

# the EMU Newsletter

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

Volume LX

September 2017

Number 8



Ken & Joan Jensen  
Director

## ALONG THE WAY . . .

"Not much 'news' happens in August." Aphorism or Sophism? Adage or Fallacy? I have heard varying renditions of this phrase for most of my adult life. However, in the U.S., August 2017 seemed to put several new nails in the coffin of this saying - violent demonstrations, a catastrophic hurricane, and a total eclipse. And news from Uruguay supplied some counterpart headlines.

The "enjoyable nail" was the **total eclipse** on August 21. I was determined not to get caught up in the media hype for this once-in-a-lifetime-in-Tailors-SC event. But other family members drew me in as our residence became the location of a designated Eclipse Party. We eventually ended up with a troop of nine adults on the 5th hole of the Pebble Creek golf course across the road from our house, and nine very high energy children chasing each other on an otherwise prohibited, beautifully manicured, lawn, while we adults watched both the chaotic activities on the ground and the slow, methodical movements in the sky. It is amazing how little of the sun is needed to illuminate the earth! The total eclipse lasted only 2 minutes and 10 seconds in our area, which was a scant time to take in the various aspects of such a momentous occurrence. Looking at the total eclipse through binoculars was breathtaking. But even more impressive were our earthly surroundings. The temperature dropped six degrees in that short time-span, but rebounded almost

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## A VISIT FROM MEMAW

by Bonnie Ruth Farmer, missionary wife in Stung Treng, Cambodia

One of our summer highlights was to be a month-long visit from my (Bonnie Ruth) mom. We all excitedly made the 7-hour trip to pick her up in Phnom Penh and returned home a few days later. Four days into her stay, however, she fell down the stairs in our house and landed face down on the tile floor. We heard the commotion and rushed to find her lying unconscious. Seeing the obvious head injury, we immediately called two local friends, one a nurse, one a doctor, who examined her and helped us secure an ambulance. So at 11:30 pm, she and I squeezed into the back of an old Montero Sport for a harrowing night ride through heavy rains and flooded roads, navigating fallen trees as well as countless carts hauling illegal lumber without lights!

Next morning at 5:00, we arrived safely in Siem Reap, the closest hospital with the equipment for a CT scan. The initial scan and x-rays revealed, among other things, swelling and hemorrhaging on the brain, and the doctor indicated that she would need surgery as soon as possible to relieve the pressure. For this, we would need to go either to Phnom Penh or possibly Bangkok. So we climbed back into an ambulance (much nicer this time!) for another 5-hour ride to Phnom Penh. In answer to many prayers, the second CT scan revealed that the brain swelling/bleeding had increased only slightly, meaning that surgery was not as urgent. Mom and I spent four nights in ICU and another four in a regular room for observation. Thankfully, subsequent scans showed that the swelling/bleeding

was decreasing and no surgery would be needed. While the brain injury was certainly our greatest concern, honorable mention also goes to three broken ribs, a fractured vertebra, a fractured wrist, fractured facial bones, and a collapsed lung!

After being released, we were hopeful that she might be able to return to our home in Stung Treng, but the pain levels (combined with the bumpy roads) soon ruled this out. So after ten days apart, Jeremy and the kids—including newly-weaned Elisha!—joined us at a guesthouse in Phnom Penh where we made some memories nonetheless. We all enjoyed a couple weeks of air-conditioning, some western food, and playing games with Memaw—no one complained! Praise the Lord that though she had quite an ordeal, she is on track to make a full recovery and was even able to make her return flight home earlier this week. We just hope the memories from her visit don't discourage her from future visits!

Though my mom's visit was not what we had planned, I'm thankful for the quality mother-daughter time during those days and nights in the hospital and also that we were able to address all of her needs here in country.



The Farmers & Ruth Marshall at the Phnom Penh airport

While reading the Psalms recently, I noticed how often David begins by rehearsing his many troubles. Enemies, personal sin, setbacks, fleeing for his life, loneliness, exhaustion from constantly running,

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

immediately when the first rays of the sun reappeared. Though darkness prevailed overhead, the entire panorama of the horizon was rimmed with the faint light of dawn, as though the sun would rise from all 380 degrees of the compass at once. A phenomenal sight!



*"Yours truly" using fool-proof eclipse glasses. Thankfully there are no fashion laws for watching an eclipse!*

Although Uruguay did not experience a total solar eclipse in August (they have to wait until the year 2103), they continue under a spiritual eclipse as Humanism/Progressivism does all in its power under the restraints of the Uruguayan Constitution to block the Light of the Word of God. But like our total eclipse here, light can still be seen on the horizons. One of the places emanating Light is **Camp Bethel** in the Department of Treinta y Tres. During the winter semester break in July, a **youth camp** was held, drawing young people from four towns. **Pastor Carlos Olivera** from Pando was the main teacher. At the beginning of August, a **men's retreat** was held at Camp Bethel.



