

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 . . .

It's that time of year again when our EMU missionaries seem to be crazy-busy with special music presentations, celebration meals with family and friends, added services at churches, planning and navigating family Christmases, seasonal decorating, and New Year's activities. I won't even mention *shopping!* (Oops) And no doubt these things are true for all o'y'all! May the Lord greatly bless you and your family during these crazy-busy weeks as we keep in mind Who we are celebrating.

As part of your seasonal plans, we trust you will seriously consider participating with us in the **EMU Christmas Fund Offering** and the **Camp Emmanuel Sponsorship Fund** - both explained in the November Newsletter.

With the return home of **Ted Allston** from India on Sunday, November 23, the international travels of our missionaries seem to have ended after a rather busy 2025.

Jeff Davis recently spent several days with **J & M**, one of our missionary families to the Muslim people, who have recently relocated to a large Muslim community in Michigan.

From there, Jeff traveled to Midland, MI, for the installation service of **Tim and Cheryl Chapman** at Cornerstone Baptist Church in Bay City, MI. The Chapmans are still searching for an affordable, appropriate house to purchase.

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FALLING FOR FRANCE

by Ken & Joan Jensen, EMU office in Taylors, SC

It had been 15 years since Joan and I last visited the **Bixbys in France**. At that time, they were residing in Bordeau in the southwestern part of the country, where Tim's father pastored a church. Eventually, the Lord led Tim and Ruth to an area north of Paris to start a church in Sarcelles, with the help of an established church in the neighboring town of Saint Denis. Though we had seen the Bixby family during their furloughs in the intervening years and had kept in close contact with them via prayer letters, emails, and phone calls, we desired - encouraged by their invitations - to visit them "on the field" again.

We had three main goals for this journey: (1) to build a stronger bond with this dear family in their own environment; (2) to see their church building, which we (mainly Joan) had a minor part in its acquisition; and (3) to meet the church members that we only knew through the Bixbys' prayer letters. There was a 4th goal, which was less specific: Tim and Ruth asked us what sights we wanted to see while in northern France and Paris. After much discussion, Joan and I decided it would be best to let them line up an itinerary according to what they would like to see if they were tourists for the first time - based on what they now know.

This report is not intended to be a travel digest of all the sights we visited. For one, that would take up several Newsletters if pictures were included! However, if I



Joan & Ken & Eiffel Tower
taken from atop the Arch of Triumph

were reading an article by a friend who had just completed such a trip, I would want to know a few things. So, here is the minimal description of Goal 4. During our eleven days in France, two were exclusively consumed with church activities - two Sundays. On the other nine days, we followed a well-thought-out tour of Paris, some areas north of the city, and Normandy. In order, we walked the town of **Chantilly** (church, chateau and stables/race track); the forest and museum of **Compiègne**, where the Armistice of World War I was signed, as well as the capitulation of France to Germany near the beginning of WWII; the home and cathedral (Notre Dame of Noyon) of **John Calvin's** early life in **Noyon**, Picardy, before he left the Catholic Church; **Notre Dame of Paris** (beautifully restored since the devastating fire of April 2019); the **Arch of Triumph**, built by Napoleon I; the house and gardens of **Claude Monet** in **Giverny**, where the painter lived and worked for 43 years; **Château La Roche-Guyon**, the headquarters of General Rommel at the time of the Normandy landing by the Allies; **Pegasus Bridge** and Museum in Ranville, Normandy, the first French territory liberated by the Allies during the Normandy Invasion; **Saint-Mère-Église**, famous for the Allied paratrooper who was stranded when his parachute got snagged on the church steeple; **Le Mont Saint-Michel**, the impressive mountaintop abbey (and small town) that becomes an island at high tide; **Angoville-au-Plain church**, where medics Robert Wright and Kenneth Moore treated 80 wounded soldiers - Allied and German - while the village of Angoville was being fought over (this is the only French village memorial to the living rather than to the dead); **Ponte du Hoc**, **Utah Beach**, **Omaha Beach**, and the **Normandy American Cemetery and Museum**; the **Palace and Gardens of Versailles**; the **Estate of Trianon** (the "Queen's Residence"); the **Eiffel Tower**; a one-hour boat **tour on the River Seine**; and the **Basilica of**

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Impaired but Not Stopped

by Pedro & Patricia Donz , MEU & Camp Emmanuel administrator in Uruguay



Bethel Church of Pando's Couples' Retreat

Last weekend, God gave me the opportunity to lead a marriage workshop. I thank God for His help in teaching and preparing, trusting that each marriage was strengthened for His glory. For the meal, we made traditional Milanesis in a variety of flavors and set up a space where couples could enjoy lunch and fellowship together. Everyone left joyful and with plenty of homework to do, as the study provided them with material to continue at home.

