

EMU

INTERNATIONAL

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Evangelical Mission to Uruguay

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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Assistant Director

ALONG THE WAY . . .

At least once per spring, as May approaches or has landed, I think of the ditty, “April showers bring May flowers.” But only now, at the age of 70, have I ever wondered where this came from. The impetus for my question is the fact that late March and all of April see most of our yard plants flowering. So, why May? The answer is that the rhyme was first recorded by Englishman Thomas Tusser in the 1500s, where the profusion of flowering flora takes place in May - more like the upper northeast of the USA. In Genesis 8:22, Yahweh promises that to the end of the world there will be seasons, as well as night and day. But those seasons vary in timing and intensity around the world, as does night and day. Even so, among our missionaries, their ministries are not invariant but pass through their own seasons of growth, plateaus, and difficulties. But one of their commonalities is that we all need your prayers for God’s guidance and blessing. Thank you for your help in this vital area.

The EMU Board Meeting on April 20 went well. The entire Board was present, except Steve Ridge, who had another commitment. Often we have a luncheon to which the wives of the Board members and all of our in-town-missionaries are invited. Because so few of our missionaries would have been able to attend that proposed gathering, it was postponed for a “stand alone” picnic to be held on May 7. Rather than list those who are planning to attend, I will report
(continued on page 2)

MARRIAGE & FAMILY CONFERENCE

by JD & Kim Crowley, linguist & teachers in Banlung, Cambodia



We have overflowing joy from what God did among us through the proclamation of His truth during the first-ever marriage and family conference of the Ratanakiri Pastors School – April 17-19. Around 150 students and wives attended, including couples from Phnom Penh, Stung Treng, and Kracheh (Snuol).



JD Crowley

The outlines from Ajith Fernando’s book provided the basic framework for the teaching, but all of our teachers included significant new material, verses, illustrations, and exhortations, as the Holy Spirit led us. I believe we have the best team of professors of any academic

program in Cambodia - those who know how to provide exactly what our rural church leaders need. That confidence was definitely not misplaced, as we saw in lesson after lesson last week. Praise God.



Speakers at the conference:
Matt & JD (lt) & Brian (rt)
(kj - I don't know the non-EMU speakers)

Our continuing prayer is that each attending couple will return to their village, live out the truths they learned, and then teach those truths in their church.

Some highlights:

- Attendance of 150 students and wives
- Set up and take down help courtesy of the Kane family
- Deep theological foundation concerning marriage and family
- Passionate song leading by Matt

(continued on page 3)

The First Quarter

by John Mark & Deborah Steel, teachers in Montevideo, Uruguay

It may be less intuitive in April than in January to reflect on the brevity of life, but it can't be any less wise. An entire quarter—and more—has gone; and we do well to pray, “Establish the works of our hands!”

January and February are months of summer camps in Uruguay. Our daughter, Elizabeth, worked three weeks in the kitchen at Camp Emmanuel in Guazuvirá, and she and Daniel James (DJ), her younger brother, both participated as campers. Some of DJ's classmates from Colegio Cristiano Cristo Viene (the school outside Las Piedras where Deborah teaches) were again able to attend. John Mark visited during the camp to encourage teens and families to consider Bible Institute class opportunities. He taught a series of messages from 1 Corinthians 15 at the GMSA (Gospel Mission to South America) camp in Paysandú, a ministry that especially serves a group of churches in western Uruguay and Argentina. Please pray for a young man who professed his faith in Christ during the week and for the significant percentage of unchurched teens. The time in Paysandú also served to promote FEBU and the possibility of a future in-person program for the Bible college, in conjunction with the camp, focusing on basic Bible knowledge and practical ministry.

In February we spent a week in Bariloche, Argentina, a trip that doubled as family vacation and a postponed school “graduation” trip for DJ. Though for years we have lived literally across the river (admittedly, at places, the widest on the planet), we hadn't visited Argentina since before moving to Uruguay in 2013. Recently this neighboring country has been a popular destination for Uruguayans who have taken advantage of far lower prices related to unfortunate economic and political challenges Argentina has endured. The Buenos Aires skyline, representing 15 million people in its metropolitan area, is clearly visible across the water from the Uruguayan city of Colonia del Sacramento, west northwest of Montevideo.

Classes in Uruguay began in March. As you know, our life tends to be tied to the academic year, since we're connected to numerous schools, either as teachers or students. This semester, for the first time in history, both FEBU and the Bible Institute have no in-person students. The online trend began, of course, in 2020, and since then we have often contemplated the pros and cons of the new reality. One of the obvious blessings is the ability to connect with students who otherwise would never benefit from classes in Montevideo. With the varying reach of these two institutions, we're currently serving approximately 80 students from Montevideo, interior Uruguay, and Argentina. Online classes have enabled



Elizabeth, John Mark, Daniel James, and Deborah Steel

us to collaborate with ministries in the Buenos Aires area (a GMSA Bible institute) and Mar del Plata further south, where GFA (Gospel Fellowship Association Missions) missionaries Don and Ruthie Harris serve (in addition to their work in the inland city of Tandil). Please pray for these co-laborers, churches, students, and some of these students' unsaved family members.

Thank you for your prayers for Elizabeth and DJ as they navigate their educational and ministry opportunities. Elizabeth is in her final year of high school at a public trade school, focusing on Administration; DJ began seventh grade at a private middle school in Progreso, just up the road from where Deborah continues to teach English. She is increasingly encouraged with ways her teaching connects her with students and their families, and provides open doors to share the Gospel. Since 2016 she has been taking occasional classes toward an M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning, initially to support the ministry of FEBU and now especially to help improve her own teaching and that of others on the elementary level in Uruguay. Please pray for much fruit from her efforts.

During *Semana Santa*, the week preceding Easter, Elizabeth was chosen to take the boat to Buenos Aires with seven other



Elizabeth Steel

cellists from the national youth orchestra, in order to participate in an international cello festival. We thought it best to go along. The experience was both enjoyable and productive, not only musically, but also in building relationships with the group. Memorable experiences included visiting the national cathedral during a Good Friday service, meeting up with one of our students in the Boca neighborhood, and getting to know a sister church in downtown Buenos Aires.

The Lord has ways of reminding us of the transience of life. Elizabeth's first concert of the season took place in early April with a performance that originally featured Carlos Céspedes, a clarinet instructor in Montevideo and the principal clarinet soloist in the standing orchestra in the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires. He went into eternity a mere six days before the concert. Following heavy rain several weeks ago, a long cement balcony collapsed onto the sidewalk leading to the orchestra auditorium seconds after a fellow cellist walked under it. Such events remind us of the opportunity and urgent need in this part of the world where God has placed us, our children, our students, and their churches. May we number our days in ways that tend toward wisdom (Psalm 90). †

ALONG THE WAY . . .

(continued from page 1)

later on who was able to come. We very much appreciate the use of the pavilion at Hampton Park Baptist Church (HPBC) for this gathering.

Josh and Amy Jensen's family returned to the Greenville, SC, area in April after having services in the NC and PA areas. Joan scheduled two family reunions this spring - one for the Jensen clan and one for the Martins. Josh preached at HPBC on April 28 in the morning and evening services. Joan and I are very much enjoying getting to better know our grandkids “from the other side of the world.” There will be a few more immediate family gatherings before the Josh Jensens leave our area for other States.



(l-r) Micah, Ezra, Clara, Anna, Isaiah, Becca, Amy, Maria, & Joshua with their passenger van.

The **Farmers** arrived from Cambodia on April 19. They were very busy with visiting their two college daughters and meeting
(continued on page 4)

Answered Prayer in Southern Mexico

by Marco & Gwendolyn Nuñez, church planters in southern Mexico

It was a joy to have Pastor Dave Walton and his wife, Kay, visiting with us during Easter week. (Dave pastors Meadowlake Baptist Church in Mobile, AL, which is one of our supporting churches.) Many of the church folks mentioned what a blessing the special services and sermons were to them.



Dave & Kay Walton (center) with Toño Alvarado's family

The Lord does hear and answer prayer according to His will. On Easter Sunday, Lucio was saved. He has been on our prayer list for some time. He has come to our meetings for quite a while at the invitation of a church family.



Lucio



Carmen

On Sunday, April 7, Carmen was saved. A coworker, who is a church member, invited her. She has been coming for about six months. She cleans the offices where a man in our church works, and she said that she

noticed him and wondered what made him so different and happy. One day she saw a Bible on his desk, and later he invited her to our church. God is building His church.



Pastor Vicente with Edid & Rosy

Two people were baptized recently at Pastor Vicente's church in Valladolid: Rosy, who was saved a few years ago; and Edid, a young lady who was saved more recently. We are thankful for the Lord's work in their hearts.

In Chemax, where Pascual pastors, three children were recently saved, and they continue to come to the Saturday classes and church services.

Please pray for salvation for Gustavo. He is the son of a faithful lady here in the church. Gustavo and his girlfriend have two little daughters. They were living with the girlfriend's father in a third-floor apartment when it caught on fire, and everything was burned, except the room where Gustavo and



Church group in Cancun engaging in street evangelism

his girlfriend and the daughters were living. They were pretty shaken up, and they all came to church after that happened.

Gustavo is 29 now, but he started coming to church with his mother when he was about three years old. I was so glad he came to church again recently, and happy that Marco is still here preaching and serving faithfully. Gustavo came into the children's class to say hello and to see the classroom he grew up in. He sat down on one of those same benches that were here when he was a child, and he wept. Please pray that there will be godly sorrow that works repentance and salvation in Gustavo, his children, and his girlfriend.

