

# EMU

## INTERNATIONAL

Evangelical Mission to the Unreached

Evangelical Mission to Uruguay

PROCLAIMING THE TRIUMPHS OF THE GOSPEL

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Ken & Joan Jensen  
in BanLung, Cambodia

### ALONG THE WAY . . .

I had fantasies in January of finishing this February Newsletter while still in Cambodia, knowing that if I waited until after Joan and I returned home, this issue would not arrive to you before, at least, after the first week of the month. Obviously, there was a problem with either my expectations or my diligence. I prefer the first explanation but suspect the latter to be the case. It was a wonderful trip and we had ample time to interact with all of our Cambodia Team members and their kids. The report of our journeys is being broken into 2 parts to better encompass our time with these dear co-workers and friends.

Summer camps are continuing in Uruguay through the beginning of March. In January a 50-year anniversary of Camp Emmanuel was held. Next month's Newsletter will present reports on the January MEU camps and the celebration.

Jeff Davis will be traveling to Uruguay on February 21 with Bill Hill to preach at the Workers' Conference (Feb. 25-28). The following week, Bill will have 2 sessions at the opening of the Family Camp (March 3-7), before returning Stateside on March 4. Jeff will take the rest of the sessions for the week. He leaves Uruguay on March 10.

The Steel family is finishing up a short furlough at the beginning of February. They plan to be back in Uruguay on February 12.

Thanks to each of you for your continued prayers and interest in the ministries of EMU International. †

### CAMBODIAN FRUIT - PART ONE

By Ken & Joan Jensen, assistant director & office administrator of EMU

The seed that eventually led to Joan's and my recent trip to Cambodia was planted in 1993 when the Crowley family was accepted by EMU as missionaries to Cambodia to work with an unreached tribal group in the northeastern jungles of Ratanakiri Province. In September of 2024, JD and Kim Crowley celebrated the 30th anniversary of their arrival in that southeast Asian country. That seed eventually resulted in four other American families joining the Cambodia Team, and each of those missionaries working with a number of national Cambodians assisting with Bible translations, national language radio programs, church planting, and Bible institute training. Several of the Americans have also written Commentaries and Christian literature in various languages. During our visit, Joan and I were blessed to see many of these ministries in action.

In the summer of 2024, the leaders of the EMU Cambodia Team contacted Joan and me and asked if we would be willing to visit Cambodia in January 2025. The impetus of their request was multifaceted: first, JD, who has been the field director of EMU in Cambodia, was handing over the position to Brian Kane. Second, all of the Americans in Cambodia came into the mission while I was the director, and Joan and I have served them - as a group - for over 30 years. We know their families and ministries intimately - even to the extent that their parents have been friends of ours for decades. I'll call it "the family tie." Third, with a Team of this size, there is often at least one family on furlough. In January 2025, everyone would be in Cambodia and available for a reunion. Fourth, Joan and I are getting old and our traveling years will come to an end. And we are both nearing at least a partial retirement. Fifth, my lengthening litany of accidents suggests a narrowing window for field visits.

Our flights to and from Cambodia took us through Greenville/Spartanburg, Atlanta, Seoul, and Phnom Penh Airports. The middle flight put us in the air for almost 15 hours. On the way home, we also had the additional "in transit" travel of driving over 9 hours from Oyadao, where Josh and Amy

Jensen's family lives, to Phnom Penh to catch our 11:45 PM plane. The return travel time was by far the longest I have ever experienced!

Brian Kane greeted us in Phnom Penh as we exited the terminal late on Saturday night, January 18. He drove us to the Christian & Missionary Alliance (CMA) guest facility, which also houses a Bible school for national missionary training. CMA has a number of rooms available at low-cost for missionaries in transit. Brian, who was the primary designer of our schedule, reviewed our agenda for the next 2+ weeks. Amazingly, neither of us seemed to suffer the dreaded jet-lag during this trip. (There's a 12-hour difference between South Carolina and Cambodia.) But Sunday was not especially relaxing as we attended the morning service at an expat church (where we had the 1<sup>st</sup> of 3 communions on this trip!) and then ran errands with Brian, who had a list of things to buy while in the capital - both for his family and others. By the time we returned to CMA, we had supper and went to bed. One thing that all of our Cambodia missionaries have in common is that they go to bed and rise way earlier than we ever imagined. Sadly, in our first week home, we are both still on *their* sleep schedule!

