



EMU
INTERNATIONAL
Newsletter

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ACROSS the LANDS

Jeff & Joanna Davis, Director

In 2010, the world held its breath as thirty-three Chilean miners were trapped deep beneath the Atacama Desert. For more than two weeks, no one knew if they were alive. When a small note finally came to the surface, “*We are well, the 33,*” nations, engineers, drill teams, and rescue specialists immediately began working together. It became a global effort, each group bringing what the others lacked. No single team could have pulled off that rescue. It took a coordinated, determined partnership. In nothing short of a miracle, sixty-nine days later, all thirty-three were saved.

Just as the miners’ rescue required unity beyond any single team, our ministry also depends on collaboration that transcends any single group’s capacity. In this month’s newsletter, stories like our collaboration with **MGMI** in Uruguay show ministry growing stronger when God’s servants unite.

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When Mission Agencies Work Together

Dan Wokaty, Executive Director MGMI & Jeff Davis, Director EMU

Dan Wokaty and I left **Greenville** for **Uruguay** on Thursday evening, February 12, and arrived the next morning to a warm welcome from **Pedro Donzé** and our first taste of the country’s hospitality over delicious empanadas. After a short rest at **Campamento Emanuel**, we stepped into a whirlwind schedule that quickly made us realize why ministry is never meant to be done alone. Within hours, we were recording radio broadcasts that would be heard far beyond Uruguay’s borders, a testimony to the truth that the work of Christ advances farthest when God’s people work together.

Over the next two weeks, we ministered together at **Family Camp** and the **Workers’ Retreat**, preached in five churches, and spent meaningful time with Pastors, Christian workers, and Bible college and seminary instructors who are faithfully training the next generation of leaders. Between responsibilities, we walked miles along the coastline of the **Rio de Plata**, taking in the beauty of God’s creation and enjoying conversations that strengthened both friendship and vision.

We enjoyed delicious meals, including Uruguay’s national dish, the famous chivito, and these moments of fellowship became occasions for stories, burdens, and encouragement to be readily exchanged.

Again and again, we were reminded that the work of the gospel advances best when God’s servants labor side by side. Different backgrounds, cultures, and callings came together with a single purpose. We were truly blessed to serve as **“laborers together in Christ,”** and what follows is Dan’s firsthand account of how **cross-cultural collaboration** strengthens the church and expands the reach of the mission God has given us.

(continued on p.3)



*Dan at the
Midnight Call Radio*



*Welcomed by Pedro
at the airport*

Camp Scholarship Update



Our Summer Camp season went very smoothly, and we held our retreats without any problems. As always, I would like to share a few stories with you.

I want to highlight an area we sometimes overlook. Our work is not only about caring for the spiritual lives of our campers—which is the most important part—but also about caring for them emotionally, socially, and physically. This is where the reach of our Sponsorship Program becomes so important.

Through this program, we met a child who was not receiving proper care in his own environment and came to us seeking help. While spending time with him, we noticed that his foot was swollen. After investigating further and reporting it to the mobile emergency unit, we took him to the hospital. He had developed an infection that was already spreading up his leg. Thankfully, he was treated promptly. I thank God for bringing this child into our care at the right moment.

Another great blessing came in the spiritual area. We were able to minister to several campers who do not attend our churches, and those who came from other places.



Children's Camp (Ages 6-11)



Teen Camp (Ages 12-15)

Being able to share the gospel with them was a true joy. In some cases, individuals made a profession of faith in Christ and then asked us how they could continue growing if they did not have a church to attend. This is also part of our mission—to help connect them with a local church where they can continue their walk with the Lord.

We were also able to bring hope to a young woman who had attempted suicide. We connected her with the appropriate people so she could receive the care she needed and continue to be supported.

To close these brief stories, it was a great joy to see six young volunteers serving with us this summer. Each of them had been campers here since childhood. Watching them grow and now return to serve is a tremendous blessing, and we give all the glory to God.