Each week this spring has brought different camps - some that we served in all areas and others for which we simply provided the facilities. We hosted a church retreat for children and teens, and it was a blessing to see the leadership's passion for future generations. My wife, Paty, supervised the kitchen, while Marcos Gomez, Henry Castro, and Josu  Mendez (my co-workers at Camp Emmanuel), and I served in various ways. Calvary Temple of Montevideo held their annual retreat at the camp, and the brothers and sisters were edified by the teaching and fellowship of Jim and Pamela Kintigh. *(Jim Kintigh taught at the Bible Institute in Uruguay for many years, but his family had to leave EMU and return to the States almost 30 years ago.)*



Calvary Temple Church Retreat (Kintighs at far left)

In the midst of our regular weekly activities, we continue working on the "**Jensen Casita**" project. The construction is on schedule. The structure is up, the roof is on, and we are finishing the first bedroom and bathroom. The windows and doors are installed, so even if it rains, we can keep working. *(Between December 19 and January 10 the construction team from Rivera will be on Christmas vacation. However, we still hope the work on the 4-bedroom/4-bathroom guest house will be completed in February.)*



*(above) One of the 4 bedrooms
(below) Installing the metal roofing*



This month of November, we'll continue hosting various events at the camp - retreats, school camps, and even a wedding. We ask the Lord to help us be salt and light among the people we serve, and that we may glorify Him in all we do.

Please keep the **Camp Sponsorship Fund** in your prayers. One of our goals is to reach groups of young people from the countryside this summer, but we can't do it without financial help. We'll also

be hosting a couple from Peru who will serve at the camp with us, and we hope to assist with their travel and lodging. The Sponsorship Fund not only helps fund these plans but also helps the volunteer staff.

Please continue praying that God would call someone to work with us full-time in the kitchen and purchasing area, and that we can raise the support needed to cover this new position.

We also need your prayers for our physical health and medical care. Paty fell last week and sprained her left foot - the one she has no feeling in - so her recovery is taking longer than usual. I haven't been well either. [Today] I should be at the camp, but I'm home due to cervical nerve compression and sciatic nerve inflammation. I can't drive, and managing the pain has been very difficult. The X-rays show not only nerve issues but also early signs of arthritis, which is new for me. I'm walking a path I didn't expect. Typing is hard due to the pain in my shoulder and arm, but voice dictation is working well. Also, Henry Castro continues to recover from carpal tunnel surgery. So, our work team is somewhat impaired at this time.

Please keep praying for Paty's and my health insurance situation. We are still unsure of the best path forward. We continue researching the ongoing cost of Paty's new medication. By God's grace, it's now available in our country. Although it's a bit more expensive than in Brazil, when we factor in travel and time, it's better to buy it here in Uruguay.

Lastly, we'd like to share a new project for prayer: the construction of a mission office building to be located at Camp Emmanuel. Since we have moved the Mission's office *(the mission house and office in Montevideo were sold a couple of years ago)* to the camp, we need more space. We have worked with an architect to design a plan that meets our needs, and we're now working to reduce the cost of the project. Thank you for praying with us about this. †

ALONG THE WAY...

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Kornel and Tanja Crnkovic are in the midst of a change in their ministry. Kornel has been the co-pastor of the Baptist Church of Koprivnica since they moved from Split, Croatia, in the far south, many years ago. There are many small baptist churches in Croatia without pastors. The Crnkovi s have been helping one of these churches located about an hour from Koprivnica once or twice a month. They now believe the Lord would have them become involved with this church more full-time. The church is in the town of **Virovitica**. There are currently

about sixteen people attending on Sundays. There are many decisions yet to be made to fully implement this plan. Pray for them.



Kornel & Tanja Crnkovic (center) with the church people in Virovitica

Also, please pray for **Ovidio Acevedo**, the pastor of Emmanuel Church of El Cerro in Uruguay. On December 17 he is scheduled to have an operation to remove a tumor from his left kidney. Biopsy results after the operation will determine if it is cancerous. He and his wife, **Yusara**, have been faithfully serving the Lord for many decades in a very difficult area of Uruguay.

As we near the end of another year, I want to thank those of you who read these Newsletters and pray for our missionaries. Your part in these ministries is as critical as it is encouraging. May the Lord grant each of you a blessed Christmas and New Year. †

Falling For France

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Sacré Cœur (“Sacred Heart Church”) on Montmartre butte overlooking Paris. I could write chapters on these experiences, but will spare you here! Except for the last three “sites,” all or some of the Bixby family accompanied us. For someone like myself who dabbles in history, this truly was a trip of a lifetime.

