

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 . . .

June is the month when summer begins in our northern climes, and it is the last month of the first half of the year. The adage, “the older you get, the faster time passes,” solidifies the notion that I am getting really old! June is also the month when we usually announce the “Rick’s Projects” that are on the docket for Camp Emmanuel in Uruguay during the designated intensive work-weeks in August. I’ll say more about this subject towards the end of this column. First, I will review the comings and goings of several of our EMU missionaries in May, June, and July.

Marco and Gwendolyn Nuñez were Stateside from May 5-27 to visit some supporting churches in the upper mid-west. Before they drove north from Greenville, SC, Joan and I were able to spend a few brief hours with them. They were doing great when we last visited. They are back in Cancún now.

Ted Allston is ministering in India from May 22 to June 9.

Billy Judson and his family are in the USA from May 28 to July 16. They will be in the Greenville, SC, area June 7-22 before heading to Florida for meetings. Pray that the Judsons will be able to raise additional funds for their ministries in India. Before coming to the States, Billy’s father-in-law passed away on May 14. Pray for this dear family.

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TRANSITION

by Cedric & Candy W., missionaries to SE Asia

(At the end of 2024, Cedric and Candy W. joined the EMU family as candidates to a country in Southeast Asia. Because this country is considered a “closed” country to the Gospel, I will not refer to the country by name, nor give the last name of this family. The following is a combination of Cedric’s two prayer letters since they have been with EMU, which will give you an overview of their transitions. Cedric’s contact with EMU has been through Jeff Davis. The two met via a ministry trip to another closed Asian country years ago. Cedric and Candy were both raised in Hong Kong, which they refer to as their homeland. - kj)

Letter 1:

In December, we transitioned our Chinese church plant [in southwestern Canada] to a capable Chinese pastor, brother Joe Sun. He and his wife have been in Canada for six years. Having recently completed his seminary studies, he was eager to find a ministry opportunity to apply what he has learned. At the same time, the Lord had placed another vision on our hearts. By the end of December 2024, we had officially handed over the church to Pastor Joe. Although we are no longer physically present, we maintain regular communication with the church. We are truly blessed to see our brothers and sisters not only remain faithful but also step up and actively participate in the ministry. Please continue to pray for their growth.

I am excited to share that the Lord is leading us back to Asia, with plans to reach the country of M. My journey with M. began during a family trip in 2019 while I was still ministering in Hong Kong. God began to work in my heart in profound ways. We had visited other Buddhist countries before, but this trip was our first experience in a Muslim nation. I was struck by the many similarities to my homeland, particularly the deep-rooted Chinese culture and our shared history as former British colonies. From that moment, I felt a growing burden to one day return and minister in that country.



(l-r) Joshua, Cedric, Caleb, Candy, & Celia

Currently, we are based in Matthews, NC, working on raising additional support before returning to Asia. For strategic reasons, we have now joined EMU International as our mission board. Our son, Caleb, is being homeschooled, while our older children, Celia and Joshua, are both enrolled at the local community college. We are also attending a Chinese church near our home, hoping to be a blessing to them during our time in the area.

Letter 2:

It’s hard to believe that we’ve already been back in the States for nearly five months. The first couple of months were filled with many settling-in tasks—looking for vehicles, securing the right insurance, and handling various logistical needs. It was time-consuming, but we are grateful for God’s goodness and provision throughout the process.

Having spent most of our lives in Commonwealth countries like Hong Kong and Canada, we’ve had to adjust to some differences here in the U.S. One significant blessing is that we were able to obtain a good medical insurance plan, for which we thank God.

Over the past year, Candy has been dealing with anemia. Unfortunately, due to long wait times in Canada, her condition worsened as

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God's Word Meeting Needs

by Tim & Ruth Bixby, church planters in Sarcelles, France

In several of his inspired epistles, the Apostle Paul specifically applies God's truth to men, women, and children according to their particular situations (e.g., Ephesians 5:22–6:9; Colossians 3:18–4:1). In keeping with this spirit, we find it beneficial to meet at times in age- or gender-specific groups, to help believers apply God's Word to their distinct roles and stations in life. Below is a glimpse of some of the ministries in which we have been privileged to participate:

In March, our team of youth workers hosted a special dinner and Sunday afternoon gathering for our teens. On another Sunday afternoon, we also welcomed our single adults into our home, where the 26 participants were divided into three smaller groups for an inductive study of 1 Thessalonians 2. The ladies of our church have been meeting monthly around the theme of "One Another Ministry" within the church body. They have held three sessions so far, with two more planned — the final meeting in June will take the form of a one-day retreat. In addition, many of the women have been meeting in smaller groups for Bible reading, prayer, and Scripture memorization. The men have been following a similar theme, gathering alternately in person and via Zoom to accommodate those who work on Saturdays.