The retreats at Camp Emanuel are an investment in eternity, and their impact is immeasurable. Once again, thank you to everyone who makes it possible for this ministry to continue being a tool for the local church in bringing hope to souls.†



Pedro & Patricia Donz 

Sponsor a Camper
emuinternational.org/camp



Youth Camp (Ages 16-20)



Family Camp



Pedro Donz , the camp director at **Campamento Emanuel** in **Uruguay**, shared important news about a serious water problem found during the camp's yearly water tests. The tests showed that a **bacterium** is present in the well water, making it **unsafe** to drink, cook with, wash kitchen utensils, or use for people with weak immune systems or skin conditions.

This type of bacterium is common in coastal wells, so drilling a new well probably would not fix the problem. The best long-term solution is to **install a complete water treatment system** that removes minerals, especially manganese, which now makes disinfection difficult. The system needs special tanks, pumps, chemicals, and installation, and will **cost \$24,419**.

While the new system is being planned, the camp has connected its kitchen and drinking water to the public OSE water system. This gives safe water for cooking and campers, but it **increases the camp's monthly water costs by about \$1,300**.

The team is making sure everyone is safe. They are thankful for prayers as they work to set up the permanent treatment system and handle the higher water costs.

We are praying that the Lord will lay it on the hearts of many of our friends to give toward this important project. To help offset the increased cost of using public water, **we are seeking three one-time gifts of \$1,300** to cover the three months. We are also establishing a **WATER SAFETY FUND** to protect campers and support the team as they navigate this challenge. Every contribution—large or small—makes a real difference. Would you ask God what He would have you give today?

Mail checks to: EMU International, PO Box 790, Taylors, SC 29687 (designate "water safety fund")
Give Online: emuinternational.org/water

Across the Lands *(continued from p.1)*

Collaboration is the Spirit-enabled partnership of God’s people working together so that Christ’s work advances farther than any one servant or agency could go alone.

many hands, many gifts,
one mission

In March, collaboration was evident not only between agencies but also through churches partnering with our missionaries. **Bethany Baptist Church of Brevard, North Carolina**, demonstrated this beautifully by sending a team of twenty-four to **Camp Emanuel in Uruguay**. Working alongside our staff, they completed key maintenance projects with enthusiasm and encouraged everyone they served.



Adults and teenagers from Bethany Baptist Church in Brevard, NC

Please continue to pray for **Pedro Donze** and **Ovidio Acevedo**. Pedro, our camp director, recently underwent back surgery that was more extensive than expected, including spinal stabilization and the removal of herniated discs. We thank the Lord for clear signs of progress. Please pray for his recovery. Pastor Ovidio is also doing well following surgery in December, in which the tumor was completely removed. He awaits final biopsy results and covets prayer that his health would remain strong as he continues to serve the Lord.

On a personal note, March has been a reminder that ministry truly spans many climates and cultures. It began with summer days in Uruguay, then shifted quickly to sub-zero temperatures and deep snow as **Joanna** and I were at a missions conference at **Fourth Baptist in Minneapolis**, and then ended back in South Carolina, where the pollen

reminded me that spring had fully sprung. By the time you read this, I will be in **Mexico** over Easter (March 28-April 8), ministering alongside **Marco and Gwendolyn Nuñez**. We will have the privilege of serving alongside several faithful pastors. On Tuesday, March 31, we will be with **Pastor José Luis Uc** in **Becal, Campeche**. Please pray for him as he grieves the loss of his wife, **Martha**, who passed away on March 7, just one day before her 52nd birthday, after many years of health challenges.



José Luis Uc with his wife Martha.

On Wednesday and Thursday, we will be with **Pascual Balam** in **Chemax** and **Vicente Puc** in **Valladolid, Yucatán**. We will then join **Toño Alvarado** at Marco’s church in Cancún for **Good Friday** and **Easter Sunday**, and also spend time with **Tomás Noh** in **Playa del Carmen**. We would appreciate your prayers for safe travels and for the Lord’s encouragement to be evident in each place.

