

# EMU<sup>†</sup>

## INTERNATIONAL

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Evangelical Mission to Uruguay

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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Assistant Director

### ALONG THE WAY . . .

It was a real joy to have the **Bixby** and **Tim Chapman** families visit us in August. The Chapmans even stayed at our house for almost a week between Lauren's finished summer at the Wilds and her move into the dorm at BJU. During their stay, we were able to have these 2 families for lunch together one day. They knew of each other, but didn't really know each other. What a great afternoon that was! The Chapmans are back in Midland, MI, and the Bixbys flew to France on August 31.

**Ted Allston** flew to India to teach on August 14 and returns on Labor Day.

The **Núñezes** arrive in Greenville, SC, on September 7 and will be stateside for about a month visiting supporting churches, friends, and family.

The **Crowleys** returned to Cambodia at the end of July. However, their youngest grandchild, **Job Johanson**, became very ill and will need an operation as soon as he fully recovers from a virus. Kim flew back to Greenville (Greer) to help Charis with the children. There is no date yet for the operation. Also, JD is scheduled to return to Greenville to be the guest speaker at BJU's Missions Advance in September. They would appreciate your prayers.

Other announcements and requests will need to wait for the next Newsletter. We so much appreciate your reading this little paper, and we thank you for your prayers for our missionaries and their ministries. †

## THE LORD'S HAND IN SARCELLES

by Tim & Ruth Bixby, church planters in Northern France

God has graciously been adding to our numbers. We regularly have people visiting who have some connection to Christianity, but they have often been limited and (mis) shaped by their cultural and/or family background. Religious assumptions are the hardest to root out, partly because we interpret reality through the filter of our assumptions and then appeal to our "real experiences" as the proof that our assumptions are correct. When people come from multiple cultural, linguistic, and religious backgrounds, it takes asking a lot of questions and allowing people to talk to discover what they, often subconsciously, assume about God, grace, salvation, etc. The opportunities for individual teaching and training are presently overwhelming. In spite of our limited abilities and time, God is blessing. Just to give you a taste of what God is doing:

- We officially added nine new members at our church business meeting in March.
- Last Sunday there were 85 in attendance.
- We have seven men assigned to teaching one adult Bible lesson during our Sunday school hour, and I am working beforehand with each one individually.
- We have one young lady, just licensed as a nurse, who took a month-long mission trip to the Central African Republic in June.
- We are looking to expand our children's Sunday school program in the fall since the present class is outgrowing their classroom.

Beyond these more visible blessings, we have also been delighted to see real spiritual growth in several individuals. We have at least six people who will likely soon be baptized after some preparatory studies. Following are a couple of their stories.

E. is a new believer with a Hindu husband who remains hostile to her faith. She had some Christian influence in her background and an earnest desire to follow the Lord,

but for the first 25 years of marriage, her husband would never allow her to attend any church. When she was finally given permission as the result of some difficult life circumstances, she came to us at the suggestion of an acquaintance. She told Ruth just this last week: "Before coming here to church, I always thought of myself as a good person, but now I have understood how much I need God's forgiveness."

Another example of God's grace is found in a couple that came to us about a year ago, unmarried, but having already established a home together that included a 1-year-old child. She (A.) began attending first, having had some grounding in basic Christian truth and having felt God's conviction for the choices she had made that had brought her to her present state. Thanks in part to a Christian friend and counselor, she was eager to get involved and seek wisdom as to how to get on God's path. Her partner, F., came to us with an open spirit and some curiosity, but no real conviction of sin. But God has allowed us to meet with them fairly regularly, both as a couple and individually. For a long time, F.--who came from a nominally Catholic, but essentially godless, home--remained kind, but openly hesitant. That changed at our meeting two

(continued on page 4)



The Bixby family at Ken & Joan's house

# Resumption of a Tradition

by Rick Jensen, on staff at the Wilds of NC / and Pedro Donze, Camp Emmanuel director in Uruguay

