

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 . . .

Obviously, it is not possible to cancel a specific date from the calendar. However, it is not only possible, but becoming more common, to cancel planned celebrations of long standing. First it was Easter. Now, in many places, it's the Fourth of July. A cursory review of the Internet reveals that many cities are still having Independence Day fireworks and parades, but in many places, some very surprising locations, traditional fireworks displays and town gatherings have been canceled. The Upstate of South Carolina is one of those areas. A few venues will celebrate, but overall, most sponsors of the Fourth celebrations have canceled "because of COVID." And I just checked the "ultimate celebration display" – the fireworks and laser show at Stone Mountain, GA – and they have canceled their traditional week-long nightly displays. I am not aware that cancellations like this have ever happened since Americans began celebrating the signing of the Declaration of Independence on a nationwide basis.

The year 2020 has been and will continue to be a pivotal year for the USA, and by extension, for the world. We old folks have lived through such times before, and in our nation's history, even darker days prevailed at times. But our God has spared us thus far from the ravages that have beset countless sovereignties through communism, socialism, anarchism, despotism, oligarchism, and even the

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A HOPEFUL DIAGNOSIS

by Brian & Lydia Kane, Bible translation in Banlung, Cambodia

Thank you all very much for your prayers and concern for Lydia. We've come to appreciate the patience it takes to get diagnosed with a less than clear-cut illness. We've talked with many of you who have had to slog through similar issues. After an MRI at the end of April revealed a meningioma

located on the amygdala, the doctors immediately began to suspect that the issues Lydia has been dealing with are actually seizures, possibly caused by the meningioma. Normal delays in the medical system, especially when dealing with specialists, are being exacerbated by the quarantine, so we were only able to meet virtually with a seizure specialist at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston (MUSC) on June 24. Many of you knew about that appointment and were praying. God answered your prayers, and both Lydia and I feel it was a very profitable visit. Due to the virtual nature of the conversation, we not only met with the seizure specialist, but the head of the department also joined us, a nice little confidence builder in the conclusions we reached. The short of it is that they strongly believe these episodes are seizures (technical description: focal onset aware seizures). Good news—there are nearly 28 different medicines that could help! He is starting her on one that she took for several weeks immediately after her head injury in 2017. Another blessing is that the patent rights for the company that developed it has lapsed, making a drug that was \$1000/mo only \$15/mo at our local pharmacy! Because these kinds of episodes/auras don't typically include loss of consciousness,



(l-r) Lydia, Julia, Brian, Brianna, Hugh, Sophia, Jackson, Mia, & Natalia

there is only a 30% or less chance that they would show up on an EEG. Thus, treatment going forward will be assuming that they ARE seizures and medicating them.

In order to rule out malignancy (of the meningioma),

the oncologist would like two more MRIs for comparison. With this in mind and also allowing our kids to finish a semester in a traditional school, we have decided to extend our stay in the US through December of this year. This will also allow us more time to make the various trips to visit our supporters, assuming things continue to open up from this quarantine time. We look forward to being able to come visit many of you over the coming months. May God bless you all and help you capitalize on this unique period in our history.

For many of us, the quarantine has shown us just how desperately we crave the community of our local church. During this time of quarantine, the government in Cambodia has restricted groups of Christians to only gather in groups of ten or less. As you might expect, all large gatherings such as the Bible schools and church celebrations such as Easter are being cancelled. Several of the Krung guys I've talked to have mentioned how much of a toll this has taken on the life of their church bodies. Without the regular fellowship and interaction, they feel isolated and are much more vulnerable to being pressured into falling back into bad habits. Please pray for

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The Rich Get Richer

by JD & Kim Crowley, regional director of EMU in Southeast Asia

(JD is scheduled to leave Cambodia on July 5 to join Kim, who is already in Greenville, SC.)

We are grateful that God has spared Cambodia from the worst of the coronavirus pandemic with just 127 confirmed cases nationwide and no deaths (as of 06/18/20). It is a great mystery why some countries are getting off so lightly, even those like Cambodia with close ties to China and daily flights from Wuhan before the shutdown. The closing of the whole world has drastically affected the economy here, especially tourism and the garment industry, but most shops and markets have stayed open during the entire period. As in the States, we here in Cambodia shake our heads trying to figure out why, here, weddings with hundreds of guests, can go on as normal, but churches with 30 members cannot meet.

The Rich Get Richer:

By God's kind providence, two of our daughters are due to give birth within 3 weeks of each other. They asked if their mother could be there for the births, so on June 7, Kim flew to Chicago to be with Anna and Adam and their 2 girls who are awaiting the entrance (or exit) of Ivan. (Ivan was born Friday, June 19.) Then she plans to fly down to Greenville, SC, at the beginning of July for the birth of Jenna and Zak's first child, also a boy.

