

EMU⁺

INTERNATIONAL

Evangelical Mission to the Unreached

Evangelical Mission to Uruguay

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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Ken & Joan Jensen
Assistant Director

ALONG THE WAY . . .

In the weeks prior to the close of 2019, several of our EMU missionaries let us know of special blessings in their lives, and I'd like to share just a few of those with you.

On a personal note, **Joan and I** were privileged to have a luncheon each with Brian and Lydia Kane, and Jeremy and Bonnie Ruth Farmer. The **Kanes** arrived December 4 from Cambodia to begin their 7-month furlough. Several of their kids were sick shortly after arriving in Greenville, SC, so we just took Brian and Lydia to lunch. It was good to get caught up on their schedule and family situation. Several of their children will be attending **Hampton Park Christian School** while the family lives at the HPBC mission house. (We do thank North Hills Bible Church of Taylors, SC, for opening up their missionary house for the Kanes for the month of December.) The Lord has supplied most of the cost of this schooling.

Jeremy and Bonnie Ruth were in town from Nashville, TN, to spend Christmas with Bonnie Ruth's family. While grandma Ruth kept the eight children, Joan and I met Jeremy and BR for lunch to deliver some mail and get caught up on the Farmer family. The Farmers return to Cambodia on February 6.

We were also able to spend some time with the **Tim Chapman family** as they stayed
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CHURCH DEDICATION IN SARCELLES

by Tim & Ruth Bixby, church planters in France

(Though the dedication of the new church building in Sarcelles took place on September 29, 2019, other previously scheduled articles prevented this report from making it into the EMU Newsletter until now. However, at the beginning of a new year, this seems a perfect time to both give glory to God for what has been accomplished and to state the financial needs for the coming two years. kj)

"And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy!" Nehemiah 12:43

We want to thank those who prayed for the inauguration service of the *Eglise Biblique Baptiste* of Sarcelles and give you a brief report. In addition to inviting other believers from churches in the area, we also distributed about 1000 invitations in the neighborhoods surrounding the church. At the same time, we distributed invitations to a "Bible exposition" that we held the same week.

We were able to use our downstairs room to host the Bible Exposition, created by a French pastor who lives just south of Paris. It contained about 30 panels explaining the history of the Bible, its influence on France, and its message. There was also a nice collection of old Bibles, as well as copies of the Bible in many different languages. I was able to use the model of the tabernacle to explain to an Iraqi woman who stopped by how Jesus is both the Lamb and the Priest foretold by the Old Testament sacrifices. Though the exposition was mainly used this year to accompany our inauguration service, we hope to use it again in the future



Sarcelles church dedication service

in conjunction with some evangelistic services.

God blessed us with a good inauguration and dedication service. We had many willing hands from our own assembly, as well as from our mother church, to help with the food, the ushering, etc. Kristi Colas helped prepare a small orchestra, and Albert Xandry led a choir made up of members from both the mother and daughter churches. There were more than 220 people present to celebrate with us. In addition to several visitors from the surrounding area, at least eight different churches were represented. Some fellow believers drove more than two hours to be with us. One of our church members who works at the town hall of Sarcelles hand-delivered invitations to several members of
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The Bible Exposition Room



Albert Xandry leading choir

Joyous Conclusion to Another Year

by Matias & Kristine Espinel, missionaries in Uruguay

We LOVE this time of year, not only for what it means to us as believers, but also for the many outreach opportunities it allows—special visits in homes, gifts for friends and neighbors with the gospel message, church activities...

This past Sunday was our church's Christmas program and dinner. We praise the Lord for a wonderful turnout—94 people in attendance! We were thrilled! We are especially thankful that several family members of our church family came to the program and/or the meal, loved ones whose salvation we are praying earnestly for as a church. We were also thrilled that two families of children that started attending our Saturday Children's class after our VBS outreach last February came to the program to see their children sing, and they stayed for the dinner as well! Please pray with us for the salvation of these families! (Zoe's family and the Silvas). The day was wet and rainy, so we had to change our plans and have the meal inside. Although not everyone fit in the sanctuary for the meal (some were downstairs in the pastoral house and some in the "nursery"), there was an abundance of food and fellowship, and a great time was had by all.



As part of the Christmas season, Uruguayans celebrate Tres Reyes (3 Kings) day on January 6. Here the 4 Espinel children visit the Tres Reyes at a local mall like children in the USA would visit Santa Claus.

Not only did the rain threaten our plans, but a recently scheduled soccer championship game between two national teams threatened to reduce our crowd as well. At the last minute, the men of the church decided that the closing message Matias was to preach at the end of the Christmas program be moved to after the meal (before dessert) so that those coming from the soccer game could still hear the gospel message. Thank the Lord, this worked out well, and one family (Mauricio, Lidia, and their girls) and an unsaved husband (Sebastian) were able to hear the gospel clearly presented as a result.

