

The EMU Newsletter

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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Ken & Joan Jensen
Director

ALONG THE WAY . . .

July. The first full month of summer. The sultry season starts in earnest. The kids are out of school. Planned vacations are initiated. TV reruns abound. Another "slow news cycle" brings the trivial to the fore on the news networks. Backyard vegetable gardens morph from a hobby to a full-time job of picking and processing. A/C becomes a Constitutional right rather than a privilege. And we celebrate the birth of our nation.

Also during the summer months, few corporations introduce new products or services, assuming the public is too distracted to pay attention. However, EMU International is not a run-of-the-mill corporation. We are offering a new service beginning with this Newsletter. In the past, the PDF of the EMU Newsletter was in the same format as the printed copy. More and more people are viewing the Newsletter on smartphones and tablets, which makes it difficult to navigate "continued on page . . ." articles. Steve Erkens (and others!) have brought this to my attention, but Steve has initiated a solution via "Mail



Chimp." Those of you who receive the EMU Newsletter by email will be viewing the monthly report in this format. If any of you who still receive the hardcopy of the Newsletter would like to be put on the email list, please let us know. (Actually, there are several families

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ONE DAY, YOU AND I WILL GO TO AFRICA

by Chicha Rodriguez, missionary in Montevideo, Uruguay

May 4th was the appointed date to start my long-awaited adventure. When that day arrived, I took a 12-hour flight from Montevideo to Madrid, followed by a 5.5-hour flight to Accra, the capital of Ghana.

Africa! My nieces and nephews have continually heard me share missionary biographies throughout the years. Inspirational stories of missionaries to Africa like Malla Moe, Amy Carmichael, Mary Slessor, and David Livingstone have challenged our hearts. I used to tell Natasha (one of my nieces), "One day, you and I will go to Africa . . . and we will tell the little kids there about the Lord Jesus." "Yes!" she would answer with all the enthusiasm of a 5-year-old girl. In March, on my birthday, Natasha called and said, "I want to make your dream come true. I want to send you a ticket for you to come and visit me in Africa." (She has been living in Ghana for two-and-a-half years working as an accountant for an American company.) The 23-day visit to Ghana gave me a very small, yet invaluable, glimpse into Africa! Upon my arrival at my niece's home, I was surprised with a cultural welcome featuring a Ghanaian traditional dance to the beat of the drums. It was "Akwaaba Chicha!" ("Welcome Chicha!")



Chicha's welcome to Ghana

I got to see a lot in Ghana: street vendors, mostly women, carrying merchandise (water, peanuts, yucca, bananas, mangos, etc.) on their heads to sell to passengers whenever the cars stopped at a light; over-



Natasha & Chicha Rodriguez sporting their newly made Ghana dresses

crowded minibuses called tro-tros that operate on the main routes connecting the city; stands along the streets, in and out of the main cities, offering a variety of goods from fruits and vegetables to shoes and furniture; mothers carrying their babies strapped on their backs with a long cloth.

We visited Akosombo, a town about 55 miles from Accra. On the way there, we passed by picturesque and colorful markets. "Akosombo" is derived from an Akan word meaning "a chain of rocks." There, we climbed a rock mountain and were able to see amazing views of God's creation in that part of the world. We also traveled to Cape Coast and Elmina where . . . we were arrested. Imagine—my first time being arrested and it happened in Africa! The police did let us go after 24 hours, but it was definitely an experience I will never forget - and for the most minor of traffic violations. After that experience, I really felt that an adventure was waiting for us around every corner.

While in Cape Coast, we stopped by Kakum National Park and went on the

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Tenacity In a Sari

by Saritha Roy Judson, wife of Billy Judson, missionary in India

(Billy and Saritha Judson joined EMU International as missionaries to India, their land of birth and field of service to the Lord. The June EMU Newsletter presented Billy's testimony and the type of work he will be engaged in. This month we are pleased to include Saritha's testimony. The family returned to Hyderabad, India, on June 16. They were able to secure an apartment which can serve as a home, an office, and possibly a classroom.)

