

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 . . .

It is not often that Uruguay makes the international news, but, of late, their current plight of a **water shortage** has worsened. **Matias Espinel**, in his article in this newsletter, mentions the dry summer, as have other letters from our Uruguayan missionaries. It is said to be the worst drought in 74 years - 3 years after the **Dabolds** arrived in Montevideo to begin their missionary labors there. (I recall reading some of Fred Dabold's letters from that time which also mentioned horrendous locust plagues.) In the last report we heard, Montevideo, where half the population resides, had about a week of water in its reservoir. The national water company, OSE, has been mixing water from the brackish Rio de la Plata with the drinking water, along with high doses of chlorine, making the tap water rather unpalatable and suspect of suitability for healthy drinking. So many people are purchasing bottled water that the stores have run short. This drought is also affecting agriculture and ranching, mainstays of the Uruguayan economy. Pray for rain, but also pray that this will be a conscious lesson to the citizens that God, Whom they have generally abandoned, is their only hope, both physically and spiritually.

Another drought of sorts is finally ending in one of our churches in Uruguay. The congregation of **Calvary Temple in Tacuarembó** has been without a pastor for many years, since the **Diaz family** moved
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UPS AND DOWNS IN URUGUAY

by Matias & Kristine Espinel, educator & pastor in southern Uruguay

Greetings from the southern hemisphere, where we transitioned from a dry summer of drought to a very chilly autumn almost overnight. Our summer flew by, as it always does, with camps and new school year preparations and activities.

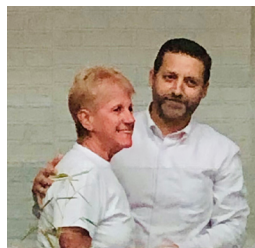
We had the privilege of teaching the children's class at a Family Camp in Paysandú. We had a wonderful week of fellowship and planning for future ministries with other missionaries while there.

In February we also had the wonderful privilege of welcoming three new members into our church through baptism. Theresa, a friend of the Galasso family in our church, whose husband passed away just a couple years ago, started attending ladies' meetings at our church and studying God's Word with the Galassos. She gradually came to understand the gospel message and gave her life to Christ.



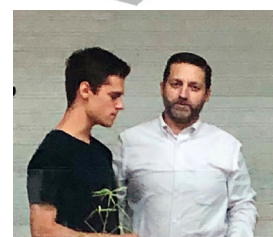
Matias & Theresa

Graciela is the mother of Shelton, a man in our church who also came to Christ and was baptized a few years ago after decades of observing his wife's and youngest son's faithful Christian testimonies. Graciela started visiting our church with her family for special events, like the Christmas dinner. Last year she joined some of the older ladies in our church at a Ladies' Retreat at Camp Emmanuel, where she gave her heart to Christ.



Graciela & Matias

Ivan is a teen who has been coming to our church with his Christian family for over a year. He has a vibrant testimony for the Lord among his peers, and we are so excited to see how God will guide and use him.



Ivan & Matias

In Uruguay we do not tend to see souls saved by the hundreds, as on some mission fields. But as we see recorded over and over in His Word, and as evidenced in our lives and in the lives of those around us, we rejoice in the fact that God is a personal God who seeks after the individual. It thrills our hearts to see Him seeking - and saving - those who are lost. It is especially good to see the ones who are at the latter end of their lives turning to Him after a life without Him.

Our new Bible College (FEBU) year got off to a great start with a 2-day retreat at a nearby camp. This year we continue to have many more students online from different parts of Uruguay and Latin America than in-person students, but we see the value of getting together with the in-town students for times of prayer and fellowship throughout the year.

After much consideration and prayer, we decided to enroll our four children in the only "truly Christian" school we are familiar with here in Uruguay. The biggest con is that it is quite a distance away, but since Matias' classes are all in the evening this year, he can stay in the area around the school and study (or work at Siloé Church, which is halfway between home and the school). The children have had somewhat of an adjustment, mainly for David who considers formal schooling "torturous" and for Megan who is in kindergarten and has never had to wake up early or be away
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Changes

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

The political unrest has settled down here in Peru, and we are thankful for that. The Lord continues to do some great things in the lives of people through the ministry of the church. Our family has a significant transition ahead of us. In all of this we value your prayers!