Although there is always much security at the stadium and on the streets before and after soccer games, the Sunday game had a tragic ending. As the fans were walking back to their homes by the hundreds, just a



Matias & Kristine with (l-r) Megan, Emma, Sophia, & David

few blocks from our house, a disgruntled fan of the losing team opened-fire on a group of fans of the winning team, killing one instantly and injuring several others. So while we were rejoicing in God's work in our church, our hearts were simultaneously incredibly saddened by the news of this senseless killing, and even more so by the reality of the other gods that Uruguayans pursue, soccer being a main one, with no thought of their spiritual condition before God. Please pray for wisdom as to how to best reach this city for Christ.

As Christmas activities end, summer ministry activities pick up. Our summer schedule here is defined by camp. As a family we are involved in two camps; our mission camp an hour away and a sister camp 4 ½ hours north (and often a few others as well). We will be helping and teaching at a children's camp in February where Matias will be teaching on the Attributes of God (February 3-7). We are also planning our second VBS in our church in the month of February as well (February 20-22) using Spanish materials from Answers in Genesis. We so appreciate your prayers for each of these ministries!

Another school year has ended. We recently had our 2nd FEBU graduation with 2 young



(l-r) Maria & Katherine graduate from FEBU

ladies (one from Argentina and another from Costa Rica) graduating. Three other ladies received certificates for completing more than half of the required classes. Katherine, from Costa Rica, plans to stay in Uruguay and work a secular job while serving in deaf ministries. María also plans to stay in Uruguay serving with music in Carmelo, a city in the interior, in the church plant of one of our FEBU teachers, Mariano Proto. María spent the last 2 years helping in our church (Siloé) teaching group and private music classes as a ministry. We now have 4 guitar players and one pianist that we did not have before she came!

Five pastors also received certificates for completing the Pastoral Program, which consisted of block courses taught by guest speakers, many of them from the United States, including several pastors from missionaries' supporting churches. This program began in 2014 and has continued every year with two week-long intensive classes at our camp near the capital and at the other camp in the north. These weeks were a time of much learning and sweet fellowship, and we are so thankful for the opportunity they provided for the pastors and others who attended.



Pastors who completed the Pastoral Program in 2019.

EMU pastors Gustavo de Oliveira (4th from right) and Gabriel Gomez (3rd from right)

Kristine recently had surgery on a hernia she has had for seven years, caused by her second pregnancy. She is recovering well from that! Also, thanks to a very generous designated gift, she has been able to begin allergen immunotherapy (desensitization). Her doctor is also an exceptional teacher (he has 3 specialties—he is an immunologist, hematologist, and oncologist), and each week when she receives her injection, she learns new things about how the body works. Please pray with us that these treatments will be effective in relieving her allergy/asthma.

Sofia turned seven last week! She is a sweet little girl who, among other things, loves babies, animals, drawing, reading, riding her bike, and playing the piano. We pray that she genuinely knows Christ as her Savior and will live her life for Him! †

Church Dedication in Sarcelles (continued from page 1)



Small orchestra

our local government. As a result, at least two vice-mayors were in attendance, as well as our region's representative to the national assembly (equivalent to a congressman in the USA). The Jewish mayor of our city came as well and gave a short speech, welcoming us to the city. We were pleased that he stayed right through to the end of the sermon. Missionary Steve Barnes, whom God used to plant our mother church, came up from southeastern France to be our speaker. He spoke on Joshua taking the reins of leadership from Moses. We ended the service by singing—in French, of course—"Thine Be the Glory."



Krista Colas at the piano

After the service many hung around to partake in the overabundance of good food that the ladies had prepared! Some Christians from a sister church who run a Christian bookstore set up a Bible book stand to provide an opportunity for people to purchase good Christian literature. And with all that going on upstairs and the Bible exposition downstairs, we still had enough room!

We are thankful for this opportunity we had to make ourselves a little more known in our city and to publicly thank our Father for the great work He has done in answering your prayers to provide our church with its very own meeting place. Our prayer now is that God will continue this work, establish it on a solid foundation, and make it a lighthouse that continues to shine bright for years to come. Thank you for your prayers and for rejoicing with us.

(These next two paragraphs come from two subsequent letters from the Bixbys concerning their ministry.)