Forty Years:

On the way to take Kim to the airport in Phnom Penh, we stopped at a small town along the Mekong River, called Chhlong, to celebrate our anniversary at a beautifully restored 120-year-old governor's mansion from the French colonial period. Because of Covid, we were about the only ones there, and we stayed for half-price. If you want to see how stunning the restoration is, look at the slideshow at their website - <https://www.lerelaisdechhlong.com/>. The first 4 pictures in the website slideshow are of the governor's suite where we stayed. Thank God with us for His great grace and kindness for allowing us to have each other for these many years.



JD & Kim at the Le Relais de Chhlong hotel for their 40th anniversary

The first serious car accident of my life:

I had just dropped Kim off at the airport and was circling back around to enter the airport again to park when a motor scooter going at least 50 miles per hour ran a red light and crashed into the side of my truck. I looked back and saw two motionless bodies strewn on the boulevard and knew that it was the stuff of nightmares. The driver gained consciousness within a couple of minutes and sat up, but the passenger, who had not been wearing a helmet, lay there completely still with a pool of blood spreading under his head. I checked his pulse and to my great relief he was still alive! An ambulance took him to a clinic 100 yards away, and the driver and I began our negotiations in the presence of the police who had just arrived.

Negotiations after auto accidents descend rapidly from who was at fault to who has the most money. Even though the driver was speeding, had run a red light, and had been drinking ("Only two cans," he insisted!), he wanted me to pay for everything! "Look at my motorcycle!" he said, "It's destroyed." "Why is it destroyed?" I asked. Seeing where this was headed, I made an offer to pay for the injured man's hospital costs and repair my own car, if the driver would admit fault and fix his own motorcycle. Even then he was reluctant to give in. The police kept telling him that the intersection camera would tell all, and that he had better take my generous offer, which he finally did. We walked over to the clinic and found the passenger getting 15 stitches. The x-ray showed no broken skull. It was a miracle that there were no broken bones, let alone a death. I couldn't believe the mercy of God on them and on me. Three hours later I paid the \$180 hospital fee and the \$40 police negotiation "fee" and left, a huge load lifted. I never even got to say goodbye to Kim, except by phone. Thank God with us for sparing the lives of those men and for giving me such peace and calm the entire time.

Praying with the unsaved:

One of my main responsibilities over the past 25 years has been to maintain good relationships with government officials. Recently the Lord has led me to ask them if I can pray for them. I've done that twice in the past few weeks, once with a police official and once with the head of the Office of Religion for our province. And both times they seemed thankful for my prayer. Of course, it's an opportunity to share the gospel, but it's also an opportunity to sincerely ask God to give wisdom and blessing to these officials and to thank God for them. Many of them have become my friends over the years. Gift giving is an important part of maintaining relationships in the majority world. Recently EMU donated a small laser printer/copier to the Office of Religion. Mr. Nara has been

leading this office for over 15 years and has been quite fair and gracious to us during his tenure. I've shared the gospel with him and with Mr. Borit, the man at the police office. Please pray that God would save them so they can see the great value of Christ.



JD & Mr. Nara at the Office of Religion for Ratanakiri Province

From sleepy town to bustling city:

When we moved to Banlung, Ratanakiri, nearly 26 years ago, it was a sleepy town with wide dirt roads and very few motorcycles and cars. Everyone knew everyone, and our large, white family made quite a splash. Now we're just a part of the community, and the sleepy town has become a bustling city.

Prayer and Praise:

* Thank God with us that the nightly 90-minute radio broadcast in 4 languages is softening many hearts to the gospel. The member of parliament from our province who used to be an opponent of the Faith has recently contacted the producer of the Tampuan program with copious praise and thanks for broadcasting such beautiful music in the traditional tribal style. He himself is Tampuan. The Tampuan parents of a friend of ours had persecuted her and her husband for many years. Now they listen to the broadcast faithfully every night!

* Pray that the government would soon allow churches to meet again. With zero community spread of Covid-19 (nearly all the cases have come from outside the country), it would seem logical to allow schools and churches to meet.

* Cambodia has just tightened up their Covid policy for entering Cambodia, requiring a \$3,000 per person refundable deposit to guarantee that the passenger will have the money to pay for quarantine or treatment if he or she tests positive on arrival. The 14-day quarantine at a government-mandated hotel is only necessary if someone on the same flight tests positive. Please pray that these requirements will be lifted before we return in August.

