

# EMU<sup>+</sup> INTERNATIONAL

*Evangelical Mission to the Unreached*

*Evangelical Mission to Uruguay*

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

Volume LXI

March 2018

Number 3



*Ken & Joan Jensen  
Assistant Director*

## ALONG THE WAY . . .

Although it seems that no one has a definitive answer as to when Resurrection Sunday received the name Easter, most agree that the Anglo-Saxon word came from the name for the ancient German goddess of the dawn, Eostre. By the time Bede, an English monk who lived in the 7th and 8th centuries, wrote his history of England in which the first mention of Easter is recorded, the worship of Eostre had died out in favor of the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. What you may not know is that our English word “east” is probably derived from the same Old German word meaning “dawn” or “shining.” This reminds me of the verse, *And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.* (Mark 16:2)

And each week, Christians around the world worship Jesus Christ on the first day of the week - Sunday, named after the Roman Sun god, “Sol.” How appropriate that Jesus is the true “light of the world.” It is amazing how the Spirit of Christ has turned even pagan names into a day that points to the Risen One. May each of you have a blessed Resurrection Sunday. And please pray for our EMU missionaries as they will be involved with Easter services on April 1, preaching and teaching of the Risen Savior.

Reporting on a few “comings and goings” from February and March is in order. The day before Paul and Theresa Bixby arrived

*(continued on page 2)*

## NOSTALGIA

*by Paul & Theresa Bixby, Greenville, SC*

The effect of nostalgia is extremely interesting. Last May Theresa and I were able to take a trip back to where I grew up. It had been 54 years since I was last there, and the visit stimulated great nostalgia of bygone years. I felt emotions I had seldom felt before that brought back long-forgotten memories. This past weekend, Theresa and I returned from Uruguay, where we had the privilege of participating in the annual **Family Camp and Workers’ Retreat at Campamento Emanuel** in back-to-back weeks, and we experienced some of the same emotions of nostalgia. You might wonder how a first-time experience can be nostalgic? It was my first trip to Uruguay, although Theresa was there for a ladies’ retreat 10 years ago. As we drove down the highway paralleling the coastline, we were reminded of the many years we served in Spain in a very similar type of countryside, so the nostalgia was pronounced. However, as we began to interact with the precious people in Uruguay, who love and serve the same Lord that we love and serve, we were swept by the same great emotions of love and warmth that we have experienced with brothers and sisters in Christ in many other places around the world.

The first week of camp (Family Camp) the studies and messages centered around



*Paul & Theresa Bixby with one of the  
younger family campers*

the Providence of God in the lives of the nations, in the lives of God’s people - as a group and individually, and in each one of our lives today. The interest in the studies and the response of the brothers and sisters in Christ was truly heart-warming. Interaction with them during free time was both exhilarating and instructive. I am sure that I received much more from them than they received from my being there.

The second week was actually a three-day week with a more intensive schedule with and to Christian workers who have faithfully served for many years in very difficult circumstances. Most of them are severely limited in what they can do by many factors, one of the most basic ones

*(continued on page 3)*



*Family Camp, February 2018*



## “Kidnapped”

*by Gabriel & Rosanna Gomez, pastor of Gethsemani Church in Montevideo, Uruguay*

After an exhausting December, we enjoyed a few days off for vacation. Sometimes we need time to be able to think. This vacation was a bit unusual because our son, Marcos, was still working at Camp Emmanuel. Our vacation time also helped Rosanna to get ready for the classes on John Newton that she would be teaching in the evenings at Children's Camp. The main theme of this summer's camps was "The Great God of Daniel." I was able to help at both youth camps and the family camp, so I heard a lot about the book of Daniel. It was really interesting, and no repetition. The Word of God and the great God of Daniel are so rich that it is impossible not to be humble before this great and wonderful Lord!

This year we were also blessed to be able to participate in all the camps with the good group of campers from our church. Eleven of our Sunday school children attended, and most of the youth group attended, too. And many members from our church enjoyed the Family camp - some for the whole week, others for two or three days. It was very good to have this time of fellowship around the Word of God.

