

EMU⁺ INTERNATIONAL

Evangelical Mission to the Unreached

Evangelical Mission to Uruguay

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

Volume LXVI

January 2023

Number 1



*Ken & Joan Jensen
Assistant Director*

ALONG THE WAY . . .

At the conclusion/commencement of a year, it is customary for organizations, families, and individuals to recapitulate the highlights of the past 12 months. The following is a brief list of some of the occurrences that took place within EMU International, which I trust will in part be an encouragement to those who take an interest in the Mission:

- A new church was planted in **Bochil**, Chiapas, Mexico, by **Daniel and Marisol Hernandez**, under the auspice of **Marco and Gwendolyn Nuñez**. The construction of the church building has been underway for a few months and good progress is being made.



Ten men showed up to help begin construction of the church in Bochil

- With the lessening of COVID restrictions around the world, our camping ministries were able to return to some level of normalcy. Summer, winter, and spring camps were held at **Camp Emmanuel** in **Uruguay**. **Tim Chapman** was the guest

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A SWEET AND SAD CHRISTMAS

by Kornel & Tanja Crnković, church planters in Koprivnica, Croatia

We already know there will be several expected transitions in our lives in the coming year, but we also know that unexpected things will happen as well. We are glad to know that the Lord is the One Who goes before us. He will be with us; He will not leave us nor forsake us.



(l-r) Nathanael, Tanja, Andrea, Kornel, & Marko

A Month of Celebration

In September of 1942 three special people were born - Kornel's parents and Tanja's father. For each family, we had special birthday parties celebrating the 80 years God has given each of them. God called all three of them to follow Him in their youth. God chose to use Miško, Tanja's father, in various ministries - church planting, pastoring, teaching, mentoring, evangelism, and radio ministry - reaching and touching many lives, with the help of his wife Mira.

Kornel's parents lived a simple farmer's life, faithfully attending a Baptist church in Sirač. Before their marriage, Kornel's mom traveled with the young people from that church visiting other churches, singing and playing the guitar. She had a lovely soft soprano voice. Zdenka, Kornel's mother, passed her love for music on to her three children. Her home was always filled with young people whom she loved and served. She lived a simple, yet challenging life with a husband who at first attended church, professed faith in his youth, and was baptized. But sadly, he stopped attending church services during their children's teenage years and gradually fell under the bondage of alcoholism. Since then, his wife's life was more difficult.

Special Thanksgiving Service

During the month of October, we had several other special family celebrations,

but the highlight was our annual church Thanksgiving service. In Croatia, we do not have a special date set for Thanksgiving, but each church decides on a date for their service. Special music was prepared by the youth for this service, and Kornel preached on Revelation 7:12, "Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power

and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen." That service was another opportunity to invite unsaved friends and family members to church.



*Above: Thanksgiving choir
Below: Koprivnica Baptist Church*



Christmas Concerts

This year's theme for our three-day Christmas evangelistic service, which was held December 9-11, was "Take me back to Bethlehem," as it was last year. We expanded last year's repertoire in various ways, such as adding a couple of duets and a Christ-centered message in the form of a

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Christmas All Week Long

by Joshua & Amy Jensen, Bible translation in Oyadao, Cambodia



(l-r) Clara, Josh, Anna, Micah, Ezra, Amy, Isaiah, & Becca Jensen

(kj – Though not covered in the following letter from Josh and Amy, their Christmas was rather spread out this year. The Jarai Christians do not celebrate Christmas in their homes with decorations and traditions like most European and American cultures: church is where Christmas is commemorated. The Christmas Eve service spanned 6:30 to 10pm, beginning with a meal, followed by a message and a lot of singing. The Christmas Day service went from 8:30 to 11:30, with lunch at the church. A Christmas pageant, directed by Amy, was presented on one of those two days. Because of the heavy Christmas Eve and Day schedule, their family celebration took place on Monday and Tuesday. Then on Wednesday and Thursday, they drove to Ban Lung for the EMU Cambodia Christmas with the Crowleys, Kanes, and Farmers.)

