EVANGELICAL MISSION TO THE UNREACHED

EMU INTERNATIONAL Newsletter

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Across the LANDS



Jeff & Joanna Davis
Director

You learn something new every day. While meditating on the word **Thanksgiving**, I discovered that in Old Anglo-Saxon English, "*thankfulness*" actually meant "*thinkfulness*." Yes, that does sound weird; however, in Old English, *þanc* (or *þonc*) meant "thought," "memory," or "a thinking of" someone with favor. The connection makes sense. The more we pause to think about where our blessings come from, the more grateful our hearts become. Yet, by nature, we tend to take daily provisions for granted, treating our homes, health, and comforts as routine rather than gifts from God's good hand. True gratitude looks beyond the gift to the Giver. And when our hearts are genuinely full of thanks, gratitude refuses to stay quiet; it moves us to action.

As I think back on **October**, I am thankful for many opportunities to serve.

The Lord blessed me with time to speak at the **Wilds Father-Son Campout**, share mission updates, and preach for Missions Emphasis Sundays in **South Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland.** I also participated in missions conferences at **Faith Baptist Bible College** and **Appalachian Bible College,** along with two outstanding pastors' conferences. The month was both busy and encouraging.

(continued on p.4)

"I have never studied the Bible like this before."



GOOD NEWS 360 CHURCH LEADERS CONFERENCE - 2026

Jeff Davis, Director & Billy Judson, Missionary to India

Some ministry reports are filled with numbers, but this one came with a sentence. As Billy Judson reflected on the recent **Good News 360 Church Leaders Conference** in **Hyderabad**, **India**, one comment surfaced repeatedly from the delegates: ***"I have never studied the Bible like this before."***

When I first read that, I assumed it must have come from a young believer or perhaps someone attending his first Bible conference. But it didn't. The statement came from church leaders—pastors—men who are already teaching and preaching God's Word.

That fact alone helps explain why **Billy Judson** and his wife **Saritha** invest so much of their lives into this ministry. Across India, faithful men serve Christ in churches both large and small. They love the Lord. They love their congregations. They want to handle Scripture accurately. Yet many have had few opportunities for structured biblical training.

This year's conference gathered approximately **310 church leaders** representing **eleven Indian states**. For **four days**, they opened one book of the Bible together: **Hebrews**—just Hebrews. That may not sound particularly exciting in our day of endless conferences, celebrity speakers, and constantly changing ministry trends. Yet there is something refreshing about a room full of church leaders simply working through a book of the Bible together and asking, **"What does God say?"**

The conference theme centered on ***Hebrews 12:1-2*** and Christ's work of transforming His people while preparing the next generation for faithful service. Throughout the week, the delegates studied Hebrews section by section, including the book's five major warning passages dealing with spiritual drift, unbelief, immaturity, willful sin, and refusing God's voice.

One detail I especially appreciated was the method. The teaching sessions were intentionally designed to not allow spectators. Questions were encouraged, and discussions followed.

(*continued next page*)

Hundreds of thousands of congregations across India are led by men and women who have little access to theological training. Good News 360 brings the classroom to them. In October, 310 church leaders from eleven states spent four days studying Hebrews and returned home equipped with Bibles, ministry resources, and fresh confidence to teach God's Word in their own churches







Pastors gathered around tables with leaders from other regions. Quizzes helped reinforce what was being taught, and they examined real-life ministry situations through the lens of Scripture.

Billy told me that some of the most valuable moments came when pastors began discussing how these truths would affect the churches they would soon return to. That is where training becomes ministry. One pastor was thinking about his congregation; another about a struggling believer; someone else about how to teach Hebrews to people in his village. The conversation moved beyond the conference hall and into real churches and real lives.

As I worked through Billy's report, another theme emerged: many of the delegates serve in relative isolation. Some pastor small congregations in rural areas; others balance ministry responsibilities with regular employment. Opportunities for fellowship with like-minded church leaders are not always easy to find. Four days together around God's Word provided encouragement that many had not experienced in quite some time.