However, the blessings reaped in meeting Goals 1-3 far outweighed the prodigious panoply of loci in the preceding paragraph. To spend time with the Bixbys and see their ministry was the impetus of our sojourn in France, not sightseeing – enjoyable as that was.

We arrived at the Charles De Gaulle Airport at half past noon on Friday, October 24, and were picked up by **Tim** and **Zach** (son #2, child #3) in the family’s mini-van. Vehicles in France give a new perspective to an American on the meaning of “mini.” Our Toyota Sienna at home looks more like a bus; and compact cars describe almost all cars. However, if the market in France was flooded by American sized vehicles, there would be nowhere to park! I have no idea how drivers in Paris parallel park on the streets in such tiny spaces. The Bixbys also have a hatchback sedan, and **Micaiah** (child #1) owns his own car. Tim ferried us and our luggage the 30 minutes from the airport to the village of **Fontenay-en-Paris** where the Bixbys own a 3-story “duplex” – i.e. a shared wall with the neighbor. The town of just over 2,000 inhabitants is very French in layout and architecture, and is situated 12.3 miles (via the train/subway) from downtown Paris. At this distance from the capital, villages are generally smallish and surrounded by plowed fields or wooded areas. Zach and **Gabriel** (#3 son), teenagers, attend a school in a neighboring village. Their parents or older siblings either drive them to the school or the boys can ride their bikes through the open fields on a shorter, more direct route – if it’s not raining. **Siméon** (#4 son) attends 1st grade a few blocks from his home. (If Energizer Battery Corp retires their bunny mascot, Siméon would be an excellent replacement – the kid has energy to spare!) Micaiah and **Miriam** (#2 child) attend college (engineering and history respectively) in Paris, and Miriam most often uses the train/subway station in a neighboring village located on the main tracks. Micaiah usually drives to classes and work in Paris.

Joan and I were given one of two ground floor bedrooms, which also doubles as Tim’s office. This level sports a bathroom, large laundry/pantry room, and a once-garage-area-now-library/coat/shoe repository. The third floor has three bedrooms and a bathroom, and the second floor is the general living quarters with a kitchen, dining room, living room, music room, sun room, outside deck, and a full bathroom.

Only the bathroom and patio have doors, the rest being open. To add to the quaint ambiance of village life, the view out the plate glass window in the dining room overlooks a spacious, gated, walking park of green grass, majestic trees – and sheep!

The Bixbys’ *modus operandi* is to keep newly arrived guests busy with a visit to Chantilly or even Paris for the first afternoon to keep the newbies awake until after supper. This was done successfully, with the help of a cold, windy walk through Chantilly, a 30-minute drive from the Bixbys’ house. Generally, the weather during our time in France was cool to cold, windy, and it rained part of almost every day.



Typical delicious supper together
(l-r) Tim, Ruth, Simeon, Michaela, Miriam, Ken, Joan, Zach, Gabriel, & Micaiah

Tim and Ruth asked that our visit coincide with the second week of their kids’ All-Saints’ holiday (Oct. 18-Nov.3) so the whole family could go on our many excursions. The brief illness of Simeon and Gabriel changed those plans for a day, but otherwise it was a family affair. The family routine was greatly interrupted, but as often as possible meals were eaten together with a short devotional at breakfast and always after supper. One evening, when not traveling, there was a “sing-along” gathering in the dining room with instruments and singing parts! They are a musical family. Joan gifted the family with the card game “Cover Your Assets” which provided some after-dinner entertainment.



Joan leading game night

Our two Sundays in France were spent almost exclusively at **Bible Baptist Church of Grand Roissy** in Sarcelles, a little over six miles from the Bixbys’ village. We had seen many photos of the church from the time the property was first located, to the purchase, and then through the renovation of the building. Though I knew the layout, to see the facilities in person was quite



Tim translating for me on Sunday morning impressive. A wide staircase leads from the spacious ground-floor room (lobby/library/meeting-activity room) to the second floor over the Ford dealership showroom. The enormous space is divided into the main sanctuary, an activity/dining area for church dinners, a modern kitchen with storage, bathrooms, and two rooms used as a nursery and a children’s classroom. A very small office rounds out the space.