On Monday morning, we battled our way out of the capital for Ou Reang Ov ("O Ring O") where the Hancock family ministers. (There are driving laws but very little enforcement. So, if you don't have some modicum of aggressiveness, it is senseless to attempt driving!) The jaunt to the Hancocks took 2 hours, and we arrived just before lunch. Our visit coincided with that of the Ferrill family. Rob and Laine attend the church in Birmingham, AL, where Matt Hancock's parents are members. Hearing of Matt and Becky's need for a helper for Becky for homeschooling and caring for their 7 children, the Ferrills' daughter Kimi volunteered to serve, and her parents accompanied her to Cambodia to help her settle in. The Ferrills have 14 children, 10 of whom are adopted from China. Kimi is one of the oldest of the adoptees. She will be with the Hancocks at

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# The Faithful Persistence of Bocha

by Ted & Marla, Bible teacher in the 10/40 Window

God in His grace has allowed me to connect with a Kenyan brother named Hussein Bocha. He is ethnically Somali. He prefers to be called Bocha, since it more clearly identifies him with his Somali people, whom he loves.

In 2004 Bocha was born again from a Muslim background. He was led to Christ by his public-school teacher, who sought an undesirable posting because it would give her the chance to evangelize Muslim students there. Bocha kept his conversion from his family for a year because he knew they would react very badly against him.

But the family saw the fruit of the Spirit in his life to such an extent that a year later his father asked him, "Bocha, have you become a Christian?" What a thing for a devout Muslim father to ask his son!! Even though his father and family saw a pronounced change for the better in Bocha, they kicked him out of the house, refusing to pay for his education because he was following Christ.

In 2005 the teachers who had witnessed to Bocha helped him get into a secondary school. It was his best opportunity, but it was 95% Muslim. His gospel testimony to others brought severe persecution. The other students beat him, and burned his books, school uniforms, mattresses – all his belongings. He went back home for about 3 weeks because the students in his secondary school would have killed him. His parents and older siblings all refused to help him with school fees. Though he was able to live at home, he was treated like an outcast. The teachers who had led him to Christ helped him finish secondary school in another part of Kenya. The cost was undertaken by churches these teachers knew.

In 2008 Bocha graduated from secondary school. God told him: "Go back to your community." He spent about a year in his village volunteering to help tutor students in the school there. Then in 2009 Bocha received a call from God to go to Bible school. He attended East Africa Bible College in Eldoret, Kenya, supported again by churches known to the teachers who led him to Christ, earning a diploma in theology.

When Bocha graduated in 2011, God said to him: "Go back to your community." He wrestled with God over this command. "My community doesn't want me, doesn't want to associate with me – even my own family." After resisting God's will for that night, he had peace to go back to his village, his family, his community.

He returned to his parents and his village, who welcomed him with great reservation because he was continuing with Christ; he was at home, but as an outcast. Over a period of about a year he focused on forming relationships of love for the sake of the truth of the gospel for the glory of

Christ. As he shared the gospel, about ten people were born again. "Muslim leaders and villagers recognized that we were serious about sharing the gospel and making disciples for Christ among our Muslim neighbors. As we gathered on Christmas Eve (2011) to worship, some ruffians came and beat us, putting two of us in the hospital; they burned our houses that night with all our belongings. I was forced to leave my village again and to begin ministering the gospel in the town of Minjila, about 10 kilometers away."

In 2014 Bocha went back to his village again to rebuild relationships with the people and their leaders. He married in August 2014. Before marriage he asked his fiancée if she really wanted to join him in his dangerous work. She said: "God will bless us and we will see His victory in the lives of these people." He and his wife went to his village where they showed Christ's love and truth to the villagers. The leading imam in the village said to him: "Bocha, we beat you, burned your home (twice), and ran you out of the village, but you have continued to come back to our community to show us that you do us good and to care for us. Surely, this is love." Not long afterwards this imam said: "I want to know about your God who commands His servants to go to those who persecute them."