Even though most of the people who have been saved and attend our church were invited by a friend, a neighbor, a coworker, or a mother, we continue to go out and share the gospel in markets, on the streets, and outside hospitals. †

Marriage & Family Conference

(continued from page 1)

Hancock, who also taught us his new tune for the "Shema" passage in Deuteronomy 6

- Practical examples and illustrations from every day marriage and family life
- A lesson book of 24 lessons put into the hands of the church leaders
- Two powerful lessons on family unity by our newest teacher, Will Grover
- A beautiful, air-conditioned meeting room and a special offering to pay for it (\$450)
- Childcare for around 20 children who came with their parents—courtesy of Kim Crowley & Lydia, Sophia, and Julia Kane
- A deeply moving lesson, "When Tragedy Strikes a Family," by Pastor Vachna
- Strong emphasis on delighting in children as they are an inheritance and reward from God (More than one couple told us they are now open to more children!)
- Clear emphasis on heart change in our

children, not just outward obedience

- Warnings about the dangers of smartphone use in our homes, and strategies to keep our children safe
- Practical ways to show love between husband and wife
- Ten rules for (or "during"?) a Christian marital spat
- The destructiveness of immorality and divorce



Julia Kane helping at the literature/logo shirt table at the conference

When I asked a newly married couple for their feedback, they said, "Now we know how to pray for our children, and we have a road map to help lead us to the destination God has for our family." Amen!

Our next Pastors School session will be a seminar on "The Church and World Missions," using the Kairos program from Phnom Penh. The Kairos team will come to Banlung for 4 1/2 days of teaching and discussion, November 12-16. Their team will do all the teaching and facilitating, and any missionaries who are in town that week are invited to participate as table leaders and "resident missionaries," since none of the presenters has missions experience. Three Fellowship Church pastors from Ratanakiri have already completed the entire Kairos course in Phnom Penh, and I hope they will be allowed to help lead discussions. I also hope that there can be some panel discussion and Q/A with the Ratanakiri missionary community who have a combined total of over 200 years of missionary experience. †

Page 4

ALONG THE WAY . . .

(continued from page 2)



Jeremy, Gloria, & Bonnie Ruth Farmer

their friends that first weekend. We saw most of the family on the Sunday morning when Josh preached. We had planned to get together with their family at our house the next day, but that had to be cancelled at the last minute. So, we are still looking forward to having a sit-down-visit with them. Their third daughter, **Gloria**, will be a freshman at Bob Jones University in August. Gloria graduated from homeschool/high school and had her graduation party shortly before the Farmers' five-month furlough began.

At the beginning of May, **Lauren Chapman** and **Mia Kane** will be flying to spend the summer with their parents in Michigan and Ban Lung, respectively. It was neat to see how the Lord supplied extra funds specifically to help Mia to fly home to Cambodia.

Tim and Cheryl Chapman were in Greenville - at BJU - to attend Lauren's junior piano recital, held on April 27. They left very early the next morning to drive to Tennessee for services. It was fun to be with the Chapmans Saturday evening, if only for a short time.

Tim Chapman will be taking a group of teens from Calvary Baptist Church of Midland, Michigan, to Lima, Peru, in June



Cheryl, Lauren, & Tim Chapman

for ten days to help the Lima church. Tim's daughter, Abby, will be in the group - probably as an interpreter for the other teens!

Ted Allston is home from his two weeks of teaching in Kenya, along with Jake Derksen. Their lessons covered material from the Pentateuch.

We received a letter from the **Crnkovićs** in Koprivnica, Croatia, that voiced their desire for their church to purchase a property next to the church for \$50,000, which had just come on the market. Within just a few days, the funds were made available! Such a blessing!



This picture of children at a special meeting at the Koprivnica church shows the building that just went up for sale.

Also, Kornel, Tanja, and their two sons will be visiting the USA this summer to visit churches and friends, several of whom support the Crnkovićs financially. Kornel and Tanja hope to present their ministry

in some new churches with the goal of increasing their support, which is currently below the recommended level.

In the last Newsletter, there were several pictures of the summer camps in Uruguay. During Holy Week, a **family camp** was held at the church in **Las Flores**, and we were able to secure a photo of the group.



Holy Week family camp in Las Flores

We received some sad news in April: **Marianne Rauter**, one of our single missionary ladies in Montevideo, Uruguay, fell at home and badly injured her leg. She was admitted to a hospital for treatment. The doctor said she is not competent to live alone, so she was transferred to a nursing home close to her daughter's house.

Also, **Chicha Rodriguez** is in Greenville again. Her sister, **Susana**, who lived in Greenville with her son's family, passed away in mid-April; so Chicha came up for the funeral and will be Stateside for five weeks. It was good to see her at HPBC on the Sunday that Joshua preached. Susana's son and three of his adult children are members at HPBC. This dear family is doing well after the homegoing of Susana. She will be greatly missed by all of us who knew her. †

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