

EMU

INTERNATIONAL

Newsletter

Volume LXIX

September 2026

Issue 9



ACROSS the LANDS

Jeff & Joanna Davis, Director

I have less than a day to live. Why do I say that? **JD Crowley** preached a message called **"Two Days to Live"** at **Palmetto Baptist Church** on the parable of the shrewd manager in **Luke 16:1-15**, in which he stated, "Life is short. That is why God piles metaphor on top of simile on top of word picture to convince us that our lives are short. You're a fading flower. A mist. Grass. Dew. A shadow. Chaff. Smoke. You will live a very, very short life followed by a very, very long eternity (**Job 14:1-2; Psalm 39:4-5; 90:5-6; 103:15; James 4:14**)." He makes his case with this explanation: "It helps me to divide my life into just three stages, three 'days,' each one around 25 years long. The days break down like this:

- Day 1 (Age 0-25): Preparation
- Day 2 (Age 25-50): Strength
- Day 3 (Age 50-75): Wisdom
- Day 4 (75+): Transition"

In explaining the parable, JD pointed out that Jesus commended the manager not for dishonesty, but for his shrewdness in preparing for his future once his current position ended.

(continued on p.3)

the WORK of many HANDS *the BLESSINGS of one GOD*

Pedro & Patricia Donzé, National Missionaries serving in Uruguay



By God's grace and providence, we are grateful to share an update on the past few weeks and our outlook for the months ahead.

To speak about the **Rick Projects 2026** is to rejoice in what God has done. Through the hands and hearts of many people, we have seen His love in action and His protection over **Camp Emanuel**. It is difficult for me to write these words without emotion, as tears of joy come to my eyes.

We deeply enjoyed the fellowship and the opportunity to serve alongside people we had never met. Although language barriers sometimes made communication difficult, we were united by our love for God and our desire to give Him our very best.

What was Accomplished?

God blessed us with a team of 29 volunteers—3 from the United States and 26 from Uruguay. Working together, we accomplished the following:

✓ Cabin Bathroom Upgrades

With the dedicated help of **Britt Hopper** and many long workdays, we completed the aluminum bathroom partitions in the cabins. Today, every cabin bathroom has aluminum partitions.

✓ Safe Water (Priority #1)

We prepared the site and platform for the new water treatment system. In the coming weeks, the provider will install the equipment, helping ensure safe drinking water for all who visit Camp Emanuel.

✓ Emergency Electrical

Thanks to **Jeff Hilla and Kevin Byrne**, we brought the electrical systems in five of our six cabins up to code. This was an unexpected but essential safety project.

(continued on p.2)

1. New bathroom partitions, 2. Site preparation for water treatment, 3. Emergency electrical



Work Trip - Continued from P.1

✓ Storm Recovery and Landscaping

After the severe storm in May, we removed dangerous trees near Cabins 5 and 6, created an emergency ambulance access road, and planted approximately 80 new trees.



✓ Facility Maintenance

We repaired and built playground equipment, refurbished dining hall benches, improved lighting in the main hall, rebuilt a badly deteriorated section of the entrance walkway, and painted the cabins inside and out.



Part of the group that worked the second week included brothers from Tacuarembó, Emanuel Cerro, Getsemani, Maldonado, and Britt from the USA

✓ Fellowship Areas

We completed the second phase of the bonfire area, providing additional seating for outdoor gatherings and meetings.



Faith and Financial Needs

The storm recovery work—including the playground, tree removal, and ambulance access road—represented **Priorities #2 and #4** on our project list. We completed these projects entirely by faith. We have not yet received the funds needed to cover these expenses or the unexpected electrical safety costs. Even so, we trust that God, in His perfect timing, will provide what is needed. **!**

Looking Ahead

The months ahead will be very active as we enter a season of ministry that will continue through April of next year.