* Pray for Kim that her "grandmother

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The Blessings of Internet

by John Mark & Deborah Steel, teachers at FEBU & the Bible Institute in Uruguay

June 13 marked 3 months of COVID-19 in Uruguay. The newly elected government has exercised strong leadership in encouraging social distancing, but we have never been under either complete or obligatory lockdown. Nevertheless, there will be long-term effects here as everywhere. The escalation to “global pandemic” began, for the Southern Hemisphere, at the very beginning of our school year, and schooling on all levels moved immediately online. The first phase of reopening the schools is scheduled on the elementary level for late June.

In April we wrote an update for the EMU Newsletter. Though not intended to be our April report, we never sent anything further. Our desire continues to be to steward the changes in schedule. Without being unaware or indifferent to the suffering caused by the closure of businesses and the breakdown in health systems, we want to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by this time. When the coronavirus reached Uruguay, we were finishing our move from the Mission House in Montevideo, which contains the mission office in the basement and the Bible Institute (B.I.) on the first floor, to a nearby apartment. We are now a half block north on one of the city’s surviving cobbled brick streets; and we have done most of our teaching and recording of classes at the mission office. In April we added an online hermeneutics course to the B.I. schedule to allow a student graduating later this year to make up a deficiency. Right after launching the course, we were given access to an online platform that we began using immediately and which will be available for future online and in-person classes. We are grateful for this gift and the potential it represents to improve the quality of the presentation and to offer content (text, documents, photos, recorded video, and evaluations) easily accessible in one place. In addition to Hermeneutics, our semester’s teaching includes Homiletics, OT Poetic



(l-r) Elizabeth, Deborah, & Daniel James headed to the store wearing mandatory masks

Books, and Grammar & Composition in the B.I. and FEBU.

We continue, for the time being, to hold a weekly service for Maranatha Bible Church via Facebook Live, sharing the responsibility for this with Daniel and Viviana Garwood, Deborah’s brother and sister-in-law. JM is also teaching Principles of Bible Study in a weekly men’s meeting via Skype. Matias Acevedo heads up the weekly youth meeting, also via Skype.

Campamento Emanuel has been forced to cancel many weeks of activity, including the winter youth retreat. Nevertheless, plans are being made for an online meeting among the youth groups of churches usually involved. Dr. Bill Lovegrove, a professor at Bob Jones University, though unable to be with us personally, is working with Pedro to put together an abbreviated “virtual camp” program on the theme of the Bible and science.

In January JM received approval of his prospectus for his doctorate. In May Deborah submitted a survey of findings on collaborative learning as an effective tool for

teaching English as a Foreign Language. We expect this to be helpful in the Uruguayan context; she is pursuing possible publication of the paper in Spanish. The kids, in addition to their online studies, continue to enjoy reading, writing, art, and music. (Soccer has suffered over the past months.) In April the Lord protected JM’s parents in SC as a tornado dropped trees on their house, yard, and truck.

Uruguay has long been known for its uniqueness in the region—demographically, culturally, topographically, and economically. To a large degree, this has been the case during this pandemic as well. The country has so far been spared much of the suffering borne by neighboring countries. This is, we think, both a mercy and a judgment. God has spared life once again; but if this kindness is attributed merely to second causes—a conclusion the secular culture is already prone to—then we should fear. Please consider making use of these thoughts in your prayers for Uruguay. †

ALONG THE WAY...

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tyranny of pure democracy. As Christians, we should never forget that our true freedom came through what happened on the day we call Easter. The coronavirus epidemic has shown us how easily we will surrender freedom for safety. And the recent and current street riots and protests have shown us what a farce “social distancing” is in the eyes of the political left. All Christians in the world do not have the right or privilege to fight for their freedom. As Americans, we have that right. Let’s not lose it through fear as a result of intimidation by those who hate Christ and His Church.

Although travel restrictions are being loosened up, crossing international boundaries is still riddled with new regulations. Some countries will still not permit US citizens to enter their countries, and some that do allow expats into their lands have instituted new requirements. First, let me point out that the ban of US travelers has kept **Ted Allston** from his 10/40 Window trips. However, Ted has been teaching some students in India via the Internet. **Billy Judson**, EMU missionary in Hyderabad, India, let us know that in recent weeks neighborhoods close to their house have seen a marked increase in those contracting COVID-19.

As you will read in the Kane and Crowley articles in this newsletter, Cambodia has instituted several new regulations for foreigners entering that country. The \$3,000 per person deposit would be a burden on the two **Crowleys**, but for the **Kanes** it would be a \$27,000 deposit for their family of nine.