I was born and brought up in a professing Christian "joint family" (a "joint family" is one in which married children, parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc. live in the same house – KJ) with a lot of Indian customs and traditions. Though we were Christians, we never gave due importance to our spiritual life and basically followed a worldly path. My ancestors never gave equal preference to the girls. To them, we were to lead a lower standard of life. But my mother and father are stable guides and perfect testimonies to God's amazing grace. They have always been to me "a breath of fresh air and hope," which ignited a spark in me to achieve something beyond the normal. I was very eager to leave the joint family, not only because it was filled with genteel customs and traditions, but also the chaos and turmoil in the household.

Although I attended Sunday school and youth events, they did not have an impact on my life in any meaningful way as I always felt something was missing. I was in a state of confusion as to what the purpose of my life was to be. My maternal grandmother was my greatest spiritual influence, and she shared her strong beliefs and personal relationship with Jesus Christ with me. I started reading my Bible to create my own personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. I shed many tears of regret to my Savior Jesus Christ after reading Titus 2:14, "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works." According to I John 1:9 and Acts 16:31, I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and took water Baptism on December 31, 1999. My faith in Jesus Christ has helped me to overcome many hurdles. Romans 1:16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes."

Though I was not a bright student, I always had the dream of becoming a pilot in the Indian Air force. This was not "a piece of cake" as it would include a lot of physical pain and hurdles, but the biggest challenge was that I was a Christian. I prepared my mindset to take-up the tough challenge to get into flying school and challenged myself that I had to win. I had a confident, strong will-power only because of my faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.



Billy, Saritha, & Bernice Judson in front of Shepherds Theological Seminary in Cary, NC

Matthew 17:20 says, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you." I got selected to join the flying academy as a full-fledged trainee. That was very exciting.

On the 1st day at the academy, they made us sing the Hindu song "Bhagawat gita." I was silent while the others sang, and I did not notice that the officers were observing everyone. Soon I learned that there is a lot of racism and no place for Christians in the military. After completing the few months of training, we were practicing the obstacle course to join the "Sainik" (army support team) in which every group was to shout the slogan of their group. My group's slogan was "Hara hara mahadeva" (which is a Hindu Bhagawad Gita Sanskrit chant meaning "Lord Shiva please take away our worries and woes"). I had completed the obstacle course in 3 minutes but did not shout the slogan at the end. For this the officers removed me from the team. A month later I again received severe punishment for not stepping into a Hindu temple. For this infraction they told me to lift the 7.62mm rifle over my head and run for 300 meters. I did not want to compromise my faith so I took the punishment happily (Matt 10:33). However, things got worse later as the officers created stringent rules and added new conditions for worshipping Hindu gods.

While at the flying academy, I was also trained in Kung-Fu martial arts, trekking, para-sailing and gliding. (Saritha was slated to represent India in a Kung-Fu tournament in Switzerland. During training for that event, a faulty piece of equipment broke loose, and she was hit in the head by a chain, requiring stitches and a bandaged head. She told her officers that she was fine and could participate in the tournament. However, the officers used this incident for a dual purpose. They not only pulled her from the competition, but they also cancelled her flying license saying that she might have a concussion during the flight maneuvers. – KJ) I had no other option left but to quit the academy. Yet I

was happy and had no regrets since I had achieved what I wanted, i.e. flying fighter jets, in a short period of time.

Every day I knelt down and pleaded with the Lord to show me how best to live for Him. Each day passed with new opportunities. After leaving the flying academy, I had the opportunity to fly to England for further studies. I eventually graduated with my MBA from the Business School of East London. Yet again this journey was very difficult as my school bills were huge.

After I returned to India, my father went through by-pass heart surgery, and the problems of my family began to escalate. We had a lot of financial problems, we had more "joint family" issues, and we lost our home. I began blaming myself because I was not doing anything to support my parents. My father encouraged me by giving me the example of Job in the Bible. Job suffered but he never questioned God. This was a boost for me to get-up and run toward the next task.

I have worked in a couple of major companies and gained a lot of trust and experience. And God has never stopped blessing me. He has richly blessed me with a loving husband (Billy Judson), and He has blessed our marriage with a beautiful daughter (Bernice Judson). In January 2015, God gave me the knowledge to start an IT software company in India. Though there have been setbacks in every stage, my Heavenly Father has given me adequate strength to overcome the hurdles and to be prepared for each new challenge. (Jeremiah 33:3 "Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.")

I feel that I am securely held in my Heavenly Father's hand and no one can seize me away, (Ephesians 1:13-14 "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.")