- In two weeks: We welcome our first children's group after several weeks without retreat activity.
- September: A church retreat will join us for its sixth consecutive year.
- Late September: We will host our annual Ladies' Retreat.
- Summer 2027: Volunteer registration is already open, and we have received our first applications. During September, we will finalize volunteer training and scheduling plans.

"Your prayers and financial gifts make it possible each month for us to continue moving forward in God's work." May God richly bless you.†

Pedro

Funds Still Needed



These are the two items we need to recover payment for, since we worked on them due to the storm damage last May.

- Tree Removal & Replanting – \$8,500
- Access Road for Cabins 5 & 6 – \$6,000

These are the projects from this year's original list that didn't receive funding. (listed in order of priority).

- Renovation of Cabins 7 & 8 (Water Leakage Issues) – \$8,000
- Drainage and Water Channeling (Area in front of the Chapel) – \$4,600
- Disability Access Adaptation (Cabin 3 Bathroom) – \$2,617



DONATE ❤️



Please pray about what God would have you give

emuinternational.org/give-now/uruguay-camp-emmanuel

Jeff Hilla
Volunteer from Community Baptist
Church in Ankeny, Iowa

**PLAN NOW
 TO JOIN US
 IN URUGUAY
 AUGUST 2027**



This was my third year participating in the Missions Work Trip with Rick's Projects in Uruguay, and each year has been a tremendous blessing. It is rewarding to know that the talents and skills God has given us can be used to serve Him and support His work. I first learned about Rick's Projects at Campamento Emmanuel near Montevideo, Uruguay, through a monthly family update from **Jeff Davis**. I reached out to Jeff for more information about the work trip, and he quickly connected me with Rick Jensen. My first opportunity to serve at the camp was in 2024, when I met **Rick Jensen from Brevard, North Carolina**, and **Britt Hopper from Wichita, Kansas**, in Uruguay. I enjoyed the experience so much that I returned the following year and participated in both weeks of the August work trip. Taking two weeks of PTO from work has been well worth the investment in God's ministry at Campamento Emmanuel.

Although August is typically one of the warmest months of the year in the United States, it is winter in Uruguay. That seasonal difference is just one of the many unique aspects of serving there. More importantly, the friendships and fellowship we have developed with our brothers and sisters in Uruguay have been a tremendous blessing.



This year, I was joined by **Kevin Byrne**, a fellow member of **Community Baptist Church in Ankeny, Iowa**. Kevin and I were able to use our electrical skills to replace outdated electrical infrastructure in several of the cabins. Although we speak very little Spanish, we were still able to communicate effectively with the help of Google Translate—and, thankfully, a shared desire to serve made the language barrier much easier to overcome.

Kevin is already talking about returning next year because of the spiritual encouragement and fellowship he experienced while serving alongside our brothers and sisters in Uruguay. Some of my favorite memories have come after working a long 12-hour day, when we would relax around the fireplace and enjoy a competitive game of **UNO**. Those simple moments of laughter and fellowship have become some of the highlights of the trip.



Over the years, we have grown to love and appreciate the ministry at Campamento Emmanuel and the opportunity to serve alongside **Pedro Donzé** and his staff. The work we do is rewarding, but the relationships we build and the opportunity to encourage and be encouraged by fellow believers are what make these trips truly special.

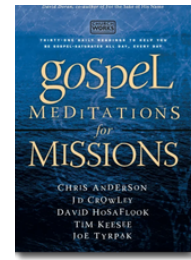
I would encourage you to prayerfully consider joining us in August 2027 for another Missions Work Trip to support Rick's Projects and the ministry at Campamento Emmanuel in Uruguay†.

