

EMU⁺

INTERNATIONAL

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Evangelical Mission to Uruguay

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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*Ken & Joan Jensen
Assistant Director*

ALONG THE WAY . . .

This is one of those newsletters that I (thought I) knew what articles would be in it before assembling all the parts. Then life happened! Or rather, the dark side of life happened. First, we received word that JD Crowley suffered a stroke after arriving back in Cambodia following their five months of furlough. Then my father died on Monday afternoon, October 28. The family-only entombment was on Wednesday morning, and the memorial service for Dad was Friday morning at Hampton Park Baptist Church in Greenville, SC. And my brother returned from working at Camp Emmanuel in Uruguay on Tuesday afternoon the 29th – which was not a dark side event. Even now, I'm not sure how this newsletter will turn out! Or when!

JD and Kim Crowley left the USA on Monday, October 21, headed back to Cambodia. That Thursday night, while in Siem Reap with their son Ethan and his family (still on their way home), JD woke up and realized that something was wrong with his right arm and leg, and the right side of his face was drooping. After giving the symptoms some time to subside, and not knowing the cause, JD and Kim decided to fly to Bangkok, Thailand, where medical care is more advanced. Monday, October 28, JD received an MRI, read by a neurologist shortly thereafter. The doctor confirmed that it was a stroke that had occurred in the left side, lower part of the

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THE PASSING OF A PATRIARCH

by Ken Jensen

George Walter Jensen did not begin life with the human stamp of “future patriarch” predetermined by his progenitors. And yet, from his humble beginning as a seedling, he grew into a patriarch for a family, a mission, several churches, many who surrendered their lives to serve full-time in the cause of Jesus Christ, and countless others who began their Christian life as a result of George Jensen’s gospel emphasis in almost all of his messages.



*George Jensen in
Mexico a few years ago*

On Monday, October 28, 2019, at 3:35 PM, Dad drew his last breath while lying in bed at the Brookdale Greenville skilled nursing facility where he had been a resident for the past seven months. A fall as a patient in the Memory Care Unit broke his spirit to ever walk again, necessitating a transfer to full-time nursing care.

Dad died of the ravages of Alzheimer’s, a disease he had before we as a family knew the reason for some of his forgetfulness or occasional odd behavior. He eventually stopped eating at the nursing facility and lost a great deal of weight before his automatic nervous system began to shut down rapidly, beginning the day before his demise. Only his heart and lungs kept functioning, and it was obvious his breathing was becoming more labored.



*(l-r) Dr. Fred Dabold (founder of EMU), Ursula Thiessen
(translator for Dabold & Jensens), Marilyn & George Jensen
- this photo first appeared in the March 1974 Newsletter*

My sister Cindy (an angel of mercy if there ever was one), Joan, and I were with him during his last two hours of life. Rick was still in Uruguay, but already preparing to come home that evening, and Mom had two doctor appointments that afternoon. We thought Dad would last until after Mom’s last appointment. We were wrong. Our sorrow had been worn down over the previous ten years as we watched Dad die by the inch. Dad and I talked about almost everything as

we worked together in EMU for 36 years (1976-2012), and even before I came into the mission, we discussed many topics. (He was my best male friend for many decades.) When we talked about dying, the one thing that he was most afraid of was Alzheimer’s – losing his mind and his identity. So, watching his decline was even harder for us, knowing the dread he had of his condition. He actually never admitted to having Alzheimer’s, and we learned early on not to say the word around him. It is interesting that during all of this time, we, the family he had taken great pains to teach that God is sovereign in all things and that whatever He does is good, were able to turn to this great truth when discouragement desired to rip and tear our faith in the goodness of God.

My parents already had arrangements made for the event of their deaths, so the entombment was quite simple. Mom, we three siblings, and our spouses gathered at a cemetery in Greer, SC, to watch as Dad’s casket was lifted to a top row crypt of a mausoleum, leaving only after the crypt’s opening had been sealed. This was on Wednesday, two days after his death. On Friday morning we held a memorial service for Dad at Hampton Park Baptist Church, where he was a

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brain stem that goes into the spinal column. The lesion is 3/16 inches (5 millimeters) wide. On Wednesday, they met with a Physical Therapist in Bangkok, and JD began rehabilitation to strengthen and regain use of his affected areas. The neurologist was encouraging in the possibility of recovery but stressed that it would be hard work. On Sunday November 3, we received a note from JD telling us that he was encouraged that "10 days post-stroke he was already making steady progress toward regaining normal strength and dexterity." JD would appreciate your prayers for his continued recovery. Obviously, JD's stroke has changed his and Kim's schedule dramatically. But with three RNs in their immediate family, they will have plenty of advice.



