

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 . . .

When you use a wood stove as full or supplemental heat in the winter, you become very attuned to temperatures, both predicted and actual. It seems to me that this February has been one of the warmest that I remember. In mid to late fall, when we have temperatures in the 70s and even 80s, we call it Indian Summer. I'm not sure of the designation when it happens in mid-winter! We could attribute it to Global Warming, but I think our friends in northern latitudes would disagree. I just hope we don't get a second winter after March 20. Warm or frigid, I trust you are experiencing the Lord's blessing this season.

Actually, it's been so warm that Joan and I have started riding bikes together again. (Just thought you might want to know - your effectual prayers at work!)

There were several events in EMU that took place in February that I won't be presenting in the EMU Newsletter until April, due to the abundance of items to report from January's activities. But I want to briefly mention a few more recent happenings just to let you know what to expect in April's paper.

Currently, **Jeff Davis** is in Uruguay where he attended the Family Camp and Workers' Conference at Camp Emmanuel. Though we have pictures and partial reports from these camps, I decided to spread out the camp news over two months so as to include other

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A SURPRISING COMMENCEMENT

by Jeremy & Bonnie Ruth Farmer, church planters in Stung Treng, Cambodia



First session of the monthly Stung Treng Bible School

The Stung Treng Bible school is off to a wonderful beginning, with the January and February sessions now behind us. My colleagues and I forecasted an initial burst of students—around 30—that would eventually taper off to a steady 15 who would be with us through the entire two-year program. So we were somewhat surprised by the 50 who showed up in January, then 60 for the February session! So whenever this tapering begins, we have a nice cushion to work with! A local NGO is letting us meet at their facility, no charge.

More importantly, the initial feedback from our students has been positive, and it seems that our efforts are meeting a strongly felt need here. The high turnout also reflects something of an ad hoc adjustment of our goals for the program. Our original ideal was a program to equip pastors to better serve their churches. But given the fine line between clergy and laity—in not just a few cases, a village church consists of an extended family in which the de facto pastor is whoever came to Christ last year, rather than last week—as well as the currently unmet need for those “lay” Christians to know the Bible, we've opened the program for anyone who is committed to putting in the work.

Thus far, we've overviewed the entire Bible via the lives of six key characters (can you

guess which ones?), introduced basic Bible study (including how to use a dictionary and recognize a command sentence), and introduced the first six questions of the New City Catechism.

A particular joy for me has been to have Gloria and Eden join us as students. In the afternoon sessions, Gloria has also been teaching literacy to our students who cannot yet read.

Thank you for your prayers. Please continue. For the students: pray that they will be faithful in developing daily habits of Bible reading and prayer; pray that they will understand our lessons. For us as teachers: pray for strength and time to be prepared each month, and for wisdom to present the material in a way that is accessible for our students. Ultimately, pray for churches that are grounded firmly and

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(l-r) Scott Sward, Cameron West, Rafi Hohmann, & Jeremy Farmer - teachers

Everyone Has a Story

by Pedro & Pati Donz , director of Camp Emmanuel & office administrator of EMU in Uruguay

God gave us the privilege of going forward with the summer camps this January and February. Each camper has "a story," with its complexity and uniqueness. Though challenging, we are thankful for the opportunity that God gave us to minister to each one. And regardless of our individual story, we all have the same need: Christ!

Most of the churches have resumed their children's ministries since the Covid restrictions ended, but they lost many of the children who attended before the pandemic. We were unsure of how many campers we would have. In addition, parts of our country are struggling economically. However, the economic situation did not really worry me, because in recent years, God has provided extra funds through the Sponsorship program. And this year, everyone who wanted to come was able to come. It was a joy for us that we were able to help many children and adolescents from the interior with the cost of their week of camp and for the bus tickets to get them here.

We averaged between 30 and 35 campers each week, and together with the staff, we numbered between 45 and 50 people. It could have been discouraging to have so few campers, but when we considered all the variables and situations that we had to face, we know God gave us just what we could handle. Having more campers would have required more staff than we had. In fact, we had to limit the number of girls during the adolescent (ages 12-15) camp because we did not have enough female counselors for more. Each week we had campers who were there for their first time, in addition to campers from churches outside of our EMU fellowship of churches.

Since the pandemic, many of the adolescents' and young people's (ages 16-20+) "stories" include struggles with depression, anxiety, fear, and anguish, and several of them are taking very strong medications. One camper, who used to come to our camps as a child, but not in the last 2 years, attended the adolescent camp this summer. She had had two really hard years away from the Lord, and when



Children's Camp - 2023



Adolescent Camp - 2023



Jovenes Camp - 2023

we saw her again, we saw a girl who, in addition to being heavily medicated, had had episodes of seizures. They were supposedly controlled, since she had not had any episodes for several months. On Friday of her week at camp, this young lady became anxious and fearful, which caused her to begin having seizures again. She had 4 seizures at the camp and 7 more in the ambulance before we reached the hospital. Pati and I were with her from 11:30 pm until 4:30 am. During that time, we were able to be with her parents and share with them how much she had enjoyed the camp and her desire to seek Christ. Her parents confessed to us that they had been afraid to send her to camp fearing she would have an episode, but their daughter insisted that attending was what she needed. They understood that being exposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ was the needed solution. Today this young lady is fine, and her parents

are very grateful for how we looked after their daughter, and that her priority now is to seek the Lord. Let us pray that she will be ministered to in her church and continue to seek to know more about our great God. We had other adolescents and children whose families are completely destroyed. The Gospel is what they need, and God gave us the privilege of sharing it with them. We had professions of faith every week, and we hope that the work of the Holy Spirit is transforming those lives.

