

EMU INTERNATIONAL

Newsletter

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ACROSS the LANDS

Jeff & Joanna Davis, Director

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," "Call me Ishmael," or my favorite, "In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit." These opening lines are among the most memorable in literature. As I type my first words as the official editor of the EMU International newsletter, I'm reminded that crafting something equally memorable is no small feat. Following in the footsteps of **Ken Jensen**, who has served with excellence for decades, only adds to the challenge.

For many years, this column has been known as "Along the Way." However, after much thought and in agreement with several of our missionaries, I've decided to retire that title. Even though previous directors used the name, "Along the Way" will always be associated with Ken. Much like Michael Jordan's #23 jersey hanging in the rafters of the United Center, "Along the Way" will remain Ken's legacy.

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God's work among the Unreached – J & M, Missionaries to the Arab World



Abbreviations used to protect our missionaries

I was a college student preparing for ministry, probably a pastorate in the U.S. Then one evening, the Lord used a special speaker to open my eyes to the Muslim world. Huge countries with millions of people were lost, many of them 99% Muslim. Not only that, but they also took a firm position against anyone trying to make a difference. No gospel allowed!

The Lord's command to make disciples in all nations (*Matt. 28:19–20*) compelled me to respond. I surrendered to go and began praying in earnest. Part of the burden was for the precious souls who were lost. Another part was to help God's people around me know that there was a living God who answered prayer for those who took His Word seriously and stepped out in faith.

By 2011, my burden had become focused specifically on "X," one of the least reached of the Arab nations.

God had sovereignly connected me to a medical friend who was preparing for me to visit him there. But then war erupted, and X closed to visits. I visited a different country instead, but my burden for X remained.

Years later, the doors to X were still shut. But I believed God would answer prayer. My wife and I (and then a growing family) began sharing our burden in churches, raising awareness and prayer meetings for the people of X.

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Summer Camps in Uruguay – January & February



“todo para la gloria de Dios” | “all to the glory of God”

Using the unique benefits of a Christian Camp, **Campamento Emanuel** serves people by presenting God's Truth with God's love so that lives can be transformed for God's glory.



Many of the workers who are serving at camp this Summer

JAN

Pray for fruit from these camps held last month

Children's Camp (Ages 6–11)

17 January 13 – 17

– Speaker **Nicolas Gomez**

Youth Camp (Ages 16–20)

17 January 20 – 24

– Speaker **Gabriel Gomez**

Teen Camp (Ages 12–15)

17 January 27 to 31

– Speaker **Marcos Gomez**



FEB

Pray for fruit for these camps held this month

Family Camp (All ages)

17 February 16–21

– Speaker **Dan Wokaty**

- A program that takes place during Carnival week designed for the whole family, combining their vacation with activities that will strengthen their homes.

**Workers Retreat**

17 February 24–27

– Speaker **Dan Wokaty**

- A program designed for the missionaries and workers



Please pray for Jeff and Dan as they travel to Uruguay, February 12 through March 2

Across the Lands (continued from p.1)

If you haven't yet read Ken's last article, "A Look Back," I encourage you to visit our website's newsletter tab and find the January edition. Ken's reflections on 50 years with EMU International are truly inspiring, and you'll be uplifted by the stories of God's blessings throughout his years of faithful service.

As EMU International celebrates its **80th year**, our mission remains unchanged: strengthening the global church through evangelism, establishing indigenous churches, and equipping nationals for ministry. Entering 2026, and reflecting on God's faithfulness throughout 2025, I had the privilege of reviewing correspondence and holding conversations with our missionaries, many of whom shared hour-long conversations filled with insight and encouragement. From these discussions, six strategic themes emerged:

- 1 **Leadership Transitions:** Ken Jensen announced his retirement in 2026 after 50 years of faithful service. **Tim & Cheryl Chapman** transitioned from missionary work to pastoral ministry in Michigan, while **J&M** moved to the Midwest to reach Arabic communities.



Pastors Mark & Dan Dickerson from Calvary Baptist, the Chapman's sending church Midland, MI, with Jeff and Tim.

- 2 **Perseverance:** Our missionary family faced health challenges, political instability, and resource constraints with unwavering faith.

- 3 **Training & Discipleship:** Biblical education and mentorship remained central, with special sessions held in **Andorra, Canada, Dominica, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, Spain, Taiwan, Uruguay, and the USA.**

Ted, John Lehman, and Jeff Davis traveled extensively to promote these efforts.

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Ted, John Lehman, and Jeff Davis

Reaching “X”...

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I began writing a weekly prayer email for those who would join in praying regularly for X. I praise the Lord for a large army of prayer warriors who continue interceding as I keep writing, even until now.



Roughly one-quarter of the world's people practice Islam

God has been answering in huge ways! Even though foreign workers were forced out of the country, the church of X began to grow. Hundreds of souls have been saved over the last decade. Leaders have risen up and matured. Even under intense persecution, the believers have followed Christ and spread the faith. Though my family couldn't go to X, we could reach God's throne and make a difference.

In 2019, we had the joy of moving overseas to a different Arab country where we learned Arabic. We also had the joy of seeing some people from X get saved, one of whom became my disciple and dear friend. He went on to translate a gospel video into the X dialect, and the Lord used that video in conjunction with a media ministry to spread God's message to thousands—way more than I ever could have reached in person by living in the country. God's ways are far higher than ours.

In 2022, our family returned to the U.S. because of some special needs for one of our children. We kept hoping to return overseas ASAP, but the Lord kept calling us to wait. At last, it became clear that we needed to stay in the States for a while. However, we hadn't given up on X. Neither had God. Even while we longed to go to X, God was bringing X to us. He was still answering prayer.