JD Crowley & Josh Jensen in Virginia while on furlough

The Northeast Cambodia Pastors School was to be held in Ban Lung November 11-15. They were expecting about seventy students for this important bi-annual event. However, when the Crowleys returned to Cambodia, JD learned that the final government department that needed to sign-off on the permission wouldn't do so. As it turned out, an opposition politician is returning to Cambodia within days of the proposed Pastors School, and the ruling politicians do not want any large gatherings close to that date. So, the school was cancelled for this fall. And JD would not have been able to teach some of the classes as he usually does. (Though knowing JD, he might have tried!)

Matt Hancock was scheduled to teach three of the Pastors School classes. But for now, he will have more time to dedicate to personal evangelism in his "new" surroundings in "O-Ring-O." On October 22, Matt was permitted to explain the Gospel to a small group of English-speaking expats in O-Ring-O. After the meeting, he gave out Gospels of Mark. Matt and Becky ask for our prayers that the gospel will work in the hearts and lives of those who heard the Good News message.

Josh Jensen was also on the teaching docket for the Pastors School. In October, he began getting more up-to-speed on his part of the Jarai translation of the Gospel of Matthew. September 30, the translation team



Jarai women from 22 villages listening to the Book of Ruth being taught in Oyadao

led a workshop on the newly translated book of Ruth for the Jarai ladies' teachers. Over 60 ladies came from 22 different villages to spend the day learning about Ruth and being introduced to the new Khmer-based Jarai alphabet that was approved last year by the government. Ruth was the first book of the Bible to be translated into Cambodian Jarai.

Last month Josh and Amy helped a neighbor get medical help for her son, **RakSmey**, who has had a tumor behind his eye since infancy. His eye was removed at a Khmer Children's hospital in Siem Reap. After they returned home, **Davi**, her son, a teen-age daughter, and some other neighborhood children began meeting with Josh and Amy to learn more about the Bible. Toward the end of October, Davi told Josh and Amy that she believes in Jesus. They are excited to see God working, and they believe she understands the Gospel unusually well. Please pray that God would give Davi a growing understanding of what it means to follow Christ and turn away from all other Gods. Josh and Amy continue to hold a Sunday afternoon Bible club for the children in their community.

We are looking forward to having **the Kane family** back in Greenville, SC, in December – next month! Brian continues his Krung Bible translation work.

The Farmers continue their furlough in the States until February 2020. Pray for Jeremy as he reports to their various churches about their ministry in Cambodia.

Brooke Illsley has been living in Phnom Penh since her return to Cambodia the end of October where she is taking Khmer classes. Her desire is to learn the language so she will be able to better minister to the Khmer people in Stung Treng, in northern Cambodia, where she helps the Farmers with their children.

Billy Judson attended several more graduation ceremonies in churches that host the Good News Bible College and Seminary program. He and his father continue to encourage churches to begin this curriculum. The school's theme is "Every Local Church as a College Classroom." Also, a board has been established in Hyderabad, India, to organize a Good News 360 Conference for the fall of 2020.

Ted Allston left for Uganda on October 30 to once again teach a group of pastors and church leaders who are refugees from the fighting in South Sudan. These families

were forced to leave their homes because of the civil war taking place in their homeland. Conditions are difficult, but these pastors seem dedicated to further Bible study.

The Cole family was in North and South Carolina for two weeks in October. The church where Michael's parents are members, in Charlotte, NC, brought the family from Bordeaux, France, for the church's missionary conference. The Coles drove to Anderson, SC, for a few days after the conference to visit with Liz's parent. On their return to Charlotte on Monday, October 28, Joan and I met them for an early lunch at a local Chick-fil-a and spent a couple of hours getting caught up. They are such a precious family! It was while driving home from this joyous time with the Coles that we received the call from my sister suggesting we go to Brookdale Nursing Home to see our dad.

In Lima, Perú, **Tim Chapman** officially began the **Pastoral Intern Program** in September with **Daniel and Jessica**. God has called them into full-time Christian ministry together as a couple. Tim has Daniel helping in many facets of the ministry of Iglesia Bautista Gracia.

As mentioned before, **Rick Jensen** was in Uruguay for 10 days working at Camp Emmanuel. I hope to have pictures of the accomplishments at camp in the next newsletter. But other events also took place during that time. The **National Election** was held on Sunday, October 27. None of the many candidates won 50% or more of the popular vote, so a runoff is scheduled for November 24. The referendum on stricter laws to curb the epidemic of crime does not seem to have passed. Please pray for the best outcome of the November 24 election.

Gethsemani Church of Montevideo has received permission from their municipality to tear up the sanctuary floor, remove the tree roots that were causing the floor to buckle and crack, and pour a new floor. The church approved the budget for the repairs last month and hope to begin construction soon. This has been a needed repair for a long time.