It was also a joy for me to be at Youth Camp with Maxi and Lucas from Pando. Their grandmother is a faithful lady from Maranatha Church, and she has prayed a lot for all of her grandchildren. I met these two young men when they were just kids. They didn't accept the Lord at that time, and at times they were very far from God's truth, but now they are so precious in the Lord. I was very, very blessed to see what our Lord and Savior is doing in their lives. Maxi is married now, and his wife has also accepted Christ as her Savior. He wants to start attending the Bible Institute this year. Pray for them that all things will work together for this purpose.

By the way, our 2018 schedule for the Bible Institute is ready. We start classes on March 5. I promoted the B.I. at several camps, and we have also been praying for more students. As the Lord said, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest." We would really appreciate your prayers with us for this. Pastor Ovidio Acevedo (my right hand in the B.I.) and I are working

hard to have everything ready for a good year of study and hard work.

Another blessing for us was to have Paul and Theresa Bixby visit our church on two occasions. Just a few hours after they arrived in Uruguay, we practically "kidnapped" them and drove to Gethsemani Church for our first couples' meeting of the year. Having the Bixbys was a good excuse to make a delicious meal, and we all shared a good time of fellowship around the Word. We are very thankful to Paul and Theresa for their effort in being there. Paul also preached at our Sunday service the next day.

There's much more to tell and more pictures to show, but I'll stop here. I hope this letter will encourage you to continue praying and helping the work of God in this small country. A particular thanks to those who have helped us with special gifts. Money is very helpful, but behind the money and more important for us is the hope that there is someone, probably unknown, who is thinking about us and praying for us. That warms and encourages our hearts. †



*Gethsemani Church at children's camp - Rosanna Gomez (lt.), Marcos Gomez (rt.), Pedro Donzé (second red shirt from rt.)*



*Gethsemani Church at youth camp - Gaby Gomez (center back)*

## ALONG THE WAY...

*(continued from page 1)*

home in Greenville, SC, from Uruguay on February 23, the Erkens family left Taylors, SC, to return to Beijing, China. It was such a joy to have Steve, Charity, and our 3 Chinese grandsons here for just under 6 weeks on their short furlough. Their next visit to the States is planned for the winter of 2020.

JD Crowley flew from Cambodia to Virginia Beach, VA, in February to speak at a 3-day Bible conference at Colonial Baptist Church. The following Monday (Feb. 26), he drove to Greenville, SC, to visit with his children and grandkids for a week. On Monday (Mar. 5), he left Greenville via an early morning flight for Chicago to spend the day with his daughter, Anna, and her 2 children, before

departing O'Hare International Airport for Cambodia that same night. JD was able to come to our house, along with Jeff Davis, for a long lunch while in Greenville.

Jeff Davis returned from Uruguay on Tuesday (Feb. 27). Joan and I picked him up at Charlotte's Douglas International Airport. It was a good chance to talk about his 2 weeks in Uruguay during our 2-hour drive to Greer, SC, where we spent more time talking over lunch. Joanna's parents are in diminishing health in Terra Haute, IN, and she has been with them since her dad was hospitalized a few weeks ago.

On his first weekend stateside, Jeff presented EMU and preached at Sumter Bible Church

in Sumter, SC. He will be speaking at 3 other mission conferences in March. Jeff will give a report in the April EMU Newsletter of his travels across Uruguay visiting our MEU churches.

The Steel family leaves Uruguay on March 6 to begin a furlough that will keep them on the road - including to Alaska - until July 5. Both on their arrival and departure from the States, the Steels will be spending some time in Florida with Deborah's father and his wife. Pray for the Steels' safe travels.

The Hancocks arrive in the States from Cambodia on Tuesday, March 13, to begin a furlough that will not end until January  
*(continued on page 3)*



## Nostalgia

(continued from page 1)

being a lack of resources. Many of them live on an income that you and I could not even imagine being enough to get by on, and yet faithfully and cheerfully they serve the Lord their love. They do so with good humor, and love for God and for the people they serve, with dedication that is truly humbling.



(lt-rt) Marcos Gomez, Nico Gomez, Paul Bixby, Gaby Gomez, & Juan Gonzalez at the Workers' Conference

Our studies dealt with Romans 7 and 8, with a focus on God's provision of righteousness, which frees us from the demands and the condemnation of the Law.

On the weekends we had the privilege of traveling to several MEU churches in the area surrounding Campamento Emanuel to speak to a variety of churches and groups in those churches. The first Saturday we arrived, I spoke at a couples' meeting at the **Iglesia Getsemani** in Montevideo. I had the privilege of preaching in the same church that Sunday evening. **Pastor Gabriel Gómez** and his wife, **Rosanna**, are doing a wonderful work there. The following Saturday we were with **Ovidio and Yusara Acevedo** in **El Cerro**. It is a very poor area on the outskirts of Montevideo, and Ovidio and his family have served there for many years. Theresa spoke at an afternoon ladies' meeting, and then I spoke at the young people's meeting in the evening. On Sunday morning



Paul preaching at Calvary Temple

again. The small church was packed, and there were people standing in the back. A lady whose mother, sister, and brother-in-law have prayed for her for years, and has attended several times recently, was in the service. The faithful testimony of her family, and the planting and watering of the seed, finally produced its fruit, and she was saved after the service. What a blessing it

was to see her tears of joy and the profound gratitude on the faces of her family as the fruit of their labors, prayers, and testimonies evidenced itself that evening. Please pray for **Karina** as she begins her new life in Christ.

One of the things that most stood out to both Theresa and me during our time with our Uruguayan brothers and sisters was the cheerful way in which they serve the Lord and one another. Theresa has some special dietary restrictions, and she did not want to be an extra burden on the kitchen staff. However, before we arrived at camp, they had made special provisions for a number of people, including Theresa, with special needs in their diets. At every meal, they served delicious food tailored to the needs of each one.

Another instance of special care of one brother for another was the situation concerning Miguel. Miguel is a believer who has MS and is from the church in Durazno. There was no way he could come



Miguel (seated), his wife & son (lt.), with Paul & Theresa (rt.)

to camp and live in the cabins. Miguel is a believer who would warm your heart. He is always cheerful, and whenever you ask him how he is doing, he will give a "thumbs-up" (in fact, in every picture we took of him, he is giving the "thumbs up"), and will, with great effort, tell you how good God is to him. He felt an urgent need to be at the camp and, at great financial sacrifice, rented a nearby house where he could receive the help he needed but also be at all the meals and services at camp. The first day several of the men gathered around his motorized wheel chair and lifted it over the step into the meeting hall. Early the next morning, I was out walking and heard a racket coming from the workshop of the camp. One brother, who is a carpenter, had the saw and the planer running and was building a ramp to facilitate Miguel's entrance into the services. Later in the week, there was a problem with his motorized wheel chair, and the same brother "just happened" to have a manual wheel chair at home and drove more than an hour each way to bring it back for Miguel. That same spirit was evidenced over

and over throughout our time in Uruguay.

I want to close this article by mentioning Pedro Donzé, who directs the camp and wears many other hats in EMU. What a servant's heart he has! I have had contact with Pedro by email for some time as we have corresponded translating some EMU business that Ken Jensen asked me to help with. However, meeting him in person and interacting with him was a blessing I will not forget. The Lord has given to EMU a talented and dedicated servant in Pedro, and I want to thank him for all he did in scheduling our time in Uruguay and taking care of us while we were there.

We were in Uruguay for only two weeks, but, judging by the bonds that were formed and the love that we feel for these precious people, it was like we were there for years. I am quickly developing an acute case of nostalgia for God's people in that small country. Theresa and I will never cease thanking the Lord for the opportunity He gave us. †

## ALONG THE WAY...

(continued from page 2)

2019. Matt and Becky, with their 4 children, are finishing their first term on the field, where they have been in language training and, for the last 2 years, helping 2 other missionary families with church planting in Kampong Cham. When they return to Cambodia, the Hancocks will move to Ou Reang Ov city to begin church planting.

On February 5, Marco and Gwendolyn Nuñez flew to a city in the State of Chiapas and rented a car to drive 2 more hours to the village of Santa Martha, where **Ciro and Dolores Alvarado** minister. The Alvarados have faithfully labored in this small town for the last 15 years. **Ciro** has been an important part of this community, helping with corn harvests, feeding hungry children, protecting the weak, driving the sick to the hospital in Comitán, and helping meet other needs as they present themselves. It is **Ciro's** hometown, and though he is well known, the hearts of the residents have generally remained closed to the Gospel.



Marco (white hair) with **Ciro & Dolores** (lt. of Marco) in Santa Martha, Chiapas

At the 4-day Krung/Brao Bible school, beginning on January 29, 70 students gathered from across northeastern Cambodia  
(continued on page 4)

Page 4

## **ALONG THE WAY...**

*(continued from page 3)*

to study the Book of Romans under the tutelage of Krung/Brao tribesmen, who are 1st and 2nd generation Christians. The study commentary that was used was written by JD Crowley especially for the tribal cultures. JD was criticized by some expats for writing a commentary on such a difficult book "for uneducated, backwards people." However, this book has been used throughout Cambodia to help Christians better understand God's Word. Brian Kane, who works with the Krung/Brao, reports that these 70 men and women sat for a total of 24 hours of teaching in an oven-of-a-chapel to receive this teaching - and were blessed and edified by it. Twenty-seven other Krung/Brao were teachers and cooks for this Bible school.

Brian, with the help of Nigh - an elder Christian among the Krung - and some other villagers in Krala, has finished translating the Epistle of the Ephesians into Krung/Brao, and they have started on the Epistle to the Philippians.

The Lord protected both Brian and Lydia recently when the brakes on their car gave out while each was driving. Except for a fence and a "clump" of bamboo that was flattened, and a few new dents in the car, no harm was done.

Josh and Amy Jensen's car that was rear-ended by a semi-truck in December,

was supposed to be fixed weeks ago. The "repaired" vehicle was presented to them last week, but a laundry-list of features were still unrepaired or poorly repaired. So, the owner of the truck is, by previous agreement, supposed to give the Jensens the original purchase price of the car. This transaction has the potential for prolonged complications, so please pray that the Khmer owner will pay Josh and Amy soon so that they can buy another vehicle. (The Jensens' moped will not safely accommodate 6 passengers!)

Billy Judson is visiting the island of Sri Lanka March 1-7 with his uncle to see about the prospect of beginning a Good News College and Seminary there. Pray for insight and success.

A few new moves are in store, affecting some of our missionaries. In Stung Treng, Cambodia, Brooke Illsley has been living in a downstairs apartment at the Farmer's house for the past 2 years as she has helped homeschool and watch over the children. She will be moving out this month to live more independently, but she will continue to teach and help the Farmer children. (The kids are especially sad about Brooke's move!)

David and Kristin Chapman and their 2 kids have been living with Tom and Connie Chapman for the past couple of years in Antofagasta, Chile, assisting in the ministry there. David and Kristin will be moving to Monterrey, Mexico, where David's older brother Tommy and sister Susan are



*The "tent" church in Antofagasta, Chile*

ministering with their families at UCLA, a Mexican Christian college. While still in Antofagasta, David and Kristin helped prepare the new church property so a tent could be set up in which to hold services while the new building is being erected. Tom and Connie's house is much quieter - and more lonely - now. Pray for Tom and Connie as they begin church planting efforts in northern Antofagasta.

This month, the Uruguayan Bible college, FEBU, begins classes, as does the MEU Bible Institute. FEBU has made a major change in its schedule by mainly teaching morning classes, rather than evening ones. This will mean a critical adjustment for students who work during the daytime. Pray for wisdom.

Finally, Ursula Thiessen's 90th birthday was celebrated by her church and MEU at Calvary Temple of Montevideo on Saturday, March 3, although her actual birthday was February 24. She is EMU's oldest active missionary. She began serving with EMU in 1953 - the year I was born! Her life has touched thousands of people around the world through her godly witness and testimony. †



*January 2018 Krung/Brao Bible school with 70 students*

Email: [office@emuinternational.org](mailto:office@emuinternational.org)

Website: [www.emuinternational.org](http://www.emuinternational.org)

Phone: (864) 268-9267