## Rick Jensen:

Despite my not visiting Uruguay since 2019, Pedro Donzé, the camp's director, continues to call the main work-week at Camp Emmanuel 'Rick's Projects.' In reality I just help to accomplish the list of things that Pedro is trying to get accomplished at the camp. Covid threw a huge monkey wrench into everything worldwide. Not being able to have camps in Uruguay for a couple of years, and the inability to freely travel to Uruguay from the USA without jumping through a lot of hoops, put a stop to my annual trips to Camp Emmanuel. But this year, I finally felt comfortable traveling to Uruguay again. I was concerned about having to finish the last leg of my trip on a South American airline, considering all the tools that I was taking down for Camp Emmanuel and not knowing the airline's regulations concerning transporting tool batteries. I normally don't travel to Uruguay during our summer camps here at The Wilds, but in Uruguay, the August week was the time when the largest number of men would be going to work, and I wanted to see as many of the national workers as I could, having missed the last three years.

As usual Pedro had a long list of projects written on the white board to be completed. Everyone who had volunteered to be there that week had their initials by the projects they would be working on. Two of the twelve men were first time workers. The Lord blessed us with almost ideal winter weather. The temps at night were in the 40's, though two nights were in the 30's, but it warmed up into the 70's most days under sunny skies. Inside the cabins and dining hall, it usually stayed in the 50's and a few times in the low 60's.



Marcos & Rick

One of the main projects that we had hoped to get done before the spring camps start was the new bathrooms connected to the dining hall - one for handicapped persons and one each for men and women. Each bathroom has two sinks and two toilets. One of my jobs was to run the water lines and electrical tubing for the bathrooms. Marcos Gomez, Pedro's assistant, was my helper on this project. Pedro and Gaby



Standing (l-r) Rick Jensen, Lucas Gómez, Gabriel Gómez, Marcos Gómez, Fernando Mendez, Martin Paiva, Henry Castro, Nicolas Gómez, & Pedro Donzé  
Sitting (l-r) Hector Gómez, José Cardozo, & Juan Gonzalez. Missing from the photo are Roberto Alvez & Carlos Silvera

Gomez, Marcos' father, installed the steel framing for the sheetrock and then screwed the sheets on. There were a number of men working on finishing the sidewalks around the girls' cabins. This project is to prevent erosion around the footers of the buildings. Included in that project was redoing the old water heater sheds on the back of each cabin. For that process, Marcos and I replumbed the water and gas lines before the sidewalks were poured. The men were also pouring some access sidewalks for the new bathrooms. All these areas also required landscaping work.

Henry Castro, the camp caretaker and all-around-handyman, kept busy moving the sand, gravel, and dirt for the different projects that were going on and pointing me in the right direction for what he and Pedro needed done next. Marcos and I spent one whole day just cutting channels in the block walls for the water and electric tubing. Because of the block wall dust, we had to stop often just to let the dust settle so we could see the lines marked on the walls. With the extra time I had at the end of the week, Pedro had me build new legs for the Ping Pong table and repair the Foosball table. On Saturday morning, before leaving that evening, I conducted a pressure test on



Mixing & pouring the sidewalks

the water lines and hooked up three of the water heaters for the cabins.

At each of the meals, these men really packed the food away, but the meal time was especially enjoyable hearing and seeing the laughing, teasing, and comradery, which is phenomenal. As Pedro came to pick me up at my room at 2:00 PM on Saturday to take me to the airport, all the workers that were still at camp came to say goodbye. It was very touching to shake hands and hug each of them before leaving. What a blessing to work with these very special, loving people.

## Pedro Donzé:

Rick continues to amaze us with the abilities and endurance that God has given him. He would finish his to-do, list and we would assign him more tasks to do. The weather was very good, allowing us to do all the work without difficulty. Rick could only stay for a week, but the camp work lasted for 2 weeks. We repaired, performed needed maintenance, and upgraded various camp facilities. All glory to God. 1Cor. 10:31

We are grateful to God for all the work teams that have assisted us through the years. They take their vacation time to help us maintain and improve the camp. May God reward all of them, as well as all those who support us with their financial gifts for the projects. God has provided for the completion of the dining room bathrooms, and we hope to have them ready by the first weeks of September. The perimeter fencing of the camp was completed, and the sidewalks from cabins 1 to 4 were finished. We still have more sidewalks to install at the Casita, cabins 5 to 8, and the workshop. We trust that in His time, God will provide as He has done so far. Let's give thanks to God together for everything that was done this year in the Rick Projects Program. *[Just under \$5,000 is still needed to complete the sidewalks around the other buildings.]*

We are preparing for the retreats for older youth, ladies, and couples this spring. In addition, we are planning the first stages of volunteer recruitment and training for the 2024 summer camps.

God has allowed us to rent out the camp to several groups from September to November. We trust that we can serve these groups well, and above all, that God will use us so that the Gospel continues to be proclaimed. We appreciate your prayers for the retreats that we will have, and that God will give us the strength to carry them out. Pray for my wife, Pati, and the camp's secretary, Beatriz, who are cooking until God provides us with someone to take that responsibility. I ask that you pray for Henry, Marcos, and me, that we can take care of all the upcoming camps. The three of us will have to work many hours for these months. †



# Theology Retreats Continue

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

In late July, I had the privilege of spending three days with a group of 125 people who were gathered for one main purpose: to study theology. This was our second theology retreat, and Dr. Sam Horn taught us from Ephesians chapter six on the armor of God. About halfway through the ten sessions, he took a moment to contrast what it is like for a person who has played checkers for many years to suddenly sit down to play a game of chess. The board looks the same, but it is not the same game. The pieces in a game of chess can do a whole lot more than the pieces in a game of checkers. He was illustrating for the people that what they thought they knew about the armor of God was like playing a game of checkers, but the armor that God has given us does so much more. That illustration captures the way most of us felt over those three days as we listened to Dr. Horn open up that text to us in a way that most of us had never seen before.

This type of retreat is what I envisioned when, a couple of years ago, God put in my heart the idea of gathering young people from local churches here in Peru for the purpose of studying theology. We met for the second time in a small resort center in



Above: Tim Chapman translating for Dr. Horn at the Theology Retreat  
Below: The group that attended the Retreat



the foothills of the Andes Mountains, about an hour from Lima. Getting there was tricky since the rains had made the roads worse than they had been previously. The fact that one of the buses overheated also caused a delay. So, we were not able to get started as quickly as we had wanted to on Thursday. But by that afternoon, we were all gathered and ready to begin what turned out to be a very fruitful retreat.

We are seeing God at work in Peru drawing

people to Himself. Thousands of young people have been seeking the Lord in different ways over the last few years, but many of them have landed in churches where the gospel is not preached clearly. Many others are in churches where they are not being spiritually fed. The result is that they have not been taught doctrinal truth like they need. The vision of the theology retreats is to ground a generation of young Christians in theological truth so that they can serve the Lord faithfully in their churches.

Our desire is that the ministry of the theology retreats will grow so that in the near future we can host several retreats and conferences each year. Concerning the financing for

these retreats, those who attend pay the full cost of what the retreat center charges. However, there are other costs which include transportation, the translation and printing of materials, and the cost of bringing in speakers. Those costs are covered through special gifts. *If the Lord puts in your heart the desire to partner with us in this endeavor, your gifts would go a long way to help us be able to continue this ministry.* †

## The Croatian Summer

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

**Literature distribution camp** – Our summer ministries started with a literature distribution camp at the island of Cres, led by our Pastor Nathanael Špičak. About 10,000 homes received a tract about the Good News of the Gospel. One day we traveled by ferry to the small island of Susak to distribute tracts there. It is an island where cars are not allowed. Their main transportation is the wheelbarrow. Apartment owners come to the ferry to welcome their guests, and they transport their luggage in a wheelbarrow. To our surprise, many were happy to receive the Christian tract we distributed. Please pray for the seed sown to bring forth fruit.