I'm not sure if Gethsemani's **Pastor Gabriel Gomez** will be there for the pouring of the new floor. An interesting opportunity arose for Gaby and two other of our missionaries, **Chicha Rodriguez** and **Pastor Gustavo de Oliveira** of Calvary Temple in Montevideo. **Dr. Self**, who is a longtime missionary in the Buenos Aires area of Argentina, has led many Holy Land tours in the past. November 4-16 is his last of these trips. There was some sponsorship money given to help national pastors make this trip. Though the sponsorship does not cover all expenses involved, it was substantial. So, three MEU missionaries will be seeing Israel and the surrounding areas for the first time in person. It is a wonderful opportunity for these deserving folks. (The leadership at

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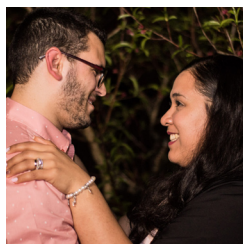
Gethsemani did give Gaby permission to go to Israel.)

Also traveling in November are **Jeff and Joanna Davis**. On November 4 they fly to Salt Lake City where their son and his family live as missionaries in that city. (It is also where Jeff and Joanna's only grandkid resides!) After returning to Greenville, SC, on the 11th, Jeff flies solo to Croatia November 13-21 to visit the **Crnković family** and see their ministries in Koprivnica in the northern part of the country. This is Jeff's first trip to Croatia. He will get to see the new building that the congregation purchased and is renovating to be their new meeting place. Pray that this will be a profitable trip. In October, Jeff attended conferences at BJU, Detroit Seminary, Shephards 360, and Appalachian Bible College. He also had services in Alcoa, TN, Flat Rock, NC, and Wilmington, NC.

At the penultimate end of the October Newsletter, I mentioned that **Joan and I** were going to the north Georgia mountains for a few days to finish a mission project that had sat in our office for too long. The trip was successful, and we accomplished what we set out to do. Dad's death and some other speed bumps in the office have hindered the final touches on the project. But hopefully in the next newsletter I will have – what to me and Joan – is an exciting offer. So, if you prayed for that Blue Ridge, GA, "get-away," thank you very much.

On November 5, Joan and I plan to drive to Delaware to spend a few days with our dear friends **Brad and Peg Lapiska**, and possibly visit with some other good friends on the way home. After our return and well into 2020, things will be very busy in the office and our home.

"Life" happens to all of us. The unexpected good and the unwanted bad. Both can be disruptive in their own way. One of the things I learned from watching and working with my father for 66 years is that regardless of what comes into our lives, the one constant should be faithfulness to Christ and His calling. Though the Kingdom of God is so much greater than any one person, God has given us the privilege and command to be a part of His plan to build His Church. May each of us renew our dedication and resolve to remain faithful to Christ to the end of life or the rapture! Thank you for your part in the ministry of EMU International. †



Our newest EMU worker in Uruguay, Marcos Gomez, son of Gabriel & Rosanna Gomez, became engaged in October to Tali. Wedding set for March 7, 2020.

The Passing of a Patriarch

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member. Our daughter Caroline played the piano; Tim Chevalier sang a missionary song; I spoke (longest); Dr. Ken Collier gave some thoughts about Dad's ministry at the Wilds as the missionary speaker for several summers; Rick Jensen then gave some memories and lessons learned from Dad; and our pastor, Dr. Drew Conley, closed the service with a short testimony of how Dad was used in his life at the age of 16. Drew also led the congregation in an opening song and the closing song, "Lord Send Me Anywhere," the hymn written based on the David Livingston prayer my father preached on so often at the Wilds, in churches around America, and at camps in Uruguay.

Dad was very much the head of his home. Although Mom's teaching, example, and nurturing were indispensable, our father was not an "absentee father," even when he was traveling to Uruguay or presenting EMU in churches. He was very much a hands-on Dad. He led us in devotions, encouraged us in sports and studies, disciplined us, and loved us unconditionally. And we kids loved and revered him. The concepts of fearing God and loving God were not difficult to comprehend as we already feared and loved our father. When I was with Dad, he always seemed open and willing to talk to me.

In my own family, Dad was literally a mission patriarch. Not only did I follow in missionary work, but two of my children are raising their families halfway around the world serving as missionaries. And, no, Joan and I did not pressure our kids into missions any more than my parents did me. The mantra has always been, "Do whatever the Lord has called you to do, and we as parents will rejoice." However, I wouldn't be sad if several of my grandkids became missionaries – if that is how God leads them.