Ruth Bixby teaching a ladies' Bible study

Ruth was asked to help teach a women's course at a Bible institute in the northeast of France. She invested many hours in preparation. One tangible blessing was that she invited two young ladies from our church to go through the course with her. These regular teaching times were not only helpful preparation for Ruth, but also a discipleship opportunity with these young women. One of them was in a relationship with an unsaved man. God used the course to give her the courage to break off the relationship, and we had the joy of receiving her into church membership last month!

This young woman was one of six people who joined our church recently — only one of whom came from another congregation. Four of the six were baptized in our church. While we wish the numbers were much greater, each one represents a life delivered from the power of Satan, and for that, God receives all the glory. One of them, **P.**, was baptized just last month. He grew up in a Catholic home where the family faithfully



(l-r) Zacharie, Miriam, Micaiah, Simeon, Ruth, Tim, & Gabriel Bixby

prayed together each day, but never read the Bible. God used several difficult circumstances in his life — including some time spent in prison in Australia and the death of his mother — to bring him to seek salvation in Christ alone. He now has a strong desire to know and serve Christ, an unusual thirst for Scripture and teaching, and will be visiting the Bible institute mentioned above next month to consider more formal training.

We enjoyed several visits during March, including one from our nephew Aric Thomas, with whom we visited Pegasus Bridge, and Pastor Matt Murphree and

two of his sons. After our Good Friday service, we celebrated Easter with a special breakfast followed by a joyful service commemorating the Lord's resurrection.

Our teens recited Isaiah 53 and the

children quoted part of John 3. A choir, led by Albert, had practiced for several weeks to present two songs. There was also a mini orchestra. We are thankful for the visitors God brought and are praying that He will continue His work. We told you in our last letter that Albert and Patricia would be joining us for the year — we are very grateful for the wisdom and energy they have brought to the ministry.

We are privileged to meet individually with several who are either seeking Christ or desiring to know Him more deeply. Let me share just one story of God's grace:

C. is a young working woman who first attended our church the day of our Christmas program and then returned for our New Year's Eve service. She comes from a very traditional Roman Catholic family within the Chaldean community. Her father abandoned the family when she was young, leaving deep scars. One main reason she has been unable to attend church regularly

is that her mother, bedridden with advanced cancer, depends on her to retrieve the reserved Eucharist after the mass and bring it home. In fact, it was her understanding of the mass that became her greatest spiritual obstacle.

However, **C.** has met with Ruth several times by video call and began faithfully reading a small Gideon Bible during her metro commute to work. After reading through the Gospels and the Corinthian epistles, she remembered someone mentioning something to her about the book of Hebrews offering answers, and she decided to skip ahead and read it. Imagine a devout believer in the efficacy of the mass reading Hebrews for the very first time! She was struck by the clarity with which Hebrews describes the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross. She made note of the verses that spoke of Christ as our High Priest and of His finished work, reading them over and over. In their most recent meeting, she told Ruth that although she had previously assured herself she would never change her mind about the mass, she couldn't help having her mind changed by Scripture! She was in church on Sunday and told me that when she attended mass with family two days earlier, it was "utterly void of meaning" for her. It fills our hearts with joy to see the Holy Spirit using the Word to enlighten a lost soul! Please pray that this new life in her will also lead to the salvation of her family and friends.

The Apostle Paul urged the believers in Rome "by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me" (Romans 15:30). If he, though an apostle, needed the prayers of believers he had never met, how much more do we! Please use this letter as a reminder to strive together with us in prayer. †

ALONG THE WAY...

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John and Suzie Lehman were teaching in several African countries from the end of April until May 20. They ministered in Kenya, Ghana, Togo, and Morocco. While on the road, John and Suzie sent out a

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John Lehman teaching in Togo with Dr. Tommy Kendall & another man translating

Future Plans

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

On March 30th, I candidated to be the pastor at Cornerstone Baptist Church in Bay City, Michigan. On April 6th, the church voted and it was essentially unanimous. I have accepted the call to pastor the church. The Lord has made clear His leading in this decision, and we are truly grateful. Bay City needs more good churches, and the Lord is forming a real excitement in our hearts about ministering in that city with this church.