Each week our theme was "The Infallible Word of God," especially challenging the young people to trust that the Scriptures are enough for their lives. Pastor Ruben Villar, missionary Tim Chapman's assistant pastor at Grace Baptist Church in Lima, Peru, taught for our youth and adolescent camps. In addition to the theme for the summer, through teaching from the books of Jonah and Philemon, Ruben dealt with other issues that the campers are facing. Pastor Gabriel G mez gave eschatology workshops for the young people. This subject is misunderstood and has caused great confusion in our country.



Pastor Matias Acevedo

Pastor Matias Acevedo went through our camps as a child, was converted here, and dedicated his life to God for full-time ministry at camp. He went

to the US to study and prepare for ministry, and now he serves the Lord in Uruguay. Returning to the camp to teach during our children's camp was very special for him, and hearing him share his testimony and life with the children was a great blessing. Rosanna Gomez and Valeria Gomez shared missionary stories and taught object lessons to the children. The children enjoyed a great week, and like every year, they didn't want to leave the camp. We had some children who exhibited a great desire for the things of the Lord and wanted to know more about the Bible, so we sent them home with material so they could start having personal devotions and learn to study the Bible for themselves. We have shared their desire with their local churches so they will continue to be disciplined.

We observed that many children have great learning difficulties, especially with their reading ability. It was challenging to teach them, but the counselors did a great job encouraging each child to seek after God. The lack of discipline in the children's lives and the absence of two parents in many of



Counselor at Children's Camp



(top right) Pastor Ruben Villar helping with the Bible quizzing

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Growth Amid Unrest

by Tim & Cheryl Chapman, church planters in Lima, Peru

We arrived safely back home to Peru on January 17th. Peru is in the midst of some serious political unrest. Thank you for taking a moment to read about it.



(l-r) Tim, Cheryl, Abby, & Micah Chapman

Family

Lauren is in her second year at Bob Jones University studying Piano Pedagogy. She has developed some great friendships this year, she really enjoys her classes, and we are grateful that she loves the Lord and wants to honor Him with her life. Micah and Abby are doing well. They will step back into their second semester of homeschool next week: Micah is a junior and Abby is a sophomore.

Political Unrest

In 2021, Peru elected to the presidency a man, Pedro Castillo, who is on the far left of the political spectrum. For over a year, he battled with the Peruvian congress for control of the government, and on December 7, 2022, he attempted to dissolve Congress. The members of Congress responded by ousting him from the presidency, and he was subsequently jailed. Castillo's vice president, Dina Boluarte, became president that same day. Since then, there have been protests throughout the country, some of them violent. The protestors are calling for the removal of President Boluarte so that new elections can be scheduled soon.

At this point, there are over 50 confirmed deaths as a result of the protests. Some of

the airports in key cities have been closed by protestors. In several places, they have blocked roads which severely limits the access that certain cities have to food, oil, and other basic products. In Lima, most of the protests take place downtown, but there have been other places affected. No one is sure where this will lead. The meeting place for our church is very near downtown, but at this point, we've had no trouble gathering as a church on Sundays.

Iglesia Bautista Gracia

When we returned last month, I began a series of sermons in the book of Isaiah. The timing of that series and the political unrest in Peru are just what the Lord arranged. The theme of trust in God despite political uncertainty runs throughout the entire book. We know that God is behind every political situation working out His good purposes in the world. Those good purposes ultimately find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ and His Gospel.

The church continues to grow. We are averaging around 240 people on Sundays. We added another 20 new members this past month. God is stirring the hearts of many people in this city to find a church where the Bible is preached, where the parallel messages of man's sinfulness and God's grace are highlighted consistently, and where the fellowship of believers is Christ-centered. God, in His grace, continues to bless our church in these ways, and we are grateful.

MK Camp

Our first full week back in Peru we spent at MK Camp. We had the wonderful privilege of having with us missionary Matt Jones. He taught the MK's each morning, and he was a special blessing to all the families that participated. We also had the privilege of having a small group from Bob Jones University here to help us. They did a



MK Camp in Lima, Peru



(l-r) Matt Jones & Tim Chapman

wonderful job, and we are grateful for their ministry.

Prayer

Pray for Peru. These are times of real uncertainty. Pray that there will be peace and that people can go about their daily lives without fear. Pray also that people will turn to trust in the Lord above all.

Pray for our pastors. Ruben and Daniel are serving well as pastors in the church. Pray that they will continue to mature and grow in the leadership of the church.