The tract distribution group



2023 Summer Campers

**Summer Youth Camp** – This year's Summer Youth Camp at the Adriatic Sea took place July 21–29 at the same campsite we had used for years (as you may remember, it was being renovated last year so we had to go to another place). Nothing was different at the camp site except that there were hardly any campers there. Our group of 120 people, consisting of teenagers ages 14 to 20 and a group of young families with small children (the parents are former campers), were warmly welcomed by the staff that have served us in past years. This year's camp theme was the study of the Israelite leader Joshua. Our program is similar each year, filled with various activities: Bible study, discussion

groups, sports activities, Bible quizzes, beach time, mealtimes, and a Bible memory contest. This year the campers were divided into 5 groups who competed in the above-mentioned activities, and each group had to write and compose a hymn. It was amazing to hear talented young people use their gifts to bring glory to the Lord through song. We also had an evening of worship and sharing testimonies. It was encouraging to hear five testimonies from young men who the Lord saved from the bondage of sin – drugs (heroin), New Age philosophy, and Roman Catholicism. A couple of them have attended our camps in the past, which contributed in part in their decision to give their lives to the Lord. Although no one was saved during the week of camp, two young men accepted Christ as their Savior the week after their return home from camp.

**Irish team** – A group of 15 people arrived from Northern Ireland to serve with us at the Baptist Church of Koprivnica August 5-14. They gave out invitations around town to come to the kids' club that was held in the backyard of our church building, and they

(continued on page 4)

Page 4

### ***The Lord's Hand in Sarcelles*** *(continued from page 1)*

weeks ago when he shared with us that he had come to Christ, confessed his sins, and asked for forgiveness! His change of heart is evident. Because of mutual obligations within the home (A. is now expecting their second child), he cannot easily leave her alone. Instead, they chose to follow the example of Joseph and Mary before Christ's birth. They were married at their town hall in a civil ceremony, followed by a religious ceremony in which they exchanged Christian vows to each other. I conducted the ceremony and Albert, the pastor of our mother church, brought a Gospel message for their many family and friends, all of whom are unconverted. May God work powerfully through their example and desire to honor God before their family, even though they began life together as unbelievers and in an immoral way.

In April, our dear coworker **Kristi Colas**

announced to us her conviction that God is leading her on to another ministry. God has given us eight years of ministry together, and we are grateful for the unusual harmony we have enjoyed and the great benefit Kristi has been both to our ministry and family. This is, of course, a mercy of the Lord, but it is also due to Kristi's hard labors and servant's spirit. We will miss her. Please pray for God to clearly lead her in the steps she should take and for God to help our church to fill the void she will leave. One of our greatest needs is for God to raise up more pastoral leadership.

Please pray also for the **Michaels**, a Pakistani family that came to France as refugees more than a year ago after experiencing persecution for their faith in their home country (one of them was sentenced to death). Our little church family has endeavored to help care for their physical needs, as they have been unable to work while waiting for their refugee status to be officially recognized

by the government. We were all astounded when their request for asylum was refused several weeks ago. They now have a lawyer representing them and expect that their case will be reconsidered and decided upon in the month of September. We thank the Lord for their testimony of confidence in Him, even during the grueling days of waiting. Please pray that God would care for them and "turn the heart of the king" in their favor, and that He would continue to provide for their needs.

Our two oldest children, **Miriam** and **Micaiah**, have been spending a good bit of their "spare time" on some Bible correspondence course work, which has been very enriching for both of them. And Miriam was grateful for God's help as she passed a very intense violin exam at her conservatory, allowing her to complete the highest certificate of violin studies this conservatory could offer her. Thank you for praying with us that God will help all of our children to hone their talents and skills for His use. †

### ***A Croatian Summer*** *(continued from page 3)*

did literature distribution in nearby towns. In the evenings they went to the park in the town center and played various sports with the local youth. Afterwards, songs were sung and testimonies were shared. Some of the children came to our service the following Sunday with their parents. Please pray that we can keep in contact with them and have follow-up, and that the Lord will bless the seed of Good News sewn in these hearts.

**Work in progress** - The work on the church parking lot is progressing slowly, but nicely. Our young men have worked faithfully and hard with Zoli, our church member handyman. We are looking forward to seeing the final result.



*Tanja & Kornel with grandson Jošua*

**Our family** - On July 2 our first grandchild was born. Our daughter Kristina and her husband, Jura, became parents to a beautiful baby boy, Jošua. We praise God for a safe delivery and that both mother and baby are doing very well. Tanja was able to spend a few days with them and help Kristina. We pray this little boy will grow up to be just like Joshua, a warrior for Christ. He was our special gift for our 30th Wedding Anniversary. Pray for this young family and us, as we both start new roles in our lives. †

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