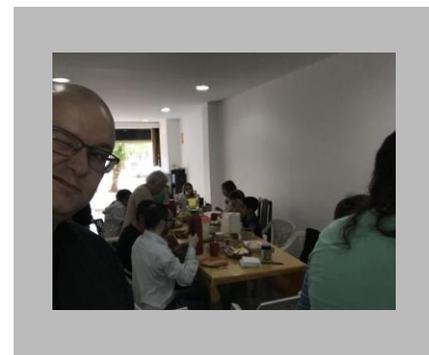




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## Just another Sunday



On the left, God's people are gathering for worship on Easter Sunday at the downtown mission; on the right, God's people are sharing Easter breakfast!

### SUMMERTIME'S OVER

We have come to the end of a mild summer and fall is here.

We had about one week of "sweater weather" and then a warm snap where it was definitely more like summer. Now we are settling into fall.

What does fall mean in Uruguay?

- Generally sunny but cool days and cooler nights.
- Back to school and back to work for many people who leave the city or reduce their work during the summer months.
- An abundance of great produce from the interior of Uruguay.
- There's no daylight savings time, so we don't have that big adjustment to shorter days.



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to [james.sharp@lcmsintl.org](mailto:james.sharp@lcmsintl.org) with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

We recently observed our third anniversary on the field in Uruguay. We are very much adapted to life in Uruguay (especially the kids) and things that used to be strange or different for us here are, for the most part, just... normal.

We passed through another Lent – "hot Lent," I used to call it, because it was so different for Lent to be in the summer – and into Holy Week – "Vacation Week" in Uruguay. And it was normal. This is our fourth Holy Week, our fourth Easter, and it was normal how all kinds of businesses were closed on Monday of Holy Week. "If you have anything important to do, do it before Vacation Week," somebody told me, and it's good advice.

So, like I said, this is our fourth time around and we are used to it. But something still surprised me. I was taking people home after Sunday worship at the City Center Mission, and as I looked around... it was a normal

Sunday. People are back from the beach or the hills. Montevideo is starting to fill up again. The restaurants and businesses that are normally open on Sunday are open – although lots of places are normally closed on Sunday. For the average Uruguayan, the five days of "Vacation Week" are the big deal, time to head out of town or close or get some repairs done or some work on the house. But Easter Sunday is just Sunday.

Of course, Easter Sunday isn't just any day. Easter Sunday is the day we celebrate the victory of our Lord Jesus over sin and death and grave. For Christians, Easter Sunday is the greatest of days, and it makes every Sunday not just another day, but the day we gather to celebrate our Lord, risen from the dead very early on a Sunday morning. Every Sunday is a little Easter, a reminder of the God who saved us from our true enemies. We pray that God will continue to send forth his Word in this country so that more people will know that Easter Sunday is not just another day, but the greatest of days.

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# Ups and Downs: Missions Update

## *City Center Mission*

Our main outreach center is the City Center Mission, near downtown Montevideo. We have increased the number of worship services, Bible studies, and other activities to reach more people. We have been very pleased with both the numerical growth and the spiritual growth we are seeing in the members and other participants. Members are stepping up and creating outreach activities to make relationships and give the opportunity to share the Gospel. We now have lay-led sewing and public speaking courses which have been very successful, and we will be starting English courses soon.

We saw very good attendance through the summer and people really making the effort to attend worship and other activities even when there were conflicts with holidays and family activities or complications from summer and holiday bus schedules. It is great to see spiritual growth in people as God's Word becomes more and more important to them. In 2017, we had 3 adults complete membership instruction and 1 join the church as a member. This year, we currently have 8 adults in membership instruction, all of whom are eager to join the church. We have also continued and expanded our

leadership training courses, starting with a course in Christian Doctrine. Development of leaders is an essential part of our mission strategy.

We really have outgrown the limited space we are in and continue to try to find a space that will work for the expansion of the mission over the long term. We are also looking into some possibilities for a plan of long-term sustainability based around some sort of business or storefront activity that could support the mission location indefinitely.

## *Chapicuy (Northern Uruguay)*

The mission in Chapicuy is humming along! Worship attendance has been very good and we are excited for the many new contacts we have made in the town and surrounding areas. Construction continues on the first stage of the new building which will serve as both a worship space and a multi-use center for outreach activities. It's a long ride up to Chapicuy but I love spending time there with the members of the congregation and getting to know more people in the little town. We are thankful for the growth that God is giving his church in Chapicuy. Praise God for their faithfulness and zeal!

## *Canelones (East of Montevideo)*

Not everything has gone well. We are facing some serious problems in our newest mission. While we are pleased at the number of contacts we have made and continue to visit and serve members of the City Center mission who have moved to the quickly-growing eastern suburbs of Montevideo in the Canelones Department, there are some personal issues between the main lay leaders that have put the work in jeopardy. It has clearly been an attack of Satan on God's mission, and by God's grace we will overcome it. For now, it has forced us to scrap some plans for outreach activities and change some others. We still feel this is a direction we need to go and we will continue doing the legwork to lay the foundation for what we hope to be a network of small congregations in the near future.



*A young man, Pablo, who stopped by the mission and stayed for Bible Study, visits with some members. He is not a Christian but has been participating and learning.*

# History of the Lutheran Church in Uruguay

*Part Two of Three. Thanks to Pastor Christian Hoffