

The EMU Newsletter

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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Ken & Joan Jensen
Director

ALONG THE WAY . . .

It is rare for us to have two Board meetings in one month, but that is what happened in May – and it was all pleasant subjects (well, at least no major problems). The annual EMU Board meeting was held on May 9 this year. All of our Board members were able to attend with their wives, except the Greg Mazaks. Because Steve and Karen Ridge moved to Colorado, and Brad and Peg Lapiska live in northern Virginia, having these two families in attendance is never a given. In addition, Pastor David Yearick had a stroke in April just before a scheduled surgery to remove a cancerous kidney. (His surgery is now scheduled for June 11.) We were so pleased that Pastor and Mrs. Yearick were able to attend the luncheon and that Pastor Yearick was able to sit through our less-than-exciting Board meeting. (I don't think we have had a high-energy Board meeting since my father was the Director of the mission! I'm just not "Mr. Exciting." I recall some of our Board members enjoying a restful nap during past meetings!) Steve Erkens has helped to make the meetings more engaging through his PowerPoint presentations covering the full range of our subject matter. He did a great job with visuals again for this meeting, in spite of my last minute requests for certain graphics. This year the Board meeting was held in the morning and ended just before the noon luncheon.

The luncheon included the wives of the

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HOME GROWN MISSIONARY

by Gorremuchu Billy Judson, missionary to India

My Testimony:

I was born and brought up in a God fearing family. I was dedicated to the Lord and named Gorremuchu Billy Judson – Billy after the evangelist Billy Graham and Judson after the great missionary Adoniram Judson, who was one of the pioneer missionaries who brought the message of salvation to Burma in 1813. (*Gorremuchu is the family name which precedes the given name.* - KJ) Both of my great grandfathers – Rev. Koppel Benjamin and Gerra Lazarus – served as missionaries to Myanmar (Burma) with Burma Baptist Indian Convention and The American Baptist Mission, USA.



Billy, Saritha, and Bernice
Judson

In my youth, I cursed my name "Billy" every day, because in the local Hindi language it means "cat." People associated this name with the famous silent cartoon character Felix the Cat, and people of all ages made fun of me. My father encouraged me by reminding me that I was dedicated to the Lord and that this name was given to me for a purpose by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This name helped me spiritually to develop self-control and maintain my testimony and walk, mindful of Christ and the Cross. Growing up with this treatment caused me to endure many humiliating situations, but, it also created in me a great desire towards missions as a child. I was under the impression that I received my salvation because I had been dedicated to the Lord, as well as being a Pastor's son and because of my name.

With enthusiasm, I actively got involved in the ministry at a very young age, distributing tracts, participating in church evangelistic events, and also helping my father's Christian film ministry. But I never

realized until I entered my teen years that I was a sinner. Even though I attended Sunday school, church, and devotedly participated in the ministry, I did not have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. I did not realize that I was a sinner who needed to be saved.

In 1997, my father established a church near our home ("home" is the city of Secunderabad, attached to the larger municipality of Hyderabad in the State of Andhra Pradesh in southeastern India. - KJ), with 300 attendees and a Sunday school for over 50 slum kids. I had the opportunity to start teaching these kids.

It was at the age of 16-years-old, during my regular devotions, that I read Malachi 1:6 which says, "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? And if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you." These words pierced my heart and brought me to the conviction to ask the important question: Am I really saved?

Though a pastor's son, nobody told me about my need for salvation, yet I started inquiring how to get rid of my guilt. In February of 1998, through a series of counseling sessions with my Sunday school leader and my father, I was able to understand I John 1:9 – that I was a sinner and I needed to confess all my sins. I immediately confessed my sins in the presence of the Lord. The following Sunday message was on Romans 6. The Lord spoke to me about the assurance of salvation and the importance of baptism. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). I was baptized on February 14, 1999, at Good News Baptist Assembly, my father's church.

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Home Grown Missionary

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God gave me the grace to complete my secular studies with a MBA (Master in Business Administration) in India. I had a strong conviction that the Lord was calling me for full-time ministry. I earnestly prayed that I could equip myself theologically to be more effective in the ministry. I also studied Systematic Theology – a three-year bachelor’s program at my father’s evening Bible College.

I got married on September 22, 2012. God blessed me with a beautiful wife, Saritha. This was an arranged marriage according to our Indian culture. (Saritha’s testimony will be in the next EMU Newsletter. - KJ) On October 22, 2013, we were blessed with a precious daughter, Bernice, which means “bringer of victory.” My wife encouraged me to pursue higher theological studies and to seek God’s guidance for full time ministry. In answering this call, on August 22, 2013, the Lord led me to Shepherds Theological Seminary in Cary, NC. The seminary is an arm of Calvary Baptist Church, pastored by Stephen Davey.

I praise God for the professors and methodology of teaching at the Shepherds Theological Seminary (STS). It was a life-changing experience and has equipped me to become a better “fisher of men” and a better “teacher of men.” I am burdened to take the Gospel message back to my brothers and sisters in India, where the Christians make up only 2.5% of the 1.3 billion population.

I graduated on May 17, 2015 with an MA in Church Ministry. I sense that this is a very defining moment in my life. God has brought me this far in the ministry, and I trust that we have our best days ahead. I am excited to work alongside my father and become the next director of Good News Bible College and Seminaries. The ministry my father started has reached thousands in India, but there are hundreds of millions who have yet to hear and have an opportunity to respond to the Gospel. We are equipping indigenous missionaries to reach our Indian nationals who are knowledgeable of the social fabric of India.

The Ministry In India:

My father, Dr. Gorremuchu Jaya Sekhar, has spent his entire adult life dedicated to full-time Christian ministry. In 1971 my dad began his ministry by working with World Literature Crusades. Starting in 1986, over a period of fifteen highly productive years, my dad systematically covered more than 3,600 villages showing the “Jesus” film in three States of India.

In 1997, my father started evening Bible classes at his church to teach systematic theology to a group of 60 students. This became Good News Bible College and Seminaries (GNBCS). The first class completed their study program in 1999.



One of the 14 GNBCS meetings Ted & Jon spoke at. Billy’s father, Dr. G. Jaya Sekhar, is to the left of Ted, who is seated in the center.

During the past 16 years, GNBCS has equipped over 11,000 students and established 40 Bible Institutes in 9 different states in India. There are 29 states in India. Currently the student body numbers 650 in all of these institutes. Over 60% of our students go into some form of ministry, many full-time. So far these graduates have established over 1,000 churches that meet in their own facilities. Almost 400 have a membership of 100 or more. Additionally, approximately 4,000 home churches have been established.

In 2002, my father began to develop what became a close working relationship with Pastor Vincent Sawyer. Pastor Sawyer is the author of 12 books on Systematic (Bible-based!) Theology, which he has made available to GNBCS at no charge. (Sawyer was the pastor of Faith Baptist Church of Corona, NY, from 1988-2014. He resigned to put his full time effort into a ministry he started called Macedonian Call Ministries. Pastor Sawyer has taught at GNBCS several times. – KJ)

Pastor Bruce MacIness first visited my father in 2000. In October 2004, Turners Chapel Church in Sanford, NC, sent Pastor Bruce and another church leader, Ray Hockaday, to India for ten days to see for themselves the ministries of my father, especially through GNBCS. This is the only church which has supported my father for the past 12 years. They also paid my tuition fees at STS. (Pastor Bruce was the one who put Billy in contact with STS. The cities of Sanford and Cary, NC, are 36 miles apart. – KJ)

In May 2014, Dr. Bill Barber, the Professor of Practical Theology and serves as the Director of Mentoring at STS, suggested that I design a Leadership Development Program for GNBCS and its affiliated ministries in India as my internship project.

My internship project focused on developing, organizing, and executing a Leadership Development Program for pastors and lay leaders in India. Two special Americans, both active leaders in Christian ministry, Rev. Ted Allston and Jon Peery, came to India to preach, teach, and help make this program possible.

From August 13 – 25, 2014, Ted Allston, Jon Peery, my father, and I traveled around 3 different states and visited 14 GNBCS Bible Institutes. At each location, we held either a leadership program geared toward those already in pastoral ministry or a program focused on leadership among

the laity. In all the sessions for pastors, Ted Allston delivered a challenging overview on expository preaching and Hermeneutic principles. In sessions designed for lay leadership, Allston just gave the overview on expository preaching. Jon Peery shared his testimony and faith in Christ. He spoke about the success the Lord has given him and his partner, Nelson Neal, in the construction business and how this has allowed him to help those bound by alcohol and drug addictions and to pursue his interest in encouraging Christian leadership in America and abroad.



At each of the GNBCS meetings Ted & Jon attended, they were laden with multiple leis. Both men look less than enthused with this adornment.

When I return to India, one of the more exciting projects my father has asked me to lead is the goal of increasing the number of GNBCS seminaries from 40 to 100 within a period of five years. India is a country of almost 1.3 billion people and growing. Only 2.5% of its population is Christian (approximately 39 million). There are over 4,000 unreached people groups in the world, and 2,027 of them are in India, followed by China (456), and Pakistan (444). India began closing itself to foreign missionaries in the 1950’s.

Many men, women, and children in India will go their entire lives without so much as meeting a single Christian believer. We need more Christians in India. This will happen only if we prepare more of the Christians already in India to reach others. ✝

ALONG THE WAY . . .*(continued from page 1)*

Board members, as well as several of our missionary families: **the Allstons, the Crowleys, the Kanés, the Farmers, the Wingroves,** and, of course, **the Erkens and Joan and me.** The first five gave short testimonies of their ministries at the end of the mealtime. Once again, we appreciate Hampton Park Baptist Church (HPBC) allowing us to use the upper level of the Yearick Center for our meeting and luncheon.

One of our subjects at the Board meeting was whether or not we should proceed with the process of lining up a meeting for the Board to meet and interview the Judson family from India. Last year **Billy Judson** contacted our office about his desire to be under a USA mission organization. A friend of ours at HPBC, Jon Peery, had recommended that Billy contact us, since EMU is one of the few mission boards that will accept non-American missionaries. We were rather leery about getting involved with missions in India since India is a closed country to foreign missionaries. In August of 2014, Ted Allston and Jon Peery travelled to India for the purposes of visiting several of the Bible Institutes under the direction of Billy's father and teaching at several of the schools. In the front-page article in this newsletter, you can read more about Billy's reason for Ted and Jon's visit. However, from our viewpoint, this gave us a more unbiased evaluation of the Gorremuchus' father/son ministries, which is very positive. Steve, Joan, and I met with Billy last December 23 to go over his ministry and portions of the EMU Policy Manual. In March 2015, after correspondence via several emails, we received the Judsons' completed application to become missionaries with EMU. Following more emails a meeting was set up with Steve, Joan, and me on May 23 which included Saritha, Billy's wife. She and daughter Bernice had flown to Raleigh, NC, for Billy's graduation from Shepherds Theological Seminary in Cary, NC, earlier in May. Again, we had a very positive meeting, so we decided to have the Judsons meet with the EMU Board on May 26. At the conclusion of the meeting, after Billy and Saritha were dismissed, **the Board voted to accept the Judsons** into the EMU missionary family. The next day, they met again with Steve, Joan, and me to go over office procedures and some other topics.

"Home Grown Missionary" gives Billy's testimony and a brief - believe it or not - overview of the Good News Colleges and Seminaries in India, started by Billy's father. I have slated Saritha's testimony for the July Newsletter, as it is a bit longer than Billy's. However, I believe you will be greatly blessed and intrigued by her testimony.

The Judsons have virtually no time for deputation before returning to India this month, but Billy has some contacts for support, and we trust several of these will partner with them. Also, Billy is currently planning to revisit the USA in six months or so to raise the remainder of their needed support. Their family budget is approximately \$1,900 per month, with a ministry budget raising the total to \$3,800.

Since the end of 2013, **the Allstons** have lost a total of \$570 support per month - none because supporters were not satisfied with their ministry! They have recently gained \$100 back but are still lacking a goodly amount. Special, unexpected gifts have been meeting their needs, but as a mission board we prefer that the Allstons have regular donations that reflect their regular monthly needs. In spite of the "regular" shortfall, funds have been available for Ted's trips. And on June 8 he will be flying to Kenya to teach. This trip will only last one week, rather than the usual two. On this journey **Ted** will be accompanied by his son, **David**. Pray for safety and a prosperous ministry.

June 15-16 seems to be the overseas travel-days of preference for several of our missionaries: **the Judsons** return to India on the 16th; **the Crowleys** leave for Cambodia on the same day; and the Steels and Espinels leave Uruguay on the 15th, arriving in South Carolina and New Jersey respectively on the 16th. **The Steels** had planned to be visiting supporting churches in Alaska this summer, but that fell through. So, during the semester break of FEBU in Uruguay, they are coming to Greenville for John Mark to take some more summer school classes towards his doctorate in Bible. They return to Uruguay on July 23 in time for the 2nd semester of classes to start at the Bible college.

The Espinels had planned to travel to Dover, NJ, in December of this year to visit Kristine's parents. Her folks had earlier hoped to visit the Espinels in Uruguay and see the new baby, but her dad's health nixed that. However, while pricing tickets for December, they found the prices in dollars and in travel miles to be almost double. So, they, too, are taking advantage of the semester break at FEBU to spend time with her family in Dover. They will also be visiting some supporting churches. The Espinels return to Uruguay on August 4.

Chicha Rodriguez, one of our single missionaries in Uruguay, had the thrill of flying to Ghana, Africa, in May. She said she always wanted to be a missionary in Africa, and now she has gotten a taste of it. Her niece, Natasha Rodriguez, is working in Ghana. While in Ghana, Chicha had many opportunities to minister, especially at an orphanage. I trust we will have a full report of the adventure before the next Newsletter!

The Coles leave for France on June 23.

We have not seen them nearly enough on this furlough. But with illnesses, visiting churches, and seeing family, they have been spread pretty thin.

The ministry of the church plant in Sarcelles, France, has continued under the direction of **Tim and Ruth Bixby**. They just had their 2nd "Inquiry Gathering" at a restaurant in Sarcelles. Thousands of pieces of literature have been distributed in this city inviting people to these gatherings to find out more about what this church plant is all about. Many members from the Saint Denis church have been helping to pass out literature and invite folks to the meetings. Continue to pray for this outreach. A recent email from Tim listed the many times he will be preaching and teaching in June. The Bixbys are looking for an affordable house in Sarcelles, but they have not found a suitable, affordable one yet. **Kristi Colas**, who is helping the Bixbys and Coles in this church plant, has just moved into her apartment in the area. She has already been a blessing and help during her time in Saint Denis/Sarcelles.



Saint Denis church members ready to hand out literature for the Sarcelles church plant.

The Farmers left Greenville, SC, on May 28 to begin a major furlough circuit that will take them to MO, MN, IL, and MA. They will then end up in central Tennessee at Reformed Baptist Church. The children will be attending a Christian school for a semester while Jeremy continues to visit supporting churches and individuals.

The Kanés, too, continue on furlough. We see them a little more often as they are living in the Hampton Park Baptist Church mission house. They have more travels, too, before they return to Cambodia at the beginning of September.

The Crnkovics in Croatia have received their Visas for coming to America, and Joan purchased their tickets this week. Also, their itinerary is basically set for visiting churches. It has been ten years since their whole family was here. They arrive on July 17 and return to Croatia on August 25. If any of you have not been contacted about meeting with them and would like to have them in your church or visit your home, please let us know so we can get it on their schedule.

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Observing Helplessness

by Amy Jensen, missionary wife in Phnom Pehn, Cambodia

Last month during the Khmer New Year, we observed a Trot Dance being performed at our neighbors' home. This traditional dance is typically performed before the start of the Khmer New Year. It's believed to ward off bad luck from the previous year and prevent evil spirits from entering into the home for the new year.

During our past 10 months here, we've seen our neighbors perform many religious rituals. The Buddhist belief of "Do good, get good. Do bad, get bad." is their primary motivation. We have watched them give gifts of food to over 50 monks on two different occasions, burn incense, offer food to the spirits, anoint their house with water, have monks bless their home, wash themselves with water—they do and do and do.

Several weeks ago, something happened. The wife of a neighbor family is experiencing some sort of depression and now rarely leaves the house. We have seen a change come over the family. When we watched the Trot Dance, we saw her for the first time in many weeks. I was shocked at how much she has changed. Her face and eyes were expressionless. It was a face of total hopelessness, so different from the happy lady we used to see performing rituals to do good.

When I saw our neighbor watching the Trot Dance being

performed for her home, I wanted to run over and shake her and say, "Don't you understand? This isn't going to change anything. This isn't going to help. Jesus has already paid the price for your bad and He can rescue you." But as I looked at her hopeless face, I felt hopeless. Is there any hope for this woman, for her family? They are entrenched in the religion of their country, their government, their family—it is everything to them. What can I say to change their hearts? Nothing. I've tried. To my Chinese friend, my Indian friend, my Albanian friend, to a Khmer neighbor. They all say the same things. They can't change from the religion of their families and they believe every religion is right. It's hopeless.

Yet I am regularly reminded of the catechism we teach our children: "Who can change a sinner's heart? The Holy Spirit alone." We can do nothing on our own. I cannot convince our neighbors or friends of their need for Jesus - that faith in Jesus is the only way. But the Holy Spirit can and will to those He calls to Himself. We must live with the hope that He can use our words, our lives, and our prayers to call people to Himself.

We live here in Cambodia by your prayers and support for our family. Please pray with us that the Holy Spirit will change the hearts of the people here and call them to Himself. ✝



A group of young people getting ready to enter a house to perform the Trot Dance for the New Year

ALONG THE WAY...

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The Wingroves finished out May in Pennsylvania, then began their mid-Western tour in June. They will be in KS, IA, and NE for services in June, and then cross over into CO and AZ for July meetings.

Matt Hancock in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, is getting his first chance to teach a student Bible study in the Khmer language - just one lesson for now. It's a sign of good progress in his Khmer studies. The lesson will be June 7 in the evening. Matt continues to ask prayer for the salvation of his Khmer language teacher.

I trust you will read the article by Amy Jensen (on this page) taken from their The Jensen Dimension blog.

The month of June means many things to different people: the beginning of summer; the beginning of the hot-'n-humid's (in the southeast); the beginning of kids being out of school; the beginning of vacations; the beginning of swimming to keep cool; the beginning of summer produce from the garden; the beginning of constant A/C in the house, car, and at work; and these are just a few things taken off-the-cuff of my mind. Sadly, what June means most to me is that the year will be half over at the end of the month! At least the heat of July and August take my mind off of the downward slide to December 31. One reality that we trust will remain constant is your interest in and prayers for the ministries of EMU International. Thank you so much for backing us as we seek to serve the Lord in the area He has placed us. ✝

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