Iglesia Bautista Gracia



Pastors & wives of Grace Baptist Church (l-r) Ruben & Laura with Belen; Jessica & Daniel with Josias; and Tim & Cheryl

This month we celebrated seven years as a church. We feel very blessed to be a part of what God has done in raising up a Christ-centered church in the heart of the capital city. The church supports two Peruvian pastors, Ruben and Daniel, who are doing a tremendous job serving the congregation. As pastors, we are taking steps to expand ministry opportunities as we seek to put into

practice Paul's instruction to pastors - to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12).

Our Family

For many months we have been praying for the Lord's direction concerning this coming school year. Our son, Micah, is entering his senior year of high school, and the Lord is directing us to spend that year with him in the States. MKs face unique challenges, and an abrupt transition from high school on the mission field to college in the States is often very difficult. Each child is different, and we believe that what is best for Micah is to have that longer transition period.

Since 2010, we haven't spent more than 5-6 months at a time away from Peru. We love the ministry that God has given us here in Lima, and we will miss that weekly involvement in the lives of the people. However, we trust God's timing and direction.

We will be living in Midland, Michigan. I will continue to be involved with the church in Lima even from a distance. That will include virtual meetings and accountability with the pastors. I will be teaching courses for our church family on Tuesday nights via Zoom. I'm also planning to take a couple of trips to Peru during the year.

At the same time, I plan to take this opportunity to work on some writing projects that have been on the back burner for a while. There are two specific projects related to evangelism and discipleship that I'm hoping to complete during this coming year. *(The Chapmans will arrive Stateside on July 1 in Michigan. - kj)*

Theology Retreat

In July, we'll be hosting our second Theology Retreat. We'll be meeting for three days at a retreat center near Lima for an intense time of study in the Word. We are excited to have Dr. Sam Horn with us again. He'll be teaching on the Armor of God from Ephesians 6. We are expecting to have around 100 people in attendance. †



Tim's parents, Tom & Connie, were able to visit Tim & Cheryl's family in Lima recently

ALONG THE WAY...

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to San Fernando to pastor. Retired pastor **Carlos Pereira** and his wife, **Graciela**, are members of this church and have helped keep the ministries of preaching and teaching going. We received an announcement from **Nicolas and Valeria Gomez** that they believe the Lord has called them to live in Tacuarembó and shepherd that flock. Nico is the son of retired pastor Hector Gomez. Nico and Valeria have served the Lord for many years, basically as itinerate ministers at churches and camps, being supported by donations from Uruguayan churches and some folks from the USA. With the birth of their first child, it has been more challenging to be in so many different places each year serving where needed. This move will affect Camp Emmanuel to some extent as Nico was one of the main chefs - his trained vocation - and Valeria helped in the kitchen. And both were excellent counselors at the three MEU camps. Pray that the Lord will guide and bless the Gomezes during this transition period, and that He will supply the personnel to replace Nico and Valeria when they cannot assist at Camp Emmanuel.

Also from Uruguay, I want to present some snippet updates from a few of our

missionaries in that country. **Pastor José Kowalczyk** recounted an outreach ministry his church was engaged in - handing out tracts in the city of Durazno - for which he was excited about the good participation of the church members. However, as they were finishing up, 81-year-old José was attacked by a dog, lacerating one of his hands, requiring many stitches, and resulting in a good measure of continuing pain. But in relating the story, José said that he used his visit to the surgeon's office to ask the doctor if he had ever considered the injuries that Jesus suffered before being crucified. Both the surgeon and his nurse listened to the Gospel message.