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The Rich Get Richer

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ministry” in America would be beneficial in June and July.

* Pray for me as I continue to prepare materials every day for future pastors’ schools, including a book on discipleship and handbooks on 1 John and Titus.

* Pray that the pastors’ school that has been postponed twice now would be able to resume in November. This is critical as we’re losing momentum.

Thank you for praying for us. We are certainly praying for you, especially for those in America amid all the unrest. †

A Hopeful Diagnosis

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these folks that God will sustain and protect them.

Cambodia has officially opened its border for foreigners to return to the country. The only drawback is that you have to give the officials a \$3,000/person deposit on arrival, in case you test positive for COVID or if someone on any leg of your flight tests positive for COVID. Let’s just hope this is a short-lived requirement because that \$27,000 re-entry fee for our family of nine will put a real dent in the ice cream fund! †

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Though partly refundable, if anyone on the same flight into Cambodia tests positive for COVID, everyone on the plane enters quarantine for two weeks and basically uses up their individual deposit. Obviously, this is quite a “gamble” that could result in a large loss of time and money. Please pray that the Cambodian government would rescind this requirement before the Crowleys or Kanes return to their fields of ministry.

Tim and Ruth Bixby made the decision to take their scheduled summer furlough in spite of some travel headaches. They are to arrive Stateside on July 2, returning to France on August 27. Tim already has a relatively full schedule for visiting supporting churches and extended family. Pray for their health and safety during these weeks. Tim’s uncle and aunt had hoped to be staying at Tim and Ruth’s house in France and help preach at the Sarcelles church. However, that plan is still uncertain. The **Coles** have opted to remain in Bordeaux, France, this summer and delay their furlough until things are more stable in the US and France.

Uruguay is one of the world’s nations that has been spared the ravages of the coronavirus. However, in mid-June, reports of an outbreak of the virus was reported in the department capital of Treinta y Tres, the city where **Rubito and Marita Rodriguez** minister. No word yet on how this has affected the church there.

Chicha Rodriguez, Rubito’s aunt and fellow EMU missionary, wrote to tell us about a ministry she has started during this time that churches are closed in Uruguay. Each week she invites four older church ladies to her house for a meal and fellowship. Although churches in Uruguay are now allowed to meet, the restrictions

allow only one-third of the members to gather at one time, and the doors and windows must be open at all times. It is mid-winter in Uruguay right now, and none of our churches have chosen to meet under such adverse conditions! Internet services and other weekly online meetings continue in our Uruguay churches.

The EMU mission house in Montevideo, Uruguay, where classes for the Bible Institute are taught and the mission office is located, has been undergoing extensive renovations since the Steels moved to their new home. The second floor of the mission house is to be used as a dorm for out-of-town men attending FEBU. The repairs have been more costly and time consuming than anticipated. The house is over one hundred years old. It is hoped that the rooms will be ready by the end of July. **Pedro Donzé** and **Marcos Gomez** have spent many days rewiring the entire house.

You may have heard about the new COVID outbreak in Beijing, China. **Steve and Charity’s family** is well aware of the news, but the area of quarantine is not in their area. So, they are not currently affected, though some restaurants have been re-closed in their neighborhood. Their church remains closed. Now that university classes have ended, Steve is spending more time on the Bible app he has helped with for several years. The whole family has also been working on translating materials for a possible “VBS” at their Beijing church. Pray that they can get their visas renewed this month.

On Saturday morning, July 11, the US EMU board of directors will gather for the **annual board meeting**. Our two Steves (Ridge and Erkens) will join us via Internet, but the others plan to be together in the conference room at Hampton Park Baptist Church

in person. I’ll give a report in the next newsletter.

Jeff and Joanna Davis doubled their number of grandchildren on June 23 when **Karis Joy Wilder** was born. This is the first child born to Kris and Bethany Davis Wilder, who reside in Raleigh, NC.

It has been a few months since we let you know about the autobiography of missionary **Ursula Thiessen**, who has served the Lord for sixty-seven years in Uruguay.

A Promise Kept deals with Ursula’s early life in Danzig, her family’s flight from the Red Army, immigration to Uruguay, call to ministry, and her first 20 years serving in pioneer missions. The book is available for a donation to EMU for any amount.

July 1 marks the midway point of the year! Some years feel like a walk-through, others a sprint. 2020 feels like it was set on Tumble Dry! “And it ain’t over yet.” But through these first six months, we can sincerely profess that the Lord has provided for all of us at EMU International. And history and His promises assure us that He will continue to do so. Thanks to each of you who prays for, and when possible, helps with the financial needs of any aspect of this mission and its missionaries. God Bless. †



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