In 2025, we moved to our new home in a U.S. city with a community of nearly 40,000 X people. 40,000! They have been here in this area for over 100 years, and still there has never been a group of them saved to form a church. Many witnesses have come and sown the gospel seeds, but the harvest in this place still lingers.

We don't have any better strategy or strength than all those who have been laboring before, but we are eager to simply follow Christ and believe He will answer prayer in His timing. He's given us many encouragements already. For one, He prepared some great teammates for us. He also provided the perfect house, smack dab in the middle of the X community. It felt like He was saying, “I want you exactly here, and I have prepared the way.”

One of our first goals is to connect with as many X people as we can, overcoming their initial suspicions and building trust by genuine, loving relationships. So far, we've counted over 300 people that we've met at least one time, and a good handful or two are becoming friends. A giant prayer request is that God will give the people a deep spiritual thirst so they

will finally be willing to receive God's Word. And we want to find those who would be willing to study the Bible.



Practicing relational evangelism over tea

It seems like a crazy thought, but God is able. Jesus told us that we who believe Him would carry on His great works and even greater because He would be working through us from heaven. And the way He would do it would be by answering prayer. “I go unto my Father, and whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do.” (John 14:12–13). That's a big promise, and so we keep praying big prayers. Please pray for us and for the people of X. Christ is in fact working. He even brought us a neighbor within the first week who expressed a desire on his own for doing Bible study. That's a miracle! Always, the Lord has answered prayer until now. We are sure He will continue. †

Islam's Growth in the USA

Pew Research notes that North America's Muslim population grew by 52% between 2010 and 2020, the fastest rate of any region in the world.



What's Driving the Increase?

- Immigration from Muslim-majority countries.
- Higher birth rates among Muslim families compared to national averages.
- Conversions, which—while a smaller factor—still contribute to steady growth.

Details in this article are kept intentionally vague to protect the work of J, M, and their children, not only now but also in the future, in hard-to-reach countries. If you would like to connect with them or join the growing list of those praying for X, reach out to office@emuinternational.org.

The man who mobilizes the Christian church to pray will make the greatest contribution to world evangelization in history.

Andrew Murray

PRAY FOR MY MUSLIM NEIGHBOR

- **Pray for gospel clarity** — that Muslims would see Jesus as more than a prophet
- **Pray for relationships** — hospitality, trust, and genuine friendship
- **Pray for the Spirit's work** — since only God opens hearts
- **Pray for your own witness** — humility, patience, and Christlike love

Across the Lands... (Continued from p.2)

- 4 Infrastructure Investment:** Generous support from EMU partners and volunteers enabled renovations at **Campamento Emanuel**, and we celebrated the completion of **Emanuel Bible Church's** new building in Antofagasta, Chile.
- 5 Cultural Contextualization:** Worship, Bible teaching, and Scripture translation embraced local languages and art forms, deepening spiritual impact—especially in Cambodia.
- 6 Commemoration & Vision:** The **50th anniversary** of **Campamento Emanuel** in Uruguay and **EMU International's 80th anniversary** inspired reflection on God's faithfulness and renewed our vision for missional growth, continuing the legacy of our founders.

Together, these themes reflect both the challenges and the opportunities that lie ahead, as we remain committed to our calling and look forward to what God will do in the coming year.

PRAISE & PRAYER

In missionary work, "*furlough*" is more than a break—it's a vital, often spiritual season where missionaries remain active, shifting their ministry homeward for rest, reconnection, and renewal before returning to the field. Many agencies now call this "*home assignment*" to reflect ongoing ministry during this time. Please pray for our Cambodian missionary families: the **Kanes, Farmers, Crowleys**, and **Brooke Illsley**, currently in the USA.

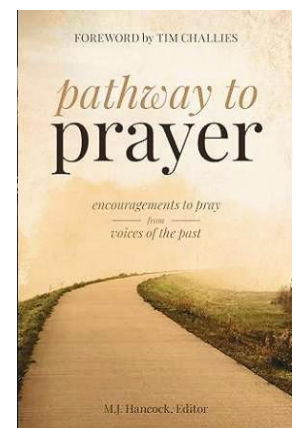
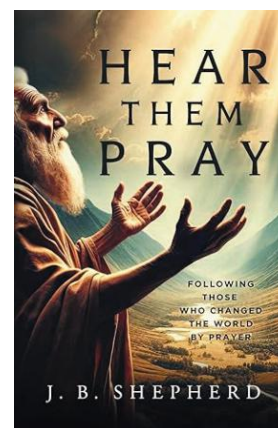
PRAISE: We're also grateful to share that **JD Crowley** was recently declared, for all practical purposes, **cancer-free**. I have asked him to provide an update in next month's newsletter.

Pray as well for **Matias Espinel**, who will visit churches in **Pennsylvania** and spend time in **Greenville** during his ten-day trip to the States in February.

Finally, **Matt and Becky Hancock** will host a work team from **Mount Bethel Church** (PA) to help finish their house, with **Russell and Susan Blom** staying on to continue assisting through their construction ministry.†

What Should I Read Next?

Book Recommendations



emuinternational.org/books

Cultivating a consistent prayer life is a significant challenge in our daily walk with Christ. Though we know prayer is our lifeline, many struggle to find the words or discipline to pray as we should. To help bridge this gap, EMU International offers two insightful book recommendations to rekindle your passion for communion with God. In **Hear Them Pray**, **J. B. Shepherd** examines pivotal Biblical moments in which ordinary people moved the heart of God. You can also draw from the collective wisdom of 106 Christian writers across the centuries in **Pathway to Prayer**, by **Matt Hancock**. By learning from these Biblical lessons and church history, you can find the inspiration needed to transform your prayer life today.