We had a lovely Christmas celebration both with our church and as a family. Josh preached at four different villages for Christmas (but not all on the same day!). The months of November and December were busy for Amy as she helped prepare the Saom Kaning Church kids' groups and adults for singing Scripture as part of the Christmas services. (She prepared 3 new songs based on Scripture for programs by the children, teens, and adults.)

We are thankful for each of you and the

different parts you play in our ministries. Thank you for praying for us and the people we work with.

Review of 2022

- We praise God that the book of Genesis in Jarai has been printed.
- We praise God that the Jarai translation oversight committee finished checking Exodus.
- We praise God for a significant increase in people reading the new translation, especially people studying the book of Matthew.
- We praise God for Davi's (our Khmer neighbor) continued faithfulness to study God's Word with Amy and attend weekly Sunday worship.
- We praise God that Davi's husband and oldest son have started attending Sunday Khmer worship when they are home.
- We praise God that Pav (our landlady's 13-year-old son) has continued to attend Sunday evening Khmer worship and wants to get baptized.
- We praise God that this year our kids enjoyed being at and participating in the Jarai church, especially Christmas services.

What's New/Next in 2023

- Please pray for the translation team as they prepare for the Exodus check with an outside consultant. We hope these checks will begin by February. Once these checks are completed, the book can be prepared for printing.
- Please pray as the translation team works on checking the book of Acts. Josh is currently working on his exegetical check of Acts. Please pray he can find uninterrupted time to make steady progress on this task.



Young people who performed the Natal pageant at the Jarai church

- Please pray for Josh as he meets with Pav to study the Bible in preparation for Pav's baptism. They started meeting last week and plan to meet several weeks reading Scripture with the goal of understanding Christ's call to discipleship.
- Please pray for Josh as he prepares weekly lessons for our Sunday evening Khmer Bible study.
- Please pray for Josh as he interacts with his translators and other church members. He is often asked for advice on many issues. Pray that God will give him wisdom in answering questions and talking through issues that come up. Pray especially that he will point people to the Word.
- Please pray as four of our children – Becca, Isaiah, Anna, and Clara – work on finishing up their school year. They should finish by early March and then start the next year at the end of May. The goal is to be done with the 2023-24 school year before we travel to the US early 2024.
- Please pray for Amy as she continues meeting with Davi three times a week to study Romans.
- Please also pray for Amy as she continues to homeschool, study Jarai, teach ladies to read, and prepares lessons to teach the children and ladies at our church. †

ALONG THE WAY...

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speaker at the Family Camp and Workers' Conference in Uruguay back in February 2022. During that visit, Tim, **Jeff Davis**, and **Pedro Donzé** worked out a plan for young adults from Tim's church in Lima, Peru, to travel to Camp Emmanuel in Uruguay for the January 2023 summer camps to work as **counselors and teachers**. We'll be reporting on that after the camps.

- During the weeks when no camps were taking place at **Camp Emmanuel**, several of the "**Rick's Projects**" from 2021 and 2022 were completed, including busting up and repouring the **floors** and then tiling



(l-r) Henry Castro, 2 church members, Gabriel Gomez, Roberto Alvez, Beatriz Silvera, Marcos Gomez, & Pedro Donze
them in two of the girls' cabins. Also, the **shipping container** storage facility was installed, and all the security cameras were mounted and interfaced. The



New fencing for the camp perimeter

fencing material to enclose the perimeter of the property was purchased and will be installed over the coming year as time permits. Several groups of helpers from our Uruguayan churches volunteered for many of the projects in 2022.

- In Lima, Peru, **Tim Chapman** organized the first theology retreat for young people, (continued on page 4)

A Sweet and Sad Christmas

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children's play. Our main speaker for this event was an old family friend, a Baptist Pastor from Slovenia, who had a big impact in our lives when Kornel and I were young. His messages were clear and specifically directed to the hearts of the listeners, calling them to examine their standing before God. He called them to return to the town of Bethlehem and find out the true reason for why Christ was born so many years ago - to start His walk down the "via Dolorosa" to Calvary. Throughout the three evenings, we had an average of about 140 people attend each night. About 40 of them were unsaved friends and family members of our church members.