Pray for our family. We need God's grace each day to be faithful to the ministries to which God has called us. †

ALONG THE WAY...

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articles such as these from the **Farmers** and the **Tim Chapmans**.

Another subject that will be covered next month, and possibly into May, concerns new EMU missionary families and associates. On February 4, we held a special **EMU Board meeting** to interview two missionary applicants. Both of these couples were approved by the Board as missionaries with EMU. Rather than give their names here, I will wait until I have more space as both of their ministries will take some explaining, and I would like to include their testimonies.

Sort of along the same line, but not really, is a family I will refer to as associates. They are not under EMU but are working closely

with one of our missionaries, **Ted Allston**. Ted and **Jake Derksen** are currently in Kenya together teaching national church leaders. This is Jake's second mission trip with Ted. When I get into explaining about the Derksens in a subsequent Newsletter, you will understand why space will not allow that at this time.

Marco and Gwendolyn Nuñez reported on the tenth anniversary of the church plant in Valladolid, Yucatan, Mexico, by **Vicente and Deisy Puc**. There were about seventy people who attended the celebration, and most of those people were not regular church attenders. Both Vicente's and Deisy's families live in Valladolid. Also, Marco let us know that the roof is on the new church building in Bochil where the **Hernandez family** is establishing a church.

In February, **Gwendolyn's sister**, who lives in Colorado, was hit by a car and sustained severe injuries. Gwendolyn travelled to be with her sister. Her sister is making good progress. While Gwendolyn was away, Pastor Montgomery, his wife, and another couple from **Shelby Bible Church** visited the Nuñezes' ministries for 10 days. Marco must have taken good care of them, as they all survived! But it's always more fun when Gwendolyn is cooking!

Thanks to each of you who continue to keep EMU's missionaries in your prayers, and for some, in your budget. We will be adding a few more people to this newsletter list to keep the supporters of our newest missionaries informed of the happenings with the wider scope of EMU International. May the Lord bless your faithfulness. †

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Everyone Has a Story *(continued from page 2)*



Rosanna Gomez (center) with her cabin at Children's Camp

their homes led us to pour out our hearts to the Lord, that they would see the love of God in Christ in the camp staff and that they would trust Him. Let us pray for this generation of children, that they may be faithful in their local churches.

When people ask me if dealing with these kids is difficult, here's my answer: there were many "tough stories" that challenged us every day, but it is these "difficult" campers who, although they demand more from us, end up making us trust God more.

One counselor, who did not have an easy time with her cabin, shared that God worked in her heart, and despite all the difficulties, her heart and spiritual life were strengthened in the Lord. That's how it was with all the staff. At times our strength declined, but every day the hand of God sustained us, and His Grace enabled us to continue. I thank God very much for the personnel we have had this summer. They also have "different stories," but each one has the same purpose: to give glory to God.

I want to thank God for the help we received from the brothers in Lima, Peru. They were a great blessing to us, and they left very grateful for everything they were

able to learn as they served alongside us. This reflects part of the scope of Camp Emmanuel's ministry, not only in evangelizing, but also in the building up and strengthening of the spiritual lives of those who are already believers.

As you see the photos of the different groups, remember that each individual has "a story," and that Christ, the only solution for their lives, was proclaimed and is enough to meet each need. Give thanks with us for the Sponsorship Program, which had a part in our ministry. Each person who gave to this Fund has had a part in sowing God's Word in souls, an investment for eternity.

I am convinced that the ministry of a Christian Camp with solid biblical objectives is vital to the support and building up of the church of God. I thank each of you who in one way or another helped make these first three weeks of camp possible. We give all the glory to our God for what is being accomplished. †



There was also plenty of competition games, beach time, and fellowship.

A Surprising Commencement *(continued from page 1)*

deeply in the Bible as their ultimate source of authority and direction, and as their daily sustenance.

The church plant in Na Ong continues. Here are some ways to pray:

Pray for Proin and Si-ma, our missionary partners in Na Ong. Pray for their spiritual sustenance. Apart from my weekly visits with them, opportunities for Christian fellowship and spiritual nourishment are rare. We're thrilled that they are studying in the Bible school. Pray for their continued language acquisition. Pray for their children Hadassah and Barnabas.

(Proin and Si-ma are ethnic Bunong, a tribal minority group among whom the church has flourished over the past two decades. The Bunong people live in Mondulkiri province, a 5-hour drive from our home here in Stung Treng. Proin and Si-ma both grew up in Christian homes and have a record of faithful service in their home church. Just over a year ago, they arrived in Stung Treng as missionaries to the Lao. They are struggling heroically to master their third language now - Bunong, Khmer, and Lao.)

Pray for those who listen faithfully, that the Word would bear fruit leading to eternal life.

Pray that others in this village will hear, both through us and through the mouths of those who are attending the meetings regularly.

Pray for more laborers. Specifically, pray that God will stir the hearts of the few Lao-speaking Christians we know to give themselves to the task of reaching the Lao. †

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