I am confident and forever thankful that Lord has made me alive in Christ and given me the privilege to share His incredible Grace. (Philippians 1:21 "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.") ✝

Correction!

In the June EMU Newsletter article concerning Billy Judson, I mis-identified the church. The name of the church is not Calvary Baptist Church, but rather Colonial Baptist Church.

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who have requested the paper copy and the email version as the spouses are split in their preference of media presentation. We do not mind sending both to a family or a church.) You can email us at the address on page 4 of this newsletter for any requests.

Our office is also working on a revamping of our donor database. When the new system is complete, our database and accounting information will be in one program - **QuickBooks for Non-Profit Businesses**. Though the front-end setup is very time intensive, we believe the final product will decrease many of the redundant procedures we currently have to perform using three different programs. **Steve and Joan**, with the emphasis on Steve, have been working on this change-over. Also, one of our Board members who is an accountant, **Nelson Neal**, has put in many hours with Steve. (Nelson has, likewise, spent much time helping our office administrator in Uruguay, **Pedro Donz **, to rearrange the EMU accounting system that Pedro uses.)

Concerning our EMU Board members, we ask for your prayers for **Dr. David Yearick**, the former pastor of **Hampton Park Baptist Church**. As many of you know, he underwent surgery to remove a kidney that had a cancerous mass on it. The operation took place on June 11. The surgeon was pleased with the operation, believing that the tumor had not spread. As of the end of June, Pastor Yearick, who is 89 years old, has undergone some rehab, but he was readmitted to the hospital due to some complications. His daughter, **Marla Allston**, and her husband, Ted, are not only EMU missionaries, but dear friends, as are Pastor and Mrs. Yearick. Pastor Yearick is anxious to resume his ministries to the elderly. Please pray for wisdom, comfort, and strength for the Yearick family. **Ted** will be traveling to Zimbabwe in early July.

The **Crowleys** have returned safely to Cambodia, leaving the States on June 16. Two of their co-worker families continue with their furloughs - the **Kanes** and the **Farmers**. **Matt Hancock** was able to attend a "church retreat" in the northeastern Province of Mondulakiri, June 18-20. Pray for Matt and Becky as they continue their Khmer language studies, and for the national friends they have made who still need to understand the Gospel message.

Josh and Amy Jensen are, also, continuing their Khmer language acquisition in Phnom Penh, though their time in the capital is coming to an end. The Josh Jensens are planning to move to Ban Lung, Ratanakiri, at the end of July. Hiring a company to move household belongings in Cambodia is quite different than in the

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Home Is Where The Lord Is

by Michael and Liz Cole, church planters in Northern France

Once again we want to express our appreciation for your prayers to God on our behalf. The big news is that we (along with 4 kids and lots of baggage) left Charlotte, NC, for Paris, France, on June 23rd. Please ask God to help us have a quick re-adaptation to life in France.

Since January 20th, we traveled more than 14,000 miles during which we visited 27 churches; stayed overnight in 21 homes, 11 hotels, and 1 prophet's chamber; enjoyed fellowship with friends from our past, and established new friendships; and we saw miles and miles of God's creation.

What we did not do is settle. At times this unsettledness was frustrating and even overwhelming, but it was never pointless. God used the past five months to remind us once again that home is where the Lord is. God used our unsettled lifestyle to call our attention back to the fact that our true



Liz with daughters Viviane & Adeline
(Couldn't pass up this photo sans males)

home awaits us on the new earth. It is not in France. It is not in the US. Our "home-i-est" home will come with the Lord's return. And yet this present earth is our home because the Lord is here now. In fact, He is with us all the time through the Spirit's indwelling. That means that He was with us in every

home, hotel, and prophet's chamber. It also means that, in one sense, every one of those places was home - a place of safety and rest for us. This doesn't mean that we weren't looking forward to returning to our home in Luzarches (or that we're contemplating moving into a hotel). We are really ready for a more scheduled lifestyle. That said, we know that we cannot (and should not) find our settledness and happiness in any one building that we call home. Please pray that God will maintain our focus on the Lord as we resume our ministry in France.  

Some Day

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canopy walkway—which is 7 hanging bridges that span 1,100 feet and hang 130 feet above the forest floor. Nearby, we took a historical tour of Elmina Castle, built by the Portuguese in 1482 and used by the Portuguese and Dutch to house slaves before they were sent off to Europe or the Americas.