In last month’s newsletter, **JD Crowley** shared about his transition from full-time missionary service. Please pray for **JD and Kim** as they return to **Cambodia** on April 1 for several months to say a proper goodbye to the people they love so dearly. Leaving will be painful, and they would deeply value your prayers during this tender season. Four of their children and their families hope to join them briefly, a sweet gift of encouragement as they close this chapter together.

The **Annual meeting** of the EMU International **Board of Directors** will be held at **Hampton Park Baptist Church** on Saturday, **April 18**. Please pray for wisdom, unity, and clarity as the board gathers to seek the Lord together and steward the ministry He has entrusted to us. We thank God for those who give their time, prayer, and counsel so that the work may continue to move forward. That includes each of you.†

Collaboration *(continued from p.1)*

Dan’s Observations

Although the command in **Hebrews 10:24** to “consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works” is best played out in the context of the local church, its application also works well in **missiological collaborative efforts**. In February, **EMU Director Jeff Davis** and I spent three weeks ministering in and outside of **Montevideo, Uruguay**. The primary purpose of my trip was to provide two weeks of training at **Campamento Emanuel**: the first week was family camp, and the second week was a retreat for the leaders of the Uruguayan branch of EMU. The trip, however, provided a plethora of ministry opportunities that went beyond just those two weeks of training. Although I had taught an online course for both the **Facultad de Estudios Bíblicos del Uruguay (FEBU)** and the **Instituto Bíblico F. V. Dabold** a few years ago, this was my first visit to Uruguay. Although Uruguay’s official language is Spanish, the country holds cultural features that I have not seen in my ministry in other areas of Latin America. Many expressions of speech, as well as the colloquial significance of many terms, were foreign to me. The appreciation of the Uruguayans for their **yerba mate** was equal to my affinity for coffee.



Having lived in Mexico for seventeen years, I am quite used to the handshake, manly bear hug, and concluding handshake. **Iván Villalobos**, a Costa Rican who serves with MGMI in Mexico, was teaching for a week in another part of Uruguay. As he debriefed me on the phone as he was heading back to Mexico, it was clear to both of us that it would take more than a brief trip to Uruguay to become acclimated to the Uruguayan greeting where men kiss each other on the cheek!

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Collaboration *(continued from p.3)*

Cultural differences aside, the love for the Lord and for His servants was a familiar setting. For the believers who attended camp the first week, **family camp** was a much more desirable alternative to the country's flesh-focused national holiday of **Carnival**, and it was an enjoyable experience to spend time with families who wanted to grow closer together as they grew closer to the Lord. It was doubly encouraging to spot former online students of mine throughout my time in Uruguay! Another unique ministry overlap occurred during the **workers' retreat**, when I discussed the fact that former students of mine from our college in Mexico are now serving all over the world.

After mentioning that a former student of mine is a missionary in **Equatorial Guinea**, one of the leaders, Pastor Hector Gomez, approached me and said he and his wife had served there alongside my former student!



Dan and Hector Gomez



Dan and Jeff shared the Chivito Plate

During the workers' retreat, I had the chance to better understand the history of missionary efforts in Uruguay, as well as see the result of decades of investment in leadership development amongst Uruguayans. Although I did not agree to spend my time in Uruguay with a quid pro quo in mind, seeing the layout of the field as well as the ministry dynamics between EMU and the leadership on the foreign field was a great help to me personally. One of my ministries is directing **TEAM Mobile Seminary**, which is cross-cultural church planting through equipping national pastors to train their countrymen. Engaging these national leaders day after day regarding their

2 Timothy 2:2 mandate to equip their countrymen to reach the next generation helped me understand the level of need for further theological and pedagogical training throughout Uruguay. Through my interactions with the ministries in Uruguay, the Lord also provided me with insight into how to better accomplish specific aspects of my role as General Director of MGMI. I left for Uruguay prepared to be a blessing and an encouragement. I left Uruguay immensely blessed and encouraged.†

Thank you, Dan, for your service, your friendship, and your partnership in our mission to reach and train nationals.

Jeff, on behalf of our Uruguayan Team