Bocha ministered to the imam's family, giving financial gifts to pay for hospital bills of the imam's father. He and his fellow disciples of Christ prayed for the imam's father's healing, and God healed him. Not long afterward this imam trusted Jesus Christ as his Savior. He is a secret believer just as Bocha was in his early days of following Jesus. If the imam tells the community that he now follows Jesus Christ, the villagers will kill him. Bocha is discipling him slowly and carefully, trusting that at some point in the near future he will find a time and place to make public his faith in Christ.

Bocha and his believing brethren continue to visit villages in their region, helping the sick, the poor, and the desperate as they tell them of the Savior of their souls who can also heal their bodies. He and his fellow believers have seen God answer their prayers for healing the sick, which has led to many professing Christ. When Adelphoi makes teaching trips to his town of Minjila, he brings together several of these disciples who tell of their commitment to and joy in Jesus, their Savior and their Shepherd, even as they deal with the difficulties of being rejected and persecuted by their families and communities.

Bocha also makes multiple trips each year to Somalia, where he has made connections with government officials who enable him to bring in food and small-scale financial

aid. One group of four men trusted Christ as a result of one of Bocha's trips to Somalia last year. Their families were run out of their village, living now in a refugee camp under a shelter made with poles and mud walls, but without a roof. God put this need on the heart of an Adelphoi partner who enabled these four families to have shelter.

Another man who saw the Jesus Film and followed Christ, then showed the film in his village on a Friday evening. The next afternoon he was beaten and sent to the hospital. His photo is below.



*Christian national beaten by Muslims*

- Please pray for Bocha and those who have followed Christ as God's Spirit uses them to share and demonstrate God's love and truth in the gospel. It is a dangerous ministry.
- Please pray for his children who are ridiculed and heckled by schoolmates because they are Christians.
- Please pray for provision and protection on his trips to Somalia. He must fly there because traveling by road is dangerous due to the terrorist group Al-shabab, which is based in Somalia but operates in Kenya as well.

May we all be challenged by this man as he follows Christ in making the gospel a visible reality in the midst of communities that hate Jesus. May we follow the example of Jesus Christ as it is clearly portrayed in the life and work of our brother Bocha. †

*(The day Joan and I returned from Cambodia, we read an email from Ted stating that Marla had been in a car accident - February 4. Joan talked to Ted the following day and received a further report. A man in a pick-up truck slammed into the side of Marla's car. Her vehicle was totaled. She was taken to the ER where she was examined for injuries. She sustained two cracked ribs and a cracked sternum, so she is no doubt in continuing pain. However, there seem to be no other injuries. Also, as you may be aware, Marla received a cochlear implant several months ago. She is continuing therapy to better recognize sounds through this new device. It is not like a hearing aid. Ted & Marla would appreciate our prayers. kj)*

## Cambodian Fruit

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least until May. It was delightful to get to know this dear family during our short time together. Rob and Laine flew home the next day.

After lunch on Monday, we all piled into 2 vehicles to drive out to the Hancocks' new property where they will be building their own house. The house plans have already been "drawn," and it is hoped that construction can begin soon and be completed in about 6 months. This new location will be advantageous to both their family and ministries.



(l-r) Ken & Joan, the Hancocks, & Kimi with her parents, Laine & Rob Ferrill

From there, Matt took Rob, Laine, Kimi, Brian, Joan, and me to meet a national pastor he works with some miles out of town. Besides pastoring the church, this young man and his wife teach English classes to area children. This has been an effective outreach into the community. We then drove to another church/school headed by a pastor that Matt also works with in the O Ring O area.