On our first Sunday, Tim taught Sunday school followed by a communion service. After singing and scripture reading and memory verse review, Tim translated for me as I taught on the *Grace of Giving*. The morning services usually go until 12:45. On this Sunday, a churchwide international lunch was held. Most of the folks who attended the services stayed for the meal. When I say “international,” I’m not exaggerating! The people are very friendly, and I talked to most of the adult congregants, many of whom spoke English to some degree. I met people from the following countries of origin: Pakistan, South Korea, Iraq, two Caribbean islands, Ecuador, Madagascar, Ivory Coast, a Berber from Algeria, Haiti, Romania, the USA, and even some folks born in France! (And I may have missed a few countries.) Amazing. Many of the wives brought ethnic dishes for lunch. It is obvious that these folks enjoy fellowshiping.



Micaiah (rt) teaching Sunday school.
He also helps run the sound system.

If you receive the Bixbys’ prayer letters, you may remember their mention of the **Michael family** from Pakistan. Religious persecution drove them from their homeland to seek refuge in France. As English is or was the trade language of Pakistan, it was easy to communicate with them. The church in Sarcelles has been helping them as the French government has been slow to recognize the family as legal immigrants. Father, mother, and college age daughter are all involved in the church, but without legal

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Falling For France

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status, finding a job is greatly hampered. Continue to pray for the Michaels.



Albert
leading the
singing



Patricia
at the
piano

The second Sunday saw assistant pastor **Albert** engagingly teaching Sunday school, while Tim translated the lesson for Joan, me, and **Michaela Keck** via headphones. (Michaela has been serving a missionary family in a Muslim country in Africa. She is also the niece of **Lydia Kane**. Michaela was on a short “visa-renewal” vacation in France, and stayed at the Bixbys’ house two nights, until the family she was to travel with arrived on Sunday afternoon.) Tim again interpreted for me as I taught through *Psalm 73* during the second service. After the morning meetings, a much smaller meal was arranged, mainly to discuss church matters among some of the church leaders. It was during this time that I got to know Albert better, while Joan conversed extensively with his wife, **Patricia**, who is an accomplished pianist. Albert was the pastor at another church in northern France, not far from Sarcelles. Through a drawn-out set of circumstances, Albert and Patricia previously had to leave their former church. I will not go into any details here, but suffice

it to say that we have been following this sad ordeal since its inception, and we are fully convinced - as are the Bixbys - that Albert and Patricia were completely in the right and desired to do all they could to act with integrity and godliness in the matter. The upside is that this couple’s transfer to Bible Baptist Church has been a tremendous blessing. Albert has been serving as an elder in Sarcelles for many months now. He and his wife were a delight to get to know.

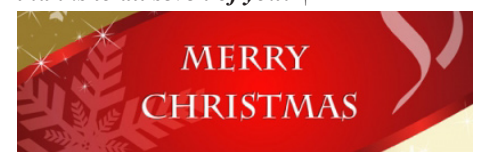
Even on our 3-day Normandy excursion, Tim and Ruth worked in a ministry opportunity. On the drive from our 18th Century Airbnb a mile from Utah Beach to Le Mont Saint-Michel on the Normandy/Britainy border, we paid an “encouragement visit” to a young missionary family. **Carlos** and **Samantha** were born in Ecuador but moved to Buenos Aires to attend and then teach at a Bible Institute. Their two children, **Ian** (8) and **Ana Elis** (maybe 3) were born in Argentina. The parents had a strong interest in missionary work, and after many years their church in BA commissioned them as missionaries to France. Living in an apartment above the municipal office in the small village of Villiers-Fossard, just north of Saint Lo (a major early battleground



Miriam reading to Ana Elis

during the liberation of Normandy), they have not been in France long and their French is limited. This family has no co-workers in the country, and Tim, having learned of them, wanted to stop by and encourage them. They spoke some English and the dialect of Spanish used in Uruguay and Argentina, so they and I enjoyed using some of that language in our time together. Carlos and Samantha are planning to move to Strasbourg, France, eventually to begin church planting. It was a very enjoyable interlude in our day’s travels.

For our last full day in France, the Bixbys sent Joan and me to Paris by ourselves to visit the Eiffel Tower, take a Seine River cruise, and walk through the magnificent Sacred Heart Cathedral (a sight recommended to Joan by a Stateside friend.) This gave us a different perspective of France. We always felt safe with the Bixbys wherever we went, but without them I was rather concerned. But with their prior instructions and the loan of a cellphone for navigation, the daylong excursion, including the subway system in Paris, was surprisingly pleasant and trouble-free. I’m sure there are unsafe areas of Paris, but we felt perfectly at ease even riding the subway during the evening rush hour. I have always been skeptical of France, but France very positively impressed me, as it did during our visit 15 years ago in Bordeaux. But the overriding, common factor is that we had such a wonderful host family. *Heartfelt thanks to all seven of you!* †



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