Ninety-five-year-old **Ursula Thiessen** - our oldest EMU missionary - relayed a recent blessing. Though she is not able to get out much to meet unsaved folks, the Lord brought a lady and her daughter from Ursula's old neighborhood in Montevideo to her. Both Carmen and her daughter, Lucia, are unsaved but listened again to the Gospel. Ursula asks our prayers for them.

Ursula's former house mate, **Chicha Rodriguez**, continues her ministry at the women's prison outside of Montevideo.

Although some of the women want nothing to do with the message of Jesus, there is a good group who attend the classes at the prison. Pray for true faith and repentance among these troubled women.

Pastor Rubito Rodriguez asks prayer for his wife, **Marita**, who will be having an operation "this winter" (probably July). His own health problem with psoriasis seems to be generally under control. And they are rejoicing that their daughter, **Victoria**, has graduated with an accounting degree in the city of "33", and their son-in-law passed the police academy training and will begin working as a policeman in their town. The Bible Institute in "33" began with 4 students from the church and another enrolled from the church in Tupambaé where they have a branch church.

Pedro Donzé, with his wife and 17-year-old son, along with **Carlos and Beatriz Alberti**, arrived in Miami, FL, on May 15 to begin several weeks of visiting churches and individual Camp Emmanuel supporters. **Jeff Davis** is chauffeuring the troop around the eastern and mid-western states in a mini-van. The Donzes and Albertis stayed at our

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Teaching, Encouraging, Translating

by Brian & Lydia Kane, Bible translator in Ban Lung, Cambodia

Pastors' School



Brian Kane teaching at the Pastors' School

At the beginning of April, we had another successful session of our Ratanakiri Pastors' school, studying through chapters 9-11 of Romans. Temperatures spiked to the high 90's during our four-day session, and inside the church it was undoubtedly over 100 at times. However, in spite of the temperatures



April 2023 Pastors' School in Ban Lung

and the theological difficulty of some of the passages, the students followed along well with the lessons, as evidenced by their questions and their testimonies at the end. A special highlight was having exegesis sessions taught by two Christian workers from nearby Stung Treng province. It was a treat for the students to hear two new voices, and the lessons were exceptionally helpful for them in increasing their ability to study the Scripture with profit.

Church Fellowship

Jesus said that one of the hallmarks of the Church, which identifies us as His, is our love for one another. One of the strengths of the Krung church is their fellowship with one another both in joy and in sorrow. This was beautifully displayed last month. While together for a joint Easter celebration, many of the church leaders decided to make an hour and half trip north to Ta Veang district to participate in the wake and funeral of the mother of a Brao pastor. After a long battle with cancer through which this woman had witnessed the trustworthiness of God through much pain, she believed on Him to her final breath. It was glorious to see these nine Krung church leaders, their wives, and many other Brao Christians joining together and celebrating the hope of the Gospel. Please pray for the 60+ unbelievers who listened to the truth preached through song and Scripture.

Translation Progress

We continue to make progress towards our goal of publishing the Krung NT at the end of the year. At the beginning of this month, we finished the final checking step for the book of Hebrews. In spite of the translation difficulty of several of the passages, I was still overwhelmed by the time and attention the writer gives to making much of Jesus. Truly, He is superior in every way. May God use this Book to help Krung believers glory in our great High Priest and hold fast their hope without wavering. †



(This picture of Sophia's 17th birthday party with a Hobbit theme was just too good not to share.)

(l-r) Lydia, Brianna, Hugh, Natalia, Sophia, Julia, Brian, & Jackson Kane in Ban Lung

Busy, and Getting Busier

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



The Jensen Homeschool:
(l-r) Becca, Isaiah, Amy, Micah, Anna, Clara, & Ezra

We've had a full few months since our last update. The kids finished their school year on March 3 and enjoyed a 6-week summer break before starting the 2023-24 school year in April. This year our homeschool has an 8th, 6th, 4th, and 2nd grader, as well as a preschooler. The school days are very full for Amy as she teaches everyone.

