

January 2026

family
update
& year
in review

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EMU International, Director



Threads of Grace

A Year Woven by God's Hand

When I look back on 2025, what stands out is not the miles traveled or the messages preached, but the unmistakable **threads of grace** God wove through every place, every person, and every moment. Ministry rarely unfolds in straight lines. It is more like a tapestry — individual strands that, when viewed up close, seem ordinary or even frayed, but when stepped back from, reveal the careful hand of the Master Weaver. As the psalmist wrote, *“The LORD will perfect that which concerneth me”* (Psalm 138:8).

This year, I saw that truth again and again as I preached 90 times, was in 4 different countries, 18 states, 40 churches, and 15 conferences.



Grace in Uruguay

Strengthening the Fabric of National Leadership

One of the strongest threads in this year's tapestry was the 17-day ministry trip to **Uruguay in February**. Traveling with **Dr. Bill Hill**, I taught ten sessions at the **Workers' Conference** and preached eight times at **Family Camp**. But the most meaningful moments were the one-on-one conversations with every national worker.



Listening to their stories, their burdens, and their victories reminded me of Paul's words: *“For we are laborers together with God”* (1 Corinthians 3:9). These men and women are not just partners — they are family. Their faithfulness, often in quiet and unseen places, is one of the strongest cords in EMU's global ministry.



We also celebrated **Campamento Emanuel's 50th anniversary**, a milestone that testifies to God's sustaining grace across generations. The camp continues to be a place where young people hear the gospel, where leaders are shaped, and where the next threads of ministry are woven.

Grace in Transition

Walking with Missionaries Through Change

Another thread running through this year was missionary care. Ministry transitions are rarely simple, but they are often sacred.

In July, the Lord prompted me to take a last-minute trip to **Lima, Peru**, to help **Tim Chapman** pack his home and prepare for his move back to the U.S. I preached twice at **Gracia**, the church he founded, now transitioning to national leadership. Standing in that pulpit, I was reminded of the promise, *"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase"* (1 Corinthians 3:6). The work continues because it is God's work and He is the one working through us.

I also had the privilege of supporting **Cedric Wong** in SC, NC, MN, and IA, as he began deputation for his return to **Hong Kong**. I walked alongside **Billy and Saritha Judson** during their six-week U.S. ministry tour. Their ministry in **Hyderabad** — **Good News Bible College and Seminary** with 57 partnering churches and more than 17,000 graduates — is a vivid picture of multiplication through national leadership.



Billy Judson



Cedric Wong

I took Cedric, Billy, and Saritha to the **Good Soil Evangelism and Discipleship Training** hosted by **BJU Seminary** and sponsored by **ABWE**. The training will be an invaluable asset for each of their ministries. Each of them is now a certified instructor.

These moments reminded me that missionary care is not an event; it is a relationship. It is the steady, patient weaving of encouragement, presence, and prayer.

Grace in the Local Church

Mobilizing the Next Generation



Throughout the year, I was privileged to preach 90 times and visit 40 different churches. I also ministered at three Christian college missions conferences — **Bob Jones University**, **Faith Baptist Bible College**, and **Appalachian Bible College** — where I observed a growing hunger among students to reach the unreached.

In many of these places, missions conferences and campuses, I shared the theme **"Your Missionary Family,"** which culminated with the theme, **"Homegrown Heroes."** God used these messages to change lives and to even see folks saved. I believe deeply that God often raises up missionaries from ordinary families in ordinary churches who simply say yes to His call. As Paul told Timothy, *"The things that thou hast heard of me... commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also"* (2 Timothy 2:2). That is the heartbeat of EMU — multiplication through faithful people.

One of the most meaningful moments of the year came when **Tabernacle Baptist Church in Wilson, NC**, a church I pastored for a decade, voted to take us on for support. It felt like the Lord tying together threads from different seasons of life into one beautiful pattern.



Grace in Unexpected Places

Peru, Canada, & Midwest



This year also included my first trip to Canada, where I preached three times at **Foundation Baptist Church in Calgary**. The Lord opened new friendships and ministry connections, and I even enjoyed a day in the **Canadian Rockies**, a reminder that *"the whole earth is full of His glory"* (Isaiah 6:3).



practicing relational evangelism in the Midwest

I made a trip to the **Midwest**, where I spent time with the **J&M family**, EMU missionaries serving among Muslim communities. I felt like I was in the Middle East. They are doing an amazing work reaching Muslims right here in our own country.



Tim and Cheryl Chapman with Steve Pettit and Jeff at a church fellowship on Saturday before Tim's installation service.

I also celebrated **Tim Chapman's** installation as pastor of **Cornerstone Baptist Church in Bay City, Michigan**. These visits reminded me that God is at work in places we might overlook — weaving His grace into neighborhoods, cities, and cultures that desperately need the gospel.



Grace at Home

Family, Provision, and God's Steadfast Care

Not all the threads of this year were ministry related. Some were deeply personal. Our daughter **Abby's family** moved to **Minneapolis** in May, where her husband, **Caleb Prigge**, now serves on the pastoral staff at **Fourth Baptist Church**. I'm already looking forward to March when I will speak for their annual missions conference.

In August, my mother, **Elaine Davis**, underwent major back surgery. We are privileged to have her live with us in Greer, SC. God allowed me a few weeks to be near home, where I was able to assist her during her recovery. Caring for her has been a privilege — a living reminder of the command, "*Honor thy father and thy mother*" (*Exodus 20:12*).

We also celebrated the joyful gift of new life as our daughter-in-law, **Jamie**, and our youngest daughter, **Hannah**, blessed us with new little granddaughters.



Brielle Davis

Ellawyn Greene

Our other two daughters are expecting — **Bethany** in February and **Abby** in July — and with God's blessing, this July, Joanna and I will be the proud grandparents of 10 grandchildren, all under 7. These little ones are threads of grace all their own.

We rejoice in God's continued supply. Even the loss of my laptop in Uruguay — an inconvenient setback — became an opportunity to see God's provision in unexpected ways.

We are still praying and searching for a replacement for my main travel vehicle as our 2011 Toyota Camry now has 265,000 miles. I was praising the Lord with a fellow pastor at a recent conference as I identified with the Children of Israel when God told them in *Deuteronomy 29:5*, "*And I have led you forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon you, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot.*"

Looking Ahead

The Tapestry Continues



As we step into 2026, I do so with gratitude and anticipation. The schedule is starting to fill — field visits to **Uruguay, Mexico, and Chile**, church and school visits, pastors' fellowships, camps, and mission conferences. But more than events, I look forward to the people the Lord will place along the way.

Thank you for being part of this tapestry. Your prayers, your giving, your encouragement — these are threads God uses to strengthen and sustain the work. As Paul wrote, "*I thank my God upon every remembrance of you*" (*Philippians 1:3*).

May the Lord continue weaving His grace through our lives, our churches, and our world — until the whole tapestry reflects His glory.

Attention Pastors

I am currently planning my calendar for 2026. In addition to traveling and visiting the EMU International missionaries on their various fields of service, I have had the privilege of preaching in Christian School chapels, Pastors' Fellowships, at Christian Camps, Missions Conferences, Revival Meetings, and Family Conferences. I am also available for individual meetings to promote EMU International's work. Contact me if you are interested in me visiting your church.

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