*Camp Bethel Men's Retreat in August*

Every two months, the men have one of these meetings for fellowship and Bible training. September 20-23, a **ladies' retreat** is planned. There are already 73 ladies signed up, and 20 are from southern Brazil. Because this number exceeds the camp's accommodations, a neighbor family has offered to keep some of the ladies. The special speaker will be **Belinda Spilman**, a longtime missionary friend from a sister organization. The topic is "The Role of Women in the World." Pray that the Lord will continue to work in the lives of those who have attended and will attend Camp Bethel this winter – and two days of spring – in Uruguay.

In the last week of July, **Dr. Ken Casillas**, the pastor of Cleveland Park Bible Church in Spartanburg, SC, taught a block course on Hermeneutics for **FEBU**, the Bible college in Uruguay. The five-day conference was held at a Christian camp in Paysandú, a city in western Uruguay on the Rio Uruguay. I was able to speak briefly with Dr. Ken on the Sunday of August 20 when **Tim and Ruth Bixby** presented their ministries in France at CPBC, their sending church. Both Ken and



*Top: Attendees at the FEBU block seminar. Below: Elizabeth & Daniel Steel get a jump on seminary Hebrew from Dr. Casillas.*



our missionaries in Uruguay who attended the conference were blessed by the fellowship and teaching. We are so grateful to Ken for taking time away from family to travel to Uruguay and teach. And that Dr. Casillas speaks Spanish is an extra blessing!



*2014 Citroen Berlingo B9*

Some of you know that the **Espinels** were looking for a larger vehicle to accommodate their growing family. The Lord blessed them with a good used mini-van, previously owned by another missionary family. Continue to pray for the **Espinels** and **Steels** as they teach and lead at FEBU. (The Steels were awakened one night in August by a man trying to break into the mission house where they reside. Though the intruder was able to break the lock on the high gate around the front courtyard, the garage and front door bar/locks held firm. Crime continues to rise in Uruguay as the society sinks deeper into sin.)

Another particularly "dark" country is India, where **Billy and Saritha Judson** minister. (The population of Uruguay is 3 million. A city in India with only 3 million residents would be insignificant!) In this strongly Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim country, the Light of the Gospel is shining in many areas. August 8-10, the **360+ National Women's Conference** was held in Hyderabad, India. Two-hundred-and-fifty ladies from around India gathered to hear teaching on many subjects to help ladies grow in their walk with the Lord and testimony among family and community. November 8-10 will be the **2nd 360 National Men's**



*2017 360+ National Women's Conference*

**Conference.** Billy is planning on around 700 attendees – twice the number of last year's group. Ted Allston will be one of the main speakers at the conference.

**Ted** spent a couple of weeks in Morocco in August teaching several men in various places, which is about all I will say on this subject. From Morocco, Ted flew to **Lomé, Togo**, to speak at a conference (September 4-8) on "Spiritual Warfare" and "Witchcraft." May the Lord greatly use Ted's teaching!

**The Bixby family** was in Greenville, SC, for almost two weeks in August, and Joan and I were able to spend some wonderful time with their family at our house. My only complaint is that their kids are growing up way too fast! We heard Tim preach at Cleveland Park Bible. I had forgotten what a good preacher he is! And he and Ruth gave a very informative update on their ministry. The whole family participated in the service by singing a hymn in French. They flew back to France on August 29. Joan and I are already looking forward to visiting the Bixbys and Coles in France – sooner or later.



*Tim Bixby & his kids singing at CPBC. Ruth is playing the piano behind the group.*

**The Crowleys** flew out of Greenville/Spartanburg on Monday, August 28. We, also, had the privilege of having this dear couple over for meals during their short furlough. JD preached an excellent sermon at Hampton Park Baptist Church on Sunday evening, August 13. Ted Allston preached that Sunday morning, and his message was a real blessing, too. One momentous event that occurred while they were back in the States was that their youngest daughter **Jenna** became engaged. They have set a wedding date for the day before Thanksgiving of this year. So, JD, Kim, and Nathaniel will be returning to Greenville for about 2 weeks for that blessed union.

When **Ruth Bixby Marshall** flew back to Greenville, SC, on August 20, she was accompanied by **Shelia Potts**, **Lydia Kane's** mother, who had spent almost five weeks with the Kanes during this, her 3rd trip to Cambodia. It was a blessing that Ruth Marshall made it home safely with as much comfort as possible for plane travel. On August 28, a four-day evangelistic outreach was held in the Brao village of Kek Guong. There were only two Christians in this village. The teaching was the **Creation-to-Christ** series. We are looking forward to

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## ALONG THE WAY...