The Jarai translation work is progressing

nicely. The Exodus portions they've translated (about 2/3 of the book) are now ready for publishing. Most of Josh's time now is focused on the book of Acts. His main task right now is doing an exegetical check of the rough draft produced by a pair of our translators. Once he finishes a chapter, he passes it back to the translators, who make additional revisions and also have questions for Josh about what various things mean. Once that's done, they pass it on to Josh's colleague, who checks it with people in the village for clarity. Josh is working on Acts 17 right now doing the exegetical check. It's slow work and often interrupted. He hopes to be done with the exegetical check of Acts by late June.



Joshua baptizing Pav in Oyadao

Pav's baptism was April 23. Thank you for your faithful prayers for his decision to follow Christ. Pav met with Josh several times over the past months for discipleship and to go through the Apostles' Creed and the baptism service.

Davi and Amy will finish reading the book of Romans and a commentary about Romans this week. Then they will transition to studying another book of the Bible one afternoon a week.

We're expecting a new Jensen late July. So far Amy's pregnancy has gone well. We're waiting to find out the gender until the baby is born, but most of our kids think it's a girl.

Josh taught at the Pastors' Bible School in April in the provincial capital, about 45 minutes away. The "school" meets for 4-day sessions twice a year. They're currently working through the book of Romans. Josh had three lessons to prep and teach for this session.

We've continued all of our other ministries in the church and at home, and we are thankful for your prayers for strength and wisdom as we work with the Jarai and Khmer people we live with. †

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Ups and Downs in Uruguay (continued from page 1)



(l-r) Emma, **Kristine**, Sophia, Megan, Matias, & David Espinel in Montevideo

from home during the day. Some tears were shed over the first month of the school year...but overall, the experience has been very positive for each of them, and we are thankful for the opportunity for them to have Christian teachers and to grow in their fluency of Spanish.

Kristine's father was hospitalized all of last week. He entered the hospital with a significant infection, but while there, an MRI to check for a stroke showed that his melanoma has metastasized from his lungs to his brain. He is in physical therapy right now in order to regain some strength (due to his MS) so he will be ready to go home, but as soon as he is out, they will begin radiation on his brain. We appreciate your prayers for him (Stan) and Kristine's mom (Miriam).

Thank you for your faithful love and partnership with us in this ministry. †

Along the Way. . . (continued from page 2)

house for two nights in May. I am sure that there will be a report in the July Newsletter reviewing the travels and adventures of this extended trip.

The Crnkovićs' recent prayer letter was a review of the past several months of ministry in their church. Though there is not space in this newsletter to present those events, I did want to give an update on their family that **Tanja** included in her writings:

*As mentioned in our last letter, there will be changes and transitions in our lives this year. One of the biggest changes will be that we will become grandparents in July. Our daughter **Kristina** and her husband **Jura** are expecting their first child. We are all very excited, and we are praying for a safe pregnancy and delivery. Kristina continues to study and work on her master's degree. **Andrea** is in her final semester. Pray for her as she researches and writes her master's thesis, but also for a job opening. **Marko** is graduating from High School and Music High School in June. Pray for him as he applies to colleges. **Natanael** is finishing his freshman year of High School and Music High School.*



Tanja, Kornel, & Kristina

We rejoice that he has decided to follow Christ in obedience and be baptized. Pray for his faith and his daily walk with the Lord.

The Crnkovićs' church in Koprivnica continues to thrive as they expand their outreach in the community.

JD and Kim Crowley saw their last child graduate from college and then get married the next day. JD's by-line with the graduation photo of **Nate** and his fiancée (now wife) **Ally**, says a mouth-full: 6 of 6. And zero school debt. And faith intact. Thank you, God!



Kim & JD Crowley with Nate & Ally at their BJU graduation

I want to end with an excerpt from a letter from **Marcos Gomez**, a MEU missionary in Uruguay. I think he speaks for all of us when he writes: *Maybe it seems repetitive to you every time I say "thank you" in my letters. But you have allowed me the opportunity to dedicate my life to what I love most - following my call to serve God. Without your help this would not be possible. Thank you! †*

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