The Christmas choir

Hearing of our effort to prepare a Christmas concert, two pastors from two different Baptist churches contacted our co-pastor, Nathanael Špičak, asking us to come

and perform in their churches for their Christmas services. On December 17 we traveled to the Baptist Church of Daruvar, and on December 18 to the Baptist Church of Moščenica. It was encouraging to hear that 10 people were first time visitors at the Baptist Church of Moščenica. Many of these people live in shipping containers which have been set up by the government for those who lost their homes due to the earthquake that took place two years ago. The leaders of the Baptist Church of Moščenica, along with their members, have been ministering to these people. The Baptist Church of Daruvar was filled with people who were eager to hear us sing. Several of them came from surrounding Baptist churches in the area. Near the end of the concert, Kornel gave a short message that talked about Christ coming to this earth to seek and save sinners.

Kornel's Mom Called Home

We were happy to see Kornel's sister and mother in the service at the Daruvar Baptist Church. His mom, Zdenka, had a weak and experienced heart arrhythmia often. Coming to the concert was an effort on her part, and just sitting in the church pew would have required a lot of strength. Yet her weak heart was full of joy hearing her son and her grandkids participate in such a wonderful service. Little did we know that this would be the last time we would see her. God chose to call this humble servant home two days later. Please, pray for Kornel's father, Đuro (George). His health is bad,



Kornel & his mother, Zdenka

yet he insists on living by himself. Pray for his salvation! Pray for the family to have wisdom in how to help him. He refuses any kind of help.

Some of the expected transitions in our lives in the coming year will be for our family to adjust to knowing that our loving mother, mother-in-law, and grandmother won't be with us. We thank God for her example of humbleness and a servant's heart. We look forward to the day when we will meet up with her in glory.

As you start the New Year of 2023, we pray that the Lord will be the strength of your heart. May He keep your heart strong even when your fleshly heart may fail you. May the Lord lead and guide each of your steps and may He be glorified through it all. †

A Change in Position, but Not Ministry

by Alexis Shoemaker de Arenas, assisting Grace Baptist Church in Lima, Peru

As some of you know, my contract with the mission board EMU International has been on a yearly basis, which means that each year, we evaluate as a team how the ministries are going and if my full-time position is still needed.

With much prayer and advice from our pastors and mentors, we have decided to take a three-year break from full-time ministry until we are ready to launch off again in 2026. I have accepted a teaching job at a private English school in Lima starting in February, and Juan Jesús (Alexis' Peruvian husband) will continue working in his field of study, biomedical engineering.

We will both continue to serve at Iglesia Bautista Gracia in our current ministries: Alexis in the kid's ministry, Juan Jesús as a deacon, and both in the refuge ministry. Juan Jesús will continue his seminary studies online at Seminario Bautista Confesional de Ecuador. Some of you know that Tim Chapman has a pastoral internship program at Iglesia Bautista Gracia, and it is Juan Jesús' desire to be involved in that program in 2024. If all goes well, he will finish



Alexis & Juan Jesus Arenas

seminary and the internship at the same time in 2025.

During these years, we will be praying for God's guidance, especially in Juan Jesús' calling, to see where He will call us next. Our desire as a couple is to be in long-term, full-time ministry here in Perú.

Because of the unique nature of these "break years," we have switched mission boards, one that will handle our donations on a part-time basis and also accept Juan Jesús even as he finishes seminary. Our new mission board is Modern Day Missions, and they will be our mission board for the long-haul as we have a break time, follow God's calling, and go back on the field full time, hopefully in 2026. If you want to see our profile on MDM's website, you can click this link: <https://www.modernday.org/profile/familiaarenas2022/> You can give on this page as well.

We are still accepting donations on a one-time or monthly basis which will be used for the current ministries that we are still involved in. We will also still be sending out updates on a quarterly basis (every three months).