George Jensen was many things in his life, but the most prominent of the hats he wore was that of missionary. He loved missions with a passion – from his years

as a film editor at BJU when he helped missionaries with their films and slides, to when he was the director of EMU. Before I became a missionary and traveled with Dad to Uruguay on occasion, I rarely heard him preach or teach, as he was usually in faraway churches or camps doing so. But he always encouraged my interest in mission biographies and the reading of the EMU Newsletter so that I knew the missionaries even before I met them. On the first trip that he took our whole family (Mom, Rick, Cindy, and me) to Uruguay in 1973, he made it a point to return home via a visit to Chuck and Jean Ramsey, missionaries to the Ayoreo tribe, in the Grand Chaco Jungle of Bolivia. The entire South American trip was life-changing for me.

Dad was also a mentor to untold numbers of young people in the USA and Uruguay as he taught at camps and in the Dabold Bible Institute. There were times when I was young that I wished Dad was around more, but I knew that his influence and encouragement and direction towards missions and sound doctrine were what others needed, too. You might think, "Ken, you really didn't have any say in the matter." But, oh yes, I did, and so did Rick and Cindy. We knew that any one of us could end Dad's ministry immediately through our actions. And that was unthinkable; not because of fear of Dad, but because of love for Dad – and fear and love for God.

One of the most important and comforting things taught to me by his and Mom's example was that the Lord will always supply your needs when you faithfully serve Him. Mark 10:28-31 was played out wonderfully in their lives.

Dad loved his Savior Jesus Christ; he loved reading, studying, discussing, and preaching God's Word; and he loved missions – first our missionaries in Uruguay and then those to other countries as we expanded. He was my patriarch in so many ways.

We will miss him very much. Our mother is doing fine, as are our three subfamilies. †



George Jensen's wife, children, grandchildren, & great grandchildren (Missing are the Erkens family in China, the Josh Jensen family in Cambodia, the husbands of two granddaughters, and two Mickler great grandsons)

The Christmas Tree

by Ken Jensen

As far as I can pinpoint the time, I was 12 years old. It was our first year in our newly built house on Taliwa Trail, a new subdivision on a single street that would eventually end about 300 yards from the entrance.

We were house number three on our side of the road, and beyond our house was thick southern woods.

Growing up at BJU, we always had a Christmas tree, and always a Frasier Fur – skimpy though they were. This first Christmas in our “huge” new house – the first one my parents ever bought – was exciting, and Dad wanted to make it special. He wanted the Hallmark memory of cutting down our own tree, dragging it home, and decorating it to the hilt.

The woods next to our residence was full of pine. In the south, the Virginia Pine is usually the first tree that grows on worn out, nutrient depleted ground. This area had once been farmland. Some folks in the south actually prefer Virginia Pine as a Christmas tree, but for this purpose, they are usually sold by tree farmers who shape the trees year-to-year, so the branches and needles are tightly bunched.

After tramping around in the woods a while and comparing the meager selection of appropriate-height saplings, Dad sawed one off at the base with his bow saw. Of course, when we got it home more inches (or feet) had to be removed to accommodate the den’s ceiling.



Amazingly, the chosen tree had fewer branches and more open space than it had appeared to have in its scrubby “natal-land.” Dad declared what we were all thinking, “It needs more branches!” And the woods were full of more branches! After harvesting appendages from other Virginia Pines, we watched as Dad made his amazing plan reality. He drilled holes into the trunk of our sparsely branched tree, selected new branches of appropriate length, whittled the butt end of the branch down to fit into the hole, inserted the branch, and then – for security – attached a wire to the new branch at its midpoint and the other end of the wire around a native branch above the transplant. Brilliant! Well, sort of.

There are a host of reasons you should never try this at home, or anywhere else for that matter. However, it did make the tree look more like a Christmas tree. And, amazingly, the structure seemed to last until after Christmas. And this was the most memorable Christmas tree we ever had in the George Jensen household! It was a good Christmas, though Dad always bought a Christmas tree after that. Thankfully!

The point of this article is the **Christmas Fund Offering** for our EMU/MEU missionaries. Every year at this time, we ask that you consider a gift to the Uruguayan missionary Christmas offering, and to consider giving a special gift to our non-Uruguay missionaries as well. Donations made just to the Christmas Fund, without designation to an individual, will be divided among our national missionaries in Uruguay. Any donations to individual Uruguayan

missionaries will be added to that amount. All gifts designated to any other EMU missionaries will go directly to that missionary.

The connection between the Virginia Pine Christmas tree and the Christmas Fund Offering is this: it takes many gifts from many people to be able to give a “full-branched” Christmas gift to each missionary. The Charlie Brown Christmas tree story is cute, but the tree is still sparse. We always hope to bless the EMU/MEU missionaries with a Christmas offering that helps meet their needs and is an encouragement, knowing that many are remembering them, especially at this time of the year.

Thank you for whatever you can do. †



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