

April 2026
family update

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EMU International, Director

Believest Thou This?

The Resurrection and the Life

Greetings from Mexico, where I am serving in Cancún alongside our missionaries Marco and Gwendolyn Núñez. These days have been full of visits with pastors, encouraging churches, preaching the Word, and seeing firsthand the faithful gospel work happening here in southeastern Mexico.

Tonight, we ministered in a church, walking through deep grief. Their pastor is Jose Luis Uc. His wife, who was only 52 years old, went home to be with the Lord just a few weeks ago after a battle with cancer. Her name was Martha. And as I sat with this dear pastor, as I watched his church gather with tears and yet with hope, I could not escape the question Jesus asked another grieving sister named Martha in **John 11:25-26**: "I am the resurrection and the life... Believest thou this?"

This is Passion Week. In just a few days, we will celebrate the resurrection of our Savior. But before resurrection morning came, there was a family in Bethany standing beside a tomb, trying to make sense of loss, trying to hold on to faith, trying to answer the same question this Mexican church is asking today:

Do we really believe?

- Do we believe that Jesus **cares**, even when He seems silent?
- Do we believe that Jesus **comforts**, even when our hearts ache?
- Do we believe that Jesus **cries** with us, entering our sorrow?
- Do we believe that Jesus **calls**, bringing life where death has claimed the final word?

I preached from **John 11** tonight, and the truth seemed especially weighty in that room. Jesus did not simply say He gives resurrection. He said He is the resurrection. Hope is not an event. Hope is a Person. And because Christ lives, we live also.



As I watched this pastor cling to that truth, I was reminded again why your partnership matters so deeply. Your prayers and support allow us to stand with servants like him—men and women who pour out their lives for the gospel and sometimes walk through valleys far deeper than most will ever see.

Thank you for enabling us to be here. Thank you for helping us strengthen pastors, encourage missionaries, and bring the hope of Christ to places where it is desperately needed. Thank you for believing with us that Jesus is still the resurrection and the life.

This Sunday, as you gather to celebrate the empty tomb, would you take a moment to pray for the churches here in Mexico, especially this grieving pastor and his congregation? Pray that the resurrection hope of Christ will anchor their souls and sustain their ministry.

March 30 — April 8
Mexico



View photos on
[Facebook.com/pastorjd](https://www.facebook.com/pastorjd)

March was a wonderful month of ministry opportunities. I returned from **Uruguay** on March 2. I was home for just a few short days and then **Joanna** and I flew to **Minneapolis** where I had the privilege of preaching several times at **Fourth Baptist Church** for their annual missions conference. This was one of the highlights of our year as we were able to make so many new friends, and also connect with several friends from our past. This is the church where our daughter **Abby's** husband **Caleb Prigge** serves as Youth and Music Pastor. It was great to spend time with family. We got to experience over a foot of snow. We especially enjoyed time with **Jud**.



Inside this issue, you'll find:

- **Cross-Cultural Collaboration** — Jeff Davis and Dan Wokaty recount two weeks of united ministry in Uruguay, from radio outreach to camps, churches, and leadership training.
- **Camp Emanuel Update** — Pedro Donzé shares moving stories from the scholarship program, including physical rescue, spiritual decisions, and former campers now serving as volunteers.
- **Water Safety Need** — A serious well-water issue requires a full treatment system; a new Water Safety Fund has been established to help protect campers.
- **Church & Agency Partnerships** — A 24-member team from Bethany Baptist (NC) completes major projects at Camp Emanuel.
- A rich look at how collaboration strengthens the church and advances the mission.

This month's issue highlights the power of partnership—how God multiplies gospel impact when His people labor side by side. From Uruguay to Mexico and beyond, the theme of collaboration runs through every story.



missions conference - March 8-11



Wonderful time with Abby's family

We returned to South Carolina on Thursday, March 19. Two days later, I left for **Stateville, NC**, and had the privilege of returning to speak at **East Side Baptist Church**, pastored by Jon Acker. I enjoyed spending time with his parents Don and Kay Acker, who are members of **Oakwood Baptist Church** in Anderson, SC, where I formerly pastored. When I returned to our home in Greer, SC, we enjoyed time with our daughter **Bethany's** family as they came for their Spring Break.



Bethany's family visited us

It was a very busy week as I had a lot of correspondence to catch up on. While working on the EMU newsletter, my daughter came downstairs to my office and said, "I think we have termites." They were staying in our guest room, and sure enough, in the door frame of the closet there was evidence of termite damage. I immediately called a pest control service, and we went to work getting ready for the treatments. There is no way that we could have gotten everything ready for them without the help of Bethany's husband **Kris**.

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We spent a couple of days cleaning out the garage and moving all of the shelves and items in storage two feet off of the wall. I left on Saturday, to travel to **Florida** where I was at two churches, **Parkway Baptist Church** in **Lakeland**, and at **Calvary Baptist Church** in **Winter Garden**. I flew to **Cancun** from **Tampa** on Monday.

The treatments were done at our house on Monday. It cost us an unexpected **\$1,500**. We know God will provide for us. He always does.

Please pray for my trip to **Mexico, March 30 - April 8**. I will speak at five different churches. Details for my trip are in the EMU Newsletter at the link above. I will have an update in next month's newsletter and Family Update.