The photographs tell part of that story. They include teaching sessions and group discussions, but also shared meals, conversations, prayer, and fellowship. Leaders from different backgrounds and regions spent time learning from one another and building relationships that will continue long after the conference ends.

One section of the report particularly caught my attention: **five hundred Telugu Bibles** were distributed. Other ministries supplied **English Bibles, theology books, Bible-study materials, and resources from previous Good News 360 conferences.** Every attendee returned home with materials they can use and reuse in ministry for years to come.

I have always enjoyed being around pastors because pastors tend to be readers. A faithful pastor with a Bible and a few trustworthy books can influence an entire congregation. Somewhere across India, those resources are already being opened again. Sermons are being prepared, lessons are being taught, and conversations are taking place around kitchen tables and church benches because God's Word is continuing its work. That is encouraging to think about.

Several years ago, someone told me that ministry is often like dropping a stone into a pond: you see the initial splash, but you rarely witness all the ripples that follow. This conference feels a little like that. We can count attendance, Bibles distributed, and states represented. What we cannot count are the conversations, sermons, discipleship relationships, and changed lives that may result over the next several years. Only eternity will reveal those stories.

One phrase from the conference report summarizes Billy's vision as well as any mission statement I have seen: **"Every local church as a college classroom."**

I love that idea. Not every pastor can leave home for years of formal education. Not every church can afford extensive training programs. Yet every church can become a place where God's Word is opened, studied, discussed, believed, and obeyed.

That is the heartbeat behind Good News 360. The goal is not merely to host a successful conference, but to strengthen local churches by strengthening local church leaders. Before the delegates left Hyderabad, the 2027 conference was announced. Next year's theme will focus on **Genesis 1–11 under the banner: Biblical Leaders, Healthy Churches.**

In the meantime, Billy and Saritha would appreciate your prayers.

- Pray for the pastors who attended.
- Pray for the churches they serve.
- Pray for wisdom as these leaders teach and shepherd God's people.
- Pray that the Word of God will continue to spread throughout India.

And perhaps thank God for a simple reminder that encouraged me as I read this report. In a world constantly searching for something new, God's Word remains as powerful as ever. Three hundred ten church leaders gathered around the book of Hebrews, and many left saying the same thing: "I have never studied the Bible like this before."†



Good News 360 Church Leaders Conference in Hyderabad, India,



CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING

One of the blessings of serving with EMU International is that our missionaries are not just names on a map. They are names we know.

When you read this newsletter, you're not simply reading about *"a missionary in Cambodia"* or *"a pastor in Uruguay."* Many of you have prayed for these families for years. You have watched their children grow up. You have followed building projects, church plants, Bible schools, illnesses, furloughs, baptisms, and funerals.

Names like Allston, Bixby, Chapman, Crnković, Crowley, Farmer, Hancock, Jensen, Kane, Nuñez, Espinel, Steel, and Judson have become familiar friends. We have enjoyed learning about J&M, the Lehmans, and the Wongs as they have more recently joined the EMU family.

The same is true of many of our national workers. Some of you have met Pedro Donzé, Chicha Rodriguez, Gabriel Gomez, or one of the many other faithful servants laboring in Uruguay. Others have followed their ministries through these pages for decades.

As Christmas approaches, we have an opportunity to do something very simple. **We can remember them.**

For many years, EMU readers have participated in our Christmas Fund Offering. Some gifts are designated to a particular missionary family. Others help our national workers in Uruguay. Every year we hear the same testimony: *these gifts arrive as a blessing and encouragement at exactly the right time.*

The Camp Sponsorship Fund provides another opportunity to invest in lives. Every summer, children and young people from churches across Uruguay gather at **Camp Emmanuel** to hear God's Word, build friendships, and grow in their walk with Christ. Sponsorship gifts help campers attend and support the volunteer workers who make those weeks possible.

I often think of Paul's words to the Philippians. He thanked them not merely for a financial gift, but because their gift demonstrated fellowship in the gospel. That is what these offerings represent.

For eleven months, you have prayed for these ministries and followed their stories.

This month, the Lord may allow you to encourage them in a tangible way.