The church has a young associate pastor named Jacob Webster. He and his wife, Jessica, have a little baby boy named Peter. Jacob loves preaching and theology. We're developing a good friendship, and he seems ready to be mentored for future pastoral ministry. We are really excited to be able to invest in their lives.

I will begin serving as pastor at Cornerstone on September 1st. There are several things that need to happen before we can settle in to ministry with the church. Cheryl and I need to go back to Peru in July to wrap up some details there. The Lord has provided a buyer for our house in Peru, and in July we should be able to close on the sale of the house. We'll also finish preparing the things that we want to ship back to the States and take care of selling other things that we won't be bringing back.

Last month I was back in Peru to lead our fourth annual theology retreat. Our speaker



(l-r) Lauren, Micah, Tim, Cheryl, & Abi

was AJ Gibson, a former missionary in Mexico. I had asked AJ to speak on the theme of Biblical Theology. From the time that I first began to plan for theology retreats, this was a theme that I have wanted to have taught in one of our retreats. Biblical Theology takes a look at the whole Bible and seeks to understand theological truth within the framework of the Bible as one story. Over a period of three days, in ten different sessions, AJ began in Genesis and worked his way through the entire Old Testament. The effect of studying through that much of the Bible in three days (while seeing so many connections in the storyline of the Bible) is amazing. So many of us left the retreat with the strong sense that we want to read our Bibles more and, in particular, read longer passages in one setting. We left with our hearts full of worship to God who committed Himself

to protect the Seed of the woman, our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

As we look ahead, even though the Lord has closed the door for us to minister full-time in Peru, we continue with our vision for these theology retreats. I plan to go back once a year for at least the first five years (the church in Bay City is happy to let me take those trips). Pray with us as we consider our role in seeing the theology retreats continue.

It's been a great joy in the last year to watch Grace Baptist Church mature to a healthy position as a church. Numerically, the church is consistently running 280 in attendance on Sundays. The pastors, Ruben and Daniel, are faithfully leading, preaching, and ministering to the congregation. They have both matured in some very significant ways as more of the leadership has fallen to them in the past year. God has raised up a great group of faithful deacons who serve the church very well. There have been many babies born in the church over the last two years (more than I can keep track of), and the young families are growing in the Lord together. We are very thankful to God for what He has accomplished in the lives of so many people through the preaching of the gospel and the ministry of the church there in Lima. We have asked the Lord for "fruit that remains," and He is giving that. †

Despite Our Limitations

by Nicolas & Valeria Gomez, pastor in Tacuarembó, Uruguay



We have seen God's hand at work in our household finances, faithfully providing for our needs. By His grace, we were able to take part in events such as the Family Camp in Pueblo Las Flores and the

Conference held at Camp Emmanuel.

Unfortunately, we continue to have difficulties with our vehicle. We are praying for the means to replace it, as it is used extensively for ministry. The maintenance costs remain high, making this a challenge.

As a church, we continue the ministries with children and at the retirement home. Every Saturday afternoon, God is giving us a wonderful time with the children. We trust in His faithful Word and its fulfillment:

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverb 22:6) To strengthen this ministry, we have started a teacher training workshop for both current and aspiring children's ministry leaders.

We have been allowed monthly visits once again to Hogar Los Abuelos (*Grandparents' House*), where we cherish precious moments with the elderly. It is our deep desire that God will do the work of saving souls in that place.

In March, the Patria (*Homeland*) Gaucha Cultural Festival was held in Tacuarembó, attracting visitors from across the country and beyond. We took this opportunity to evangelize in public places and had many opportunities to share the Gospel. Additionally, we held special services in our church, where several individuals visited and heard the message. May God bring salvation through these efforts!

During Holy Week, a group from our congregation attended the Family Camp in Pueblo Las Flores, where they enjoyed a beautiful time of fellowship and learning from God's Word. Some of our brothers and sisters also served in various staff ministries:

Graciela Ferreira worked in the kitchen; Wilmar González led devotionals; Valeria (my wife) taught children; and I led the prayer meetings.

It is truly a blessing to see how God can use us despite our limitations—to Him be all the glory!