(l-r) Brian, pastor/teacher with wife & child, & Matt at a Khmer church/school

Back at the Hancocks' house, we enjoyed a delicious supper followed by a time of singing and prayer. Matt is the unofficial Team troubadour - he seems to always have his guitar handy and is ready to lead singing, which he also did at the EMU Cambodia reunion later that week. The next morning we all gathered at the Hancocks' house for one last meal together. A traditional dish of rice and pork was added to the eggs and oatmeal breakfast.

At 10:30 AM, Brian, Joan, and I began our 5½ hour drive north/northeast to Stung Treng. The many hours of being in Brian's vehicle gave the 3 of us plenty of time to converse on many subjects. Brian is a wealth of knowledge.

About 20 minutes shy of Stung Treng, Brian handed us off to Jeremy Farmer and 3 of his kids at a gas station where the road to BanLung begins its eastern track. Seeing the Farmers' "compound" for the first time was amazing. The house and grounds are truly

impressive. Our first order of business was to take our luggage to Brooke Illsley's bungalow, where we would be staying. Brooke graciously moved into the Farmers' house so we could use her cottage. Her residence is the epitome of efficiency consisting of a living room, kitchen, bathroom, and a loft bedroom. And it has A/C, though we ended up not using it much, especially at night. (During our visit I heard the word "freezing" more in 2 weeks than I had heard it in Greenville all fall and winter - where it actually was freezing! At nights the temps dropped down to as low as 58°, which for Cambodia is cold. Even I succumbed to sporting a long-sleeve t-shirt in the mornings. The daytime highs were generally in the 80s, so the weather was rather pleasant for a tropical climate.)

On Wednesday morning, Jeremy took Joan and me, along with Van Da, an hour north to the Cambodia/Laotian border where a church is being established in the village of Na Ong. Van Da is a Laotian by heritage and is helping in this church plant. He speaks fluent English, Khmer (Cambodian national language), and Laotian. He and his wife, Pou, teach English and have one child and are expecting another. It's an interesting but long story of how the Farmers and this couple became friends and started working together. The drive north was fascinating as I peppered Van Da with questions about his life, ministry, and country.



Van Da with wife Pou & child

At Na Ong village, we parked at the home of Pro-in and Si-ma. This couple and their 2 children are from a tribal group in the Mondulakiri Province. They felt called of God to become missionaries to the Laotians living in northern Cambodia, and they moved to Na Ong 2 years ago. It has been rough going as they were very much outsiders and not accepted in the community. However, over time, the attitudes towards them improved. Pro-in and his wife are partly supported by a



Pro-in with wife Si-ma & their children

church group in Mondulakiri, but they have to supplement their income by growing *casava*, a cash crop used for making flour. He took us to his field and explained the process of growing, harvesting, and preparing the roots for sale. It is not an easy life, but Pro-in was a farmer in his home village before becoming a missionary and is a hard worker. And it was abundantly obvious talking to Si-ma that she is a highly intelligent and capable wife. For a snack they served us sugar cane from their garden. Very refreshing.



(l-r) Van Da, Pro-in, & Jeremy meeting at Pro-in's house in Na Ong

Thursday morning was the official pancake and bacon breakfast meal on the Farmers' open-sided balcony. Actually, all of our missionaries' houses, except the Hancocks, have open-sided balconies where their meals are served. You forget the difference between inside and outside the house. The main living quarters, which sport these balconies, are probably 12 feet off the ground, providing some reprieve from mosquitos and prying eyes, but catching any passing breeze. Speaking of mosquitos, we rarely got a mosquito "bite" during the entire trip. Malaria is now scarce in most towns and villages - a radical change from my first visit to Cambodia in 1995 - but Dengue Fever is still a concern.

That morning the Farmer kids, minus Eden, gave Joan and me a "walk-about" of their elaborate bike-trail labyrinth in the cashew forest across from their house. I'm pretty good with directions in the woods from my years of mountain hiking, but without these kids, I would still be trying to find my way out of that maze! At mid-afternoon, Jeremy took the 4 youngest kids, Brooke, Joan, and me to a peer that stretches several hundred yards into the Sekong River for the kids to play in the shallows near the center of the massively broad river. We adults availed ourselves of four of the dozens of hammocks tied under shelters. It was a wonderful time of talking



Joan & Eden back from buying drinking water (continued on page 4)

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## **Cambodian Fruit**

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about so many subjects. Later that evening, after supper, oldest son, Judson, who enjoys “survivalist preparedness,” started a bonfire for us using his flintstone. While Eden played her guitar softly, we had a memorable time of fellowship – again, with no bugs, and the fire truly felt good in the coolish night air.