Thank you for remembering the names behind the ministries. And thank you for helping us continue to proclaim the triumphs of the Gospel across the lands.†

GIVE NOW



emuinternational.org/give-now/uruguay-christmas-fund/

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- Jeremy & Bonnie Ruth Farmer
- Matt & Becky Hancock
- Josh & Amy Jensen
- Brian & Lydia Kane

Chile
- Tom & Connie Chapman

Croatia
- Kornel & Tanja Crnković

France
- Tim & Ruth Bixby

India
- Billy & Saritha

Mexico
- Marco & Gwendolyn Nuñez
- National Mexican Workers: Dolores Alvarado, Toño & Karina Alvarado, Pascual & Leydi Balam, Daniel & Marisol Lopez, Tomas & Kleyni Noh, Vicente & Deysi Puc, Jose Luis Uc

USA/Global
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- Ken & Joan Jensen
- John & Suzie Lehman

Uruguay
- Matías & Kristine Espinel
- John Mark & Deborah Steel
- National Uruguayan Workers: Ovidio & Yusara Acevedo, Beatriz & Carlos Alberti, Pablo & Christina Billafan, Henry & Patricia Castro, Alberto & Carolina Diaz, Pedro & Patricia Donzé Family, Gabriel & Rosanna Gomez, Marcos & Tali Gomez, Hector & Graciela Gomez, Nico & Valeria Gomez, Juan & Noemi Gonzalez family, Jose Kowalczuk, Josue & Katherine Mendez, Gustavo & Alejandra de Oliveira, Carlos & Mabel Olivera, Carlos & Graciela Pereira, Rubito & Marita Rodriguez, Ricardo & Mayka Windmoller

10-40 Window
- Cedric and Candy (Hong Kong)
- J & M (Arab World – Midwest)
- Ted & Marla

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Across the Lands

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We are thankful that **Cedric and Candy Wong** have settled back into ministry in **Hong Kong** and are already seeing encouraging opportunities. They are helping revitalize a church in **Tuen Mun** that was facing an uncertain future earlier this year and are building relationships with new families through creative community events. Please pray for wisdom as they search for a better church location and for fruitful gospel opportunities with new families.





Beyblade competions provide for a creative way to connect with the community.

We are also thankful for J**osh and Amy Jensen** and the continued progress of the **Jarai Bible translation project** in **northeastern Cambodia**. Recent outreach efforts gave more than 1,000 Jarai villagers opportunities to hear the Gospel, and the translation team has completed a new **Creation-to-Christ presentation** in the Jarai language. The team also finished its review of **Romans** and hosted Bible and literacy training events that are helping believers read and study God's Word more confidently in their own language. Please pray for continued progress toward a completed New Testament and for lasting fruit from these evangelistic efforts.



Jarai Foundations Bible School (studying Acts)

We're thankful for an encouraging answer to prayer in the ministry of **Tim and Ruth Bixby** in **France.** Their church has been facing zoning challenges because of parking requirements, but a recent visit from the mayor opened an unexpected door. After meeting the congregation and hearing about the situation, he expressed a desire to help resolve the issue. Please pray that God will give wisdom to all involved, provide a favorable outcome for the church, and use this relationship as a testimony for the Gospel.

We rejoice that **Ken and Joan Jensen** were able to return to **Uruguay** in October, and we look forward to hearing more about their trip in next month's newsletter. Please pray for **FEBU** and the **IBD Bible Institute** as they conclude another academic year and prepare for upcoming graduations. These celebrations will coincide with several evangelistic and ministry opportunities in the interior of Uruguay.

We also thank the Lord that the **Hancock** family has safely returned to the United States and ask you to pray for them as they begin a nine-month furlough.

As we **count our blessings** this Thanksgiving season and look toward our upcoming **Missionary Christmas Offering,** we have a precious opportunity to put our gratitude into practice. Just as God's ultimate expression of love was sending His unspeakable Gift into a dark world, our year-end gifts can cross oceans and borders to encourage faithful servants who are proclaiming Christ across the lands. This month, let's allow our **"thinkfulness"** to become **thankfulness**, and our thankfulness to become action. The Gospel is still advancing across the lands, and we have the privilege of being part of the story.†