More Information

If you would like more information on the 2027 Rick's Work Trip scheduled for next August, please email:

jeff@emuinternational.org

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



View on Youtube: <https://bit.ly/2days2live>
 JD shares these same thoughts in *Gospel Meditations for Missions (Day 25)*:
<https://bit.ly/gmmday25>

The central command is to use our "**unrighteous wealth**"—our earthly resources and money—to make friends and impact people for the gospel. The ultimate "return on investment" is people, not possessions. JD concluded by challenging the congregation to be "shrewd investors" in the upcoming global harvest, urging all of us to use our unique skills and resources to make God famous in places where he is not yet known.

This newsletter is full of examples of Christians investing their time and talents for eternity, as demonstrated by the work accomplished during the recent trip to **Camp Emanuel in Uruguay**. We could not have accomplished any of this without those of you who have invested your finances with an eternal R.O.I. in mind. Thank you for giving. Let this also challenge us all: there is still time to invest. We have been given another day of life—an opportunity to invest in our goal to make God famous to every tongue, every tribe, and every nation.

Yet, faithful stewardship doesn't always unfold according to our schedule. While final arrangements were being made for the **Rick Work Trip to Uruguay** in early August, **Rick Jensen** reached out to straighten a small ramp that led into his house. He felt what he first assumed was a hornet's sting, but quickly realized it was something more serious: a copperhead strike. Providentially, his son Jason was nearby, and within an hour he was at the Emergency Room in Brevard.

Although copperhead bites are rarely fatal when treated promptly, their bites can cause significant pain, swelling, bruising, blistering, nausea, and occasionally more serious effects such as low blood pressure or bleeding. When I saw him a week later, his hand was still very swollen.

(continued on p.4)



PO Box 790
Taylors, SC 29687

Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
GREENVILLE, SC
PERMIT NO. 1371

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

After evaluation, his physicians strongly advised him not to travel, especially with the pressure changes involved in flying, forcing him to cancel his participation in the Work Trip that bears his name. Though naturally disappointed, the team pressed forward with the project lists Rick had prepared and accomplished a remarkable amount of work.

God blessed **Marco and Gwendolyn Nuñez** with a profitable short furlough as they visited five churches in **Colorado**. They are grateful for the leadership of **Pastor Toño Alvarado** and his wife, **Karina**, who led the church in their absence. After teaching through the major doctrines and practices of the church on Wednesday nights since January, Marco helped the congregation establish a constitution, organize a membership list, and appoint five new deacons. We thank the Lord for the spirit of reverence and joy that marked this important step in the church's growth. The church is also grateful for the new security cameras installed following the recent break-in.



Deacon Ordination in Cancun

The **Kanes** have returned to **Cambodia** following their six-month furlough. The **Bixbys** are glad to be back in **France** after a packed three months of furlough, during which they visited twenty different churches. Please pray for them as their daughter **Miriam** remains in Greenville for a "gap year" between her bachelor's and master's degree studies in Paris. She is living with Tim's mother, **Bonnie Bixby**, and pursuing a Bible Certificate from **BJU Seminary**. The **Farmer** family plans to return to Cambodia on September 15.

Please continue to pray for **J&M** and their ministry to the **Arab** people in the **Midwest**. Christ is working in answer to prayer (*John 14:12-14*). Despite the huge obstacles,

there have been encouraging signs of God's grace in the Muslim community: a new believer, a seeker meeting for Bible study, and online outreach overseas. They are also encouraged by a non-Muslim local who trusted Christ and is preparing for baptism. Please pray for the Spirit to move mightily among the Muslim community, drawing them to seek the God of the Bible, and pray for strength for J&M's family.

Ted A. is currently serving in **East Africa** for the second time in the past year, providing biblical training for a group of church leaders. His current courses focus on the **Major Prophets**, and he will soon be joined by a pastor from his home church to teach the **Psalms**. He is greatly encouraged by the faithfulness and determination of these leaders, who remain committed to their training despite significant challenges and opposition. Please pray for wisdom, strength, and perseverance for all involved in this ministry. Also remember his wife, **Marla**, in prayer as she continues to deal with significant back and hip pain related to severe disc deterioration in her spine.†