Friday morning was a travel day again. This time Jeremy was the driver. Their van was packed with 10 bodies, food for the reunion, Eden’s guitar, the Farmers’ & Brooke’s luggage for spending the night in BanLung, and Joan’s & my luggage. The drive to BanLung took about 2 hours, and as usual, the time was well spent in conversation.

The Kanes’ newly purchased house (they bought the residence they had been renting almost since they moved to BanLung) was the staging ground for the Friday EMU reunion. We were enthusiastically welcomed by the Kane family. We were the first “group” to arrive, so I took the time to explore the premises. Lydia Kane loves plants, so my first reconnoiter was their vast yard, planted with many fruit and ornamental trees. Very shortly after my wandering began, 13-year-old Julia joined me as a tour guide to explain what-was-what and when it was planted. (Several of our missionaries and MKs have the “horticulture-gene.” So fun!) Before the tour was over, the Hancocks, Josh Jensens, and Crowleys arrived to round out our mob. Twenty-five kids under the age of 19 – and 2 Golden Retrievers - can certainly provide a lively environment! But one that makes the heart swell!



*Ken & Julia under the jackfruit tree.*

All the wives, except Joan, brought their assigned



*(l-r) Jedidiah H, Enoch H, Hope H, Ethan H, Matt H, Jonathan H, Hans H, Becky H, Ezra H, Kimi, Micah J, Ken J, Amy J, Josh J, Isaiah J, Ezra J, Becca J, JD & Kim C, Anna J, Clara J, Joan J, Maria J, Judson F, Salem F, Henry F, Jeremy F, Bonnie Ruth F, Elisha F, Hugh K, Brooke I, Eden F, Brianna K, Sophia K, Jackson K, Lydia K, Natalia K, Julia K, & Brian K*

foods, and when all was in order we had lunch. There were several kinds of soup, breads, fruits and vegetables, and many desserts. Later in the afternoon, JD announced a colloquy of the adults and any kids who wanted to attend. As usual, Matt led us in several songs. What followed, though embarrassing to Joan and me, were testimonials of thanks to us for our service to the Cambodia Team over the decades. To be honored by such an amazing group of outstanding missionaries was more than humbling. But our hearts were filled with rejoicing as we looked around at these families and considered their ministries, and realized the privilege God has given us to be a part of this pioneer missionary endeavor. But of equal blessing is having all of these folks as a very real part of our family. This is such a fulfillment of Mark 10:29-30 in Joan’s and my lives!

Later in the day, after group photos were taken with Brian’s drone, leftovers were served, after which families began peeling off, some to return home (Josh and his family) and others to their overnight accommodations in town. Joan and I then transferred our “stuff” to the Crowleys’ house, which was to be our overnight residence for the next 5 nights as our time was divided between JD & Kim and the Kane family. (Another thing

I never got used to in BanLung and later in Oyadao with the Jensens, was the level of early morning noise. The hundreds of roosters vie to be the loudest and earliest crowers, and in the process waking up every dog in the province. The cacophony is unbelievable. My pre-dawn coffee/devotional time had to take place in a closed room with calming Spotify music played at full volume!) Most of our fellowship with the Crowleys was spent in discussing families and ministries – past, present and future. JD and Kim plan to retire from full-time ministry in Cambodia at the end of their current term, though their involvement with the ministries in Cambodia will not end, if the Lord provides sufficient health. JD and Kim’s confidence in the Team to continue the multiplied ministries is encouraging. The 4 families who arrived in Cambodia subsequent to the Crowleys had excellent teachers – JD & Kim – and each husband and wife of these 4 units are highly capable of continuing the legacy. †

*(To Be Continued)*

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