Praise the Lord with us for an encouraging regional young people's meeting on November 11th. Around 75 students and young professionals (and even some not so young!) from all over the Paris area and beyond joined us at the church of St-Denis for a day of teaching concerning the origins of our universe. Dr. Steve Taylor, a Christian science professor from the University of Liverpool, did a great job presenting and defending the Biblical creationist viewpoint. Clear teaching on this subject is hard to come by in France, and we were encouraged by the interest this one-day seminar generated and the uplifting fellowship that all seemed to enjoy.

Just this last Sunday (*December 15*) we held a Christmas outreach. We counted at least 25 visitors that came in response to personal invitations they had received. We know that at least six of the visitors had never attended a service in an evangelical church before. Others were unsaved family members and Catholic friends with little exposure to the Gospel, etc. One Iraqi lady returned to our midweek service and has expressed a desire to start attending our church. †

Building Purchase Update:

The Sarcelles Church entered into a 3-year Rent-to-Purchase contract with the building's owner. The contract began on December 1, 2018, when the church made their first payment. Because the cost of the property is based on the Euro, the numbers listed here are in that currency. Also, the US Dollar and Euro exchange fluctuates.

708,000 € - cost of building

108,000 € - 1st payment on Dec. 1 2018

600,000 € - due by Nov. 30, 2021 (*A legal "promise of sale" [intent to buy] document must be signed by June 30, 2021, to allow for France's long property sale process.*)

157,000 € - current amount the Sarcelles church has on-hand towards purchase

2,800 € x 24 = 67,200 € - budgeted amount of church offerings set aside for the building purchase

375,800 € - additional funds needed in the next 2 years



Tim Bixby speaking at dedication service

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

with us for a few days after Christmas. Tom and Connie Chapman's children and grandkids gathered at the Anchorage Camp in eastern North Carolina to celebrate **Tom and Connie's 50th anniversary!** (All the family attended except Daniel's family.) The Sunday after Christmas, a drop-in celebration was held at Heritage Bible Church where Tom and Connie are members. (Unfortunately, I had a Christmas-cold, so I missed out on this celebration, as well as 3 Jensen family Christmas gatherings.) The Tim Chapmans flew back to Lima, Peru, on New Year's Day. Tom and Connie will be moving in with us for several days beginning January 7. (I still haven't seen them yet!)

Steve and Charity Erkens, and their 3 sons, arrive the next week (Jan. 15) to begin their one-month furlough. More about that in next month's "Along the Way."



(l-r) Gabriel Gomez, Chicha Rodriguez, and Gustavo de Oliveira at customs in Israel

In November, three of our Uruguayan missionaries - **Chicha Rodriguez, Gabriel Gomez, and Gustavo de Oliveira** - visited the Holy Land. A special gift from an outside source subsidized the trip allowing for this opportunity. All three expressed what a blessing it was to be able to walk where Jesus and many other characters of the Bible walked. Also, just prior to their Israel trip, Gustavo and Gabriel graduated from the Pastoral Program of FEBU. Congratulations to both!

During November and early December, the men of Gabriel's church - **Gethsemani of Montevideo** - tore out the concrete floor in the sanctuary, removed the damaging roots that were destroying the floors, and poured a new floor. In the meantime, they made some alterations to the auditorium. This entire project was paid for by the church. The repairs were scheduled before the Holy Land trip. Incidentally, **Gabriel and Gustavo** are both **supported 100%** by their churches.

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ALONG THE WAY...

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Please pray for the **children's**, **adolescents'**, and **Jovenes' camps** to be held at **Camp Emmanuel in Guazuvera, Uruguay**. The training of counselors and other staff take place at the beginning of January. Also, **Tim Chapman**, with the help of some other missionaries, will be holding the 2nd annual **missionary kids camp** in **Lima, Peru** - January 27-31.

On a sad note, **Tim and Lynnette Chevalier** have resigned as missionaries with EMU. Tim's physical condition declined during 2019 to the point that it would not be wise for him to travel overseas as Ted Allston does. Pray for Tim as he undergoes some medical procedures (operation) to hopefully increase the use of his arms and hands. The Chevaliers will always feel like a part of the EMU family.

Ted Allston flies to India on January 8 for 19 days of intense Bible block courses for national pastors.

We covet your prayers and offerings in this new year of 2020. May our view to the Kingdom of God be just that - 20/20. Thank you for your part in the ministries of EMU International. †



The Chapman reunion for Tom & Connie's 50th anniversary at the Anchorage in NC



The 7th graduation class of the Good News Bible College & Seminary in Tirupati, India, - a 10-hour drive south from Hyderabad



On the last day of November, Amy Jensen (front, center, in red skirt) taught 35 ladies who are leaders from 10 different Tampuan and Jarai churches. This group meets at least once a year. These ladies are Sunday school teachers, lead children's and ladies' classes, and direct the children's ministries.

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