Thanks for your prayers during this transition time. I always struggle with change, but Juan Jesús has been my loving leader through it, pointing us both back to the Lord and remembering that God's plans are better than what we have planned. I hope you're seeing that in your life too! †

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held outside the city in July, where **Sam Horn** was the guest teacher.

- In **Croatia**, the Baptist group that hosts the yearly **summer camp** was forced to find a new campground. The week of camp was very successful.
- The need for “new” vehicles was also a theme in 2022. The Lord provided “newer” transportation for the **Crnkovics** in Croatia, the **Judsons** in India, the **Hancocks** starting furlough, and the **Davises** stateside.
- Besides being on furlough, the **Hancocks** added **Enoch Samuel** to their crew. There have been a host of grandchildren added to our missionary families, but I won’t venture to name them for fear of overlooking any of them. Suffice it to say, it was a good year for grandparents!
- In Cambodia, the **Pastors’ School** program had their May and November sessions again as COVID regs relaxed. And in addition to the Pastors’ Schools, the local tribal **Bible schools** were able to resume in 2022.
- In EMU’s 10/40 ministry, **Ted Allston** acquired a helper. The **Jake and Anita Derksen** family, from northern Alberta, Canada, spent over a year at the mission house of Hampton Park Baptist Church. There is a long story there, but the bottom line is that many of us got to know this family very well, and Jake felt the burden to assist Ted in his teaching ministry in the **10/40 Window**. Though the Derksens had to move back to Alberta for a time, Jake is doing online teaching with Ted and plans to travel with Ted when he is able. Either Ted, Jake, or I will write a more complete account of how this all came about.

- Finally, the mission matriarch, **Marilyn Jensen**, moved into Shepherd’s Care assisted living in March and sold her house – a big change for her.

I am far less adept at prognostication, but there are a few things I’m relatively sure will happen in 2023:

- The **Bochil church** building will be completed.
- The **summer camps** – January and February – at Camp Emmanuel in Uruguay will be well attended. **Jeff Davis** will be at the Family and Workers’ camps in February, with **Dr. Kevin Oberlin**, of the Bible faculty at Bob Jones University, as the guest speaker at the Workers’ Conference.
- **Pedro** (camp director) and **Pati Donzé**, along with their son, **Maxi**, and co-workers **Beatriz** and **Carlos Silvera**, will be visiting churches and individual supporters of Camp Emmanuel’s ministry in the USA in May-June.
- Other of the “**Rick’s Projects**” that we are hoping will be completed this year are the addition of two **bathrooms** at the kitchen/dining facility, handicap bathroom revisions in two of the cabins, and concrete **sidewalks** around the buildings.
- The board of directors of the Uruguay branch of EMU has decided to sell the **Mission House in Montevideo**. This residence well served three mission directors and an unnumbered host of visitors since the late 1940s. More currently it has been used for male FEBU students and Bible Institute classes. Until about 10 years ago, it was my base of operations when I was in Uruguay. I’ll miss it – and I won’t miss it!

At the end of 2022, there was another EMU blessing that is a little more personal: we published 12 EMU Newsletters, one per

month. This has always been our goal, but in light of my 5 weeks of COVID pneumonia and the bike accident that sidelined me for several months, this accomplishment was often in doubt. Some of the issues were sent out later in the month than desired, and there were several news items that did not make it onto these pages. Two of those that I want to mention now are, first, the 45th anniversary of **Bethel Church in Pando**, Uruguay. **Pastor Carlos Olivera** invited **Pastor Gabriel Gomez** to speak at their special services. The second was the baptism that took place at **Camp Bethel in Treinta y Tres**. On November 27, congregates from “33,” Vergara, Tupambae, La Charqueada, and Melo gathered at the camp for a picnic and to witness the baptism of four of their fellow believers.



3 of the baptismal candidates.
Pastor Rubito Rodriguez (3rd from rt)

Thank you for your prayers and gifts that have sustained our missionaries over this past year. May the Lord grant you a prosperous New Year! †

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