growing and making good spiritual decisions.
- 3. Our family:** Especially Marcos' and Lucas' spiritual growth, their studies, and their health, too. Lucas has started playing basketball just to help improve his health. (His cholesterol levels are not good; Rosanna's levels are not good either, but I don't think they will let her on the team!)

Thanks so much for taking the time to read this letter, for your faithful prayers on our behalf, and for your love and support. God is so good! ☩

Pando Ponderings

by Carlos Olivera, pastor of Bethel Church in Pando, Uruguay

It is a pleasure to share with you the news about the ministries here in Pando and our lives during March and April. We are thankful to God that we were recently able to buy a used little Fiat truck. (*The Board of Directors in Uruguay decided to sell the last EMU owned vehicle – the Fiat mini-cargo truck. It was my dear friend and companion! KJ*) We are already organizing a series of different activities that will allow for more participation of the brothers and sisters. Future goals are to take the brothers and sisters to pray at different homes and encourage them to invite their neighbors. We are focusing on evangelism this year. I will quit some activities, such as working in the kitchen during many of the EMU camps, which are not related to the church in Pando. I hope God will bless and save new souls. Mabel and I will forego other activities in which we have been involved in order to dedicate more time to evangelizing the lost.

This year I am teaching the Poetic Books of the Bible at the Bible Institute. Next semester I will be teaching on the Major Prophets.

We had a good time helping at the evangelistic campaign in Rivera. However, Mabel had an accident. The gate of the church there suddenly shut hard because of the wind, and her foot was injured, and even one of her toes was broken.

We were also at the family camp in Treinta y Tres (“33”) at the end of March, as we do every year. We had a blessed time receiving the Word and enjoying fellowship with the brothers and sisters there.

We are discipling Alejandra, who made a decision for Christ. She is a medical student and a great blessing to us. Her sister Carolina is also showing interest.

We have a planned goal for the pastor’s (my) support by the church. But in reality, we must grow more in numbers. May God help us to fill the benches with souls transformed by God.



We had a baptism service for three people: Pedro, Sebastian, and Ana Maria. It was a good time, and the church group rejoiced together at Rivera Park afterwards with a snack fellowship. There are others who are growing and maturing, and there is a desire in their hearts to be baptized, too. ✝

Seven Years of Savings

by Rubito Rodriguez, pastor of Calvary Temple in Treinta y Tres, Uruguay

We are well here. Our daughter Victoria has started her 5th year of high school (*Uruguay has 6 years of high school, but no “middle school.” KJ*), and she is doing very well. With the changing weather, I have had problems with my psoriasis, but I am getting relief little by little. Since the camping season is finished, we have resumed several activities. We started this year’s Bible Institute with 12 students – 4 brothers and 8 sisters. We have also started the discipleship groups

again, currently with 11 people – 2 married couples and 7 young people.

In our last letter we told you that we finally received the “Personeria Juridica,” and also that we had started the negotiations to buy a Micro bus. (*“Personeria Juridica” is much like becoming incorporated, only it takes years and costs a ridiculous amount for various government fees.*) Thank God we were able to buy a bus, and in April we will start using it. The purpose for it is to bring people to church services on Wednesdays and on Sunday mornings and evenings. It will also be used for the ministry at camp. It is a 2001 Kia passenger van that holds 18 people. We are very happy. We had been saving for 7 years.

At the end of March and the beginning of April we had our family camp at Camp Bethel. We had 80 campers, and additional people visited us during the day. Pastor Timothy Willowby, from another mission organization, preached the Word, and it was a week of great blessings. ✝



The new 2001 Kia passanger van



“Holy Week” family camp at Camp Bethel in the Department of “33”



Bill Hill was in Uruguay April 9-27 speaking at several of our churches.

(left) The youth meeting at Calvary Temple of “33”

Bill kneeling at right

(right) The couples’ meeting with Bill Hill at Calvary Temple of “33”

Bill standing at right



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Cambodia. They have been able to travel some, visiting supporting churches. Joan and I had a wonderful time with their family one afternoon with lunch.

- JD, Kim, and Nathaniel are still visiting churches and spending time with JD's parents in North Carolina. We have enjoyed our fellowship with them as well. Their youngest daughter, Jenna, will graduate with a degree in special ed from BJU on May 8. The Crowleys return to Ban Lung, Cambodia, on June 4.
- The Coles are on the road a lot, also, visiting supporters. We were able to have them at our house for a meal, too. Their kids are a lot of fun, also. They return to France on June 23.
- Steve Erkens had a successful journey to, around, and from southern Mexico. You can read about his adventures in this Newsletter. After his return home, he and I began meeting again to go over EMU's workings. After much prayer and consideration, Steve has asked that his transition to become the director of EMU be postponed for at least another year. Yes, I'm a bit disappointed in his and Charity's decision, but I fully understand the reasons.
- The Wingroves are presenting EMU in churches in MA, CT, SC, and NC in May.
- Missionary Chicha Rodriguez from Uruguay will be traveling to Ghana for a 3-week visit with her niece.

Thank you for your prayers and financial support and for standing with us in the work of the ministry of EMU. ✚

Impressive Impressions

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into his church every few months. There was not a baptismal service while I was there, but there were 3 people who made professions of faith. Two of them have been attending for some time, and the other one attended when she was a young girl. She stopped going for a number of years and made some really bad decisions, but by God's grace, she has now put faith in Christ as her Savior.

I was also impressed with Marco's discipleship and training of his men with the goal of sending them out to be church planters. Many American churches want those who are most faithful and willing to serve to stay in the church, but Marco's goal is different. He wants to train them and send them out to plant their own churches. Marco's church has had the opportunity of sending out 7 men to plant churches in the southern part of Mexico.

Another exciting part of the ministry is that the church meets in the Nuñezes' 2-story home. Besides the kitchen and utility room, the Nuñezes' living quarters are on the second floor. Most of the church activities are on the first floor, with the exception of the nursery and a bathroom. So when the Nuñezes have church activities, which they do often, they are opening their home to the church. This obviously brings about some great challenges (especially when there are regular church-wide meals), but this is also a great opportunity for the Nuñezes to show hospitality to the people of the church through their testimony, generosity, and graciousness.

Besides holding services in their home/church on Wednesdays and Sundays, Marco and Gwendolyn are also both



Gwendolyn teaching in the home of a church family in Cancun

busy teaching during the week. Marco currently has one student in the Bible Institute that desires to be a church planter. He and Gwendolyn also teach new believers during the week as well as work with the teens every Saturday afternoon. Gwendolyn continues to teach children's Bible classes at the home of a church family.

I thank God for giving me this opportunity to visit the Nuñezes. It was a blessing to me to observe their self-sacrificing love for the people of Mexico. They keep a very full schedule of ministry every week, and they do it with great joy. I am grateful that they are part of EMU and that I have the opportunity to partner with them in their ministry. ✚

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