Lastly, Valeria and I have been taking the Administration of Ministry course at the F.V. Dabold Bible Institute being taught by the MEU office administrator, Pedro Donzé. It has been a tremendous blessing and challenge as we seek to serve God more effectively. We ask for your prayers so that we may apply what we learn in a way that glorifies His name.

As a family, we have faced some health struggles. Valeria is undergoing prediabetic treatment after recent tests revealed elevated glucose levels. Mateo has battled a severe flu, a viral digestive condition, and most recently, the mumps.

We deeply appreciate your continued prayers for our family and our congregation, Iglesia Evangélica Calvario de Tacuarembó. †

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ALONG THE WAY...

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number of photos, which amounted to a virtual photo-review of their ministry, but hopefully, they will write a more detailed article for the Newsletter about their travels.

Tim and Cheryl Chapman will be flying to Lima, Peru, on July 8 to begin the final phase of packing their belongings to be shipped to Michigan, where they will be ministering beginning September 1. Tim talked to the EMU leadership about the idea of continuing the Theology Retreats and a pastoral training program in Lima even after he is no longer an employee of EMU. The mission would continue to handle donations for these outreaches, and Tim would make periodic visits to Peru to be a part of those ministries. We will let you know more when the plans are finalized.

Jonathan and Marjorie B. are making plans to move from Greenville, SC, to the Detroit, MI, area so they can have greater interaction with the large "closed country" community there. Pray that the Bs will have wisdom and strength to make this move smoothly.

On Saturday morning, **June 14**, EMU will be holding its **annual Board meeting** in Greenville, SC. We are hoping that several of our in-town missionaries will be able to attend the luncheon afterwards, which will also include the spouses of the board members. Maybe, just maybe, we will get a group photo to share with you!

Rick Jensen is planning to go to Uruguay again in August to help oversee the major projects to be accomplished at Camp Emmanuel. I do not yet know the details of the team from the US he hopes to take.

There were several projects from last year that have not been completed, however, the money is already in-hand to finish them. The following projects have been planned which still need funding. Camp director, **Pedro**

Donzé, his camp personnel, and Rick Jensen and **Jeff Davis** decided these projects are needed.

- **New septic field lines for the Casita and for the two boys cabins. Projected materials & backhoe work: \$34,562 (\$10,000 has already been given)**

The septic fields were installed many years ago and have become impossibly clogged with pine tree roots, in spite of measures to mitigate the intrusion of the roots. New septic fields need to be created for these 3 facilities.

- **Replacement of the Camp Pumping System (for firefighting) - project need: \$2,300**
- **Air Conditioning for the Chapel and Cabins - project need: Chapel \$7,350 & Cabins \$9,200**

Temperatures over 100 degrees this past summer have raised this project on the priority list!

- **Removing dangerous trees close to structures - project need: \$1,900**
- **Bathroom partitions (aluminum) in girls cabins 1 to 4 - project need: \$14,300**
- **Installation of lighting for the ball field & the road/walkway to the ball field walkway areas - project need: \$10,300**

As usual, a large number of Uruguayans from our churches will be helping complete these projects. Much of the work to be done requires a lot of manual labor and technical skill, and it seems these requirements will be met by those who have volunteered to help. Pray that the funds will be available so the work can go forward. Pray, too, for sufficient volunteers to staff the kitchen, a necessity to fuel the work teams!

The "summer months" (which include more than the actual summer) are often

referred to as vacation months. But I think it is only those enrolled in school who actually have extended vacation time. None the less, I trust that "at no time" you will take a vacation from praying for EMU's missionary team and ministries. Thank you so much for partnering with us. †

Transition

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she wasn't able to receive timely treatment. She is now under the care of a couple of specialists and is scheduled to begin iron infusions next week. Please pray that her treatment will be effective and that her health will be fully restored in time for our move to the field.

In recent months, we've had the opportunity to visit several new churches to share our vision for reaching the country of M., as well as reconnecting with a number of long-time supporting churches. After moving into our current home, we quickly realized what a blessing our location is—we are just five minutes away from an Asian market and a Chinese church. Both have made our transition much smoother. Joshua and Celia have already made friends with peers their age, and I've had the opportunity to preach a couple of times as well.

Later this month, I will participate in staff training at The Wilds Christian Camp of North Carolina. I've also been invited to serve there for two weeks in July. Students from Hong Kong and Macau will be attending the camp, and I'll be assisting with translation. Please pray that God would use this opportunity to reach these students for Christ. †

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