But the part I enjoyed the most was meeting the people of Ghana, each with their own distinct identity. I will always treasure the opportunity I had to visit and help out at Agape Orphanage and Christian School where I met wonderful teachers and lovely children. In Ghana the meaning of a name will often reflect a person's day of birth, and the kids loved to explain their names to me. A couple of the girls who were particularly memorable are 8-year-old Afia Kamameta Oppong - "Kamameta" meaning "Friday-born" in the Akan language - and 10-year-old Justine Serwa Awusu Akosua - "Akosua" means born on Sunday. I was able to visit and serve at Agape for 4 days of my trip, and I thank God for the opportunity they gave me to share the Word of God with them.



Chicha with some of the children from the orphanage

The Christians I met in the churches we attended and the testimonies I heard about how the Gospel message reached them were also blessings to my heart.

Thanks be to God for all the Christians who are busy doing God's work in Ghana and in countries all around our world. The national anthem of Ghana says: "God bless our homeland and make our nation great and strong . . ." I think Psalm 67 is a good guide as we pray for ourselves and for the nations.  

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by Ken Jensen

An “Early Bird Special” is designed to draw customers into a store, usually a restaurant, before the normal eating time. The specials are either reduced in price or only available at that time.

It has been our custom in one of our Fall newsletters to remind our readers that we are taking a special offering for sponsoring campers at Camp Emmanuel in Uruguay during the coming January. And some of you have been generous in giving to this fund.

However, we always have a problem: most of the donations are given towards the end of the year, but our camp director, in order to let the EMU pastors know how many children or teens can receive sponsorship money, needs a “ball park” figure in dollars before that time. Most years there are poor campers who could have attended camp, but the donations came too late to notify the churches.

So, the camp director, Pedro Donz , requested I place this announcement in an earlier Newsletter for the sake of planning. The cost for a camper to attend a week at Camp Emmanuel will be \$105, which basically covers food and utilities.

If you can be an Early Bird by giving towards this worthy project, it will be very Special to some child or young person. And we can possibly have an increased volume of campers in January. Thanks for your consideration and generosity! ✝



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States. Our missionaries in Cambodia who have moved from Phnom Penh to Ban Lung each have their stories of the “joys” of the experience. Pray that the Jensens will find a reliable, conscientious company to haul their belongings. (The Josh Jensen family just celebrated their first year anniversary of their arrival in Cambodia.)

The **Steels** and the **Espinels** arrived in Greenville, SC and Dover, NJ, respectively, on June 17. John Mark Steel is using the semester break in Uruguay to take summer courses at BJU towards his doctorate. (Their earlier planned furlough to visit churches in Alaska at this time was cancelled.) We have yet to see either of these families, but we will have the Steels at our house for a meal on July 6. We won't be with the Espinels at all as their short time will be spent in the northeast USA. The Steels return to Uruguay on July 23 and the Espinels on August 4.

The **Crnkovic** family from Croatia will arrive in Greenville, SC, on July 17 for their first family “furlough” in ten years. As national Croatians, their furlough will be quite different than most missionaries: their families live in Croatia. But there are supporting churches and families, as well as friends, they hope to visit during their five weeks in America. The Lord supplied a 3-bedroom house for them to stay in during their sojourn, and they already have transportation lined up. We are looking forward to being with the Crnkovics again, but it will make for a very busy half of July and most of August. Pray that **Kornel and Tanja** will be able to raise more support during this trip.

Most of us fathers had a special day on Sunday, June 21, as we celebrated **Father's Day** with our dads and/or children. But

few of us had the blessing that **Marco Nuñez** received on that day. An email from his wife, **Gwendolyn**, announced the following: “These 3 people were saved yesterday! On the left is Mariana who has been visiting for about 4 months. She rents a room from one of the ladies in the church. The man is the father of one of the little boys who comes with his mom. The mother is a believer and has a good testimony. The girl on the right is a friend of one of the young girls in our church. She came from another town and is working here now, and her friend invited her to church!” Please pray for these babes in Christ as they are disciplined in God's Word. **Mariana, Eric, and Bety** are their names.



(l-r) Mariana, Eric, Marco, & Bety

In closing we trust each of you will know Yahweh's blessings, thanking Him for the spiritual liberty we have in Christ and the political liberty to worship Him openly. Thank you for your continued interest in EMU International. ✝

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