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hearing the account of that day. Pray that the Lord will continue to work in the hearts of those who heard the Gospel message.

We were able to talk to **Josh and Amy Jensen** in Oyadao, Cambodia, at the end of August. Beside other things, Josh told us of a new opportunity to teach God's Word in a Jarai village. A national pastor asked if Josh would help teach at this church. They regularly visit Jarai churches in their province, and Josh is always asked to preach.

**Matt and Becky Hancock** send out a monthly prayer calendar with a prayer request for each day. The September calendar came with an explanation about the Cambodian holiday, "The Festival of the Dead," (Pchum Bum) held September 19-21. The following is an excerpt: "Cambodians believe that the spirits of their dead ancestors in purgatory are 'set free' for a period of time to return to earth and visit their home towns. Since there is no food in hell, these spirits are famished until this yearly opportunity to gorge themselves. Thus, out of pity and respect, Cambodian people prepare food and offer it at the Buddhist temple, hoping it will reach their relatives. It is sad to see how 'the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers.'" (2 Cor. 4:4). Many are unaware of the demonic activity behind the rituals. For obvious reasons, most Christians do not participate and are often times ridiculed for this stand, feeling ostracized from their families. Please pray that God would strengthen each believer in Cambodia: 1) to stand firm without compromise, 2) to respond graciously to their upset family members, and 3) to cling to Christ and His church as one's true family."

In August, we learned that the **Erkens family** will be coming to Greenville, SC, for a six-week furlough during the winter semester break (January-February) for the college where Steve teaches English. The school break includes the Chinese New Year in February. (A belated Christmas present for Joan and me!)

I also want to share a portion of **Tim and Cheryl Chapman's** August prayer letter about activities in Lima, Peru: "Earlier this month, we hosted a group of 32 folks from our home church (24 of them teenagers). Though it was a very busy time, it was also a wonderful time to be able to have them work alongside of us for about 10 days. Two of the days that they were with us, they helped us by handing out invitations for our church all around the area where we meet on Sundays. They were able to hand out over 10,000 invitations. The following Sunday, we had three different families visit us after having received an invitation. Two of those were back this Sunday, and we are making arrangements to visit them soon."

"The group generously paid for our family to join them for a trip to Cusco and Machu Picchu, and we had a wonderful time there enjoying one of the most beautiful places in South America."



Tim with the group from Midland, Michigan

"One unique blessing that the Lord gave us in the last two months has been the opportunity to move to a much better meeting place for our Sunday gatherings. We meet now in a new, well-kept building in which we have the use of an entire floor with three large rooms. It is a tremendous blessing! This is the third time that the Lord has directed us to a place for our Sunday meetings that at each stage of the church plant has met our needs. We are very grateful!"

In August, **Mel and Jan Wingrove** travelled around Indiana visiting supporting churches and families. This month, they plan to do the same in Florida - if they don't get blown back north by a hurricane! Thankfully, Jan's health has not deteriorated further, making these visits possible.

The **Davises** had a grand occasion on August 12 as their eldest daughter, **Bethany**, became the wife of **Kris Wilder**. After the



Kris & Bethany (Davis) Wilder

honeymoon, the couple moved to Raleigh, NC, where they will work in the church and school of Friendship Baptist Church. Construction of a "mother-in-law apartment" for Jeff's mom is ongoing in the ground floor of the Davises' new house. The construction includes Jeff's new office. Jeff and Joanna also spent time with all of our missionaries who were in town in August. Continue to pray that Jeff's service schedule to represent EMU International in churches will develop at a good pace.

**Melody Sherf** is still working in the EMU office! Continue to pray for Melody and Joan as they work together, and for Melody as she learns the office procedures.

Many have asked about **George and Marilyn Jensen**. My folks are in good health physically, but Dad continues to deteriorate due to Alzheimer's. They are still able to live together at home, and Mom can still drive with her hand-operated gas and brake levers.

## Camp Emmanuel "Rick's Team" Projects

1. Replacement of the metal roofing on the Dining Room/Kitchen - right at \$10,000.

2. Replacement of 6 Water Heaters for Cabin Bathrooms - \$1,450 per water heater.

3. Repair of the Water Tank.

4. Repair of a Kitchen Wall damaged during a hurricane (cyclone) earlier in the year - \$230.

5. Replacement of the Chapel Lighting - \$2,320.

6. Replacement of the rotting Bridge that spans a wetland between the soccer field and the obstacle course - \$1,140.

7. Concrete Tables and Benches - \$600 per set.

8. Repair of old Bunkbeds - \$400 for all.

9. Repair of Equipment in the Children's Corner (playground) - \$730.

10. US & Uruguay team expenses - \$1,300 (in-country food & transportation).



If you ever want to pay them a visit, they would love to see you - even if Dad doesn't remember you! (At times, even Mom and us kids fade from his recollection.)



George & Marilyn Jensen

As September begins, I am hoping this will be a slow news month. It seems that EMU missionary travels will take a rest, though they pick back up in October. Joan and I will have a little less company - maybe. And just maybe our country will take a breather from turmoil and natural catastrophes. However, I do hope you who receive the EMU Newsletter will not take a break from praying for the ministries of our missionaries. We depend on your prayers and financial gifts. Thank you. †

**If you would like to receive the EMU Newsletter via email, please let us know. There are more and larger pictures in the email format.**

## Prisoners to Sin

by Maria Teresa "Chicha" Rodriguez, missionary in Montevideo, Uruguay

Some of you may remember my prayer request for someone to minister with me at the women's prison on Fridays. My two friends who used to go are currently unable to help. One of them is expecting a baby, and it is not safe for her to go. The other one fell and broke her hip, and had to have surgery. I have had to go by myself, and have prayed and waited on God. A dear friend of mine who I had not seen for months came to my house recently and told me that she is retired now (she worked as a school teacher for many years). She has been looking for a ministry to participate in. "Do you still go to the women's prison?" she asked. "I would love to go with you!" God answered our prayers!

Just a couple of weeks ago, we learned the life stories of two girls who come to our prison meeting. Each of them is around 25 years old, and they are currently in jail for stealing in order to buy drugs. Both have repeated their offenses many times, and both agree that life on drugs for so many years has been a real hell. One of them is serving a nine-year sentence; the other one doesn't yet know how long her sentence will be. Both are mothers of young children. They confess that they never cared for their children and only lived to consume drugs and do whatever was necessary to obtain more. They have tried to quit drugs, but they have been unsuccessful, and they have not been happy. We told them about the only One who can free them and change their lives, Jesus Christ! We gave them some Gospel tracts to read. Another thing I told them is that I would really like to be able to share what they said in our city's schools, where so many children and young



Marianne Rauter (left), who also visits the hospitals, and Chicha (rt)

people start experimenting with drugs, believing it to be a fun thing. The reality is totally different.

To reach more people with the gospel, we have split those who are part of the hospital ministry into two groups. Some go to the adult wards and others to the children's wards. We take the gospel to the children on the 5th, 6th, and 7th floors of the hospital every Sunday. A few Sundays ago, when we were on the 6th floor, I went to ask permission of the nurse on duty before entering the ward. (This is something we always do). The nurse told me she was new and needed to know what we were there to do. I explained that we are a group of Christians who have been visiting the hospital on Sundays for years. We sing and tell stories from the Word of God to the children to encourage them and let them know that there is a God who loves them and cares. Right away that nurse asked us to visit rooms 324 and 328 because two girls, 13 and 14 years old, were there because they tried to commit suicide. Imagine what an opportunity we had to speak not only with the nurse but also the young women and their families about the hope available to them in Christ! Join us in praying that the light of Christ would enlighten these hearts. For God, anything is possible!

We are planning our annual ladies' spring meeting for September 9th here at our church, Calvary Temple. It is always a good occasion for inviting visitors, and many have come in the past. May God help us to present the gospel clearly through hymns, special music, and the teaching of the Word. †

## A Visit From Memaw (continued from page 1)

depression from feeling forgotten (or worse, hated)—all are common expressions in David's prayers to God. Yet somehow, these same prayers almost always end with praise. How? And why? Did God answer in the affirmative every request David made? Were these negative circumstances removed? No, but David wasn't finding his hope in smooth circumstances or from somewhere deep within his own heart. His source of hope even amid trouble and discouragement was in his never-changing, always-loving, and supremely sovereign Redeemer. Though our struggles aren't normally of the magnitude of David's, circumstances in recent months are forcing us to remember that our Hope, like David's, is indeed steadfast. Our Hope—through hot days, nearly sleepless nights, discouraging lack of fruit, promising relationships that turn apathetic, lack of love toward the very people we are here to serve—has not changed. We cling to the same promises that the peoples will one day sing His praises. We hope in the same promises of ultimate renewal, both within and without. And we rejoice in the promise that our Hope is ever present with us. And so, brothers and sisters, please pray for us. Jeremy specifically is experiencing an unusual level of discouragement, in part due to prolonged seasons of apparently unanswered prayer, as well as physical and mental fatigue.

We are very thankful that Brooke Illsley is back with us for another school year. She has been invaluable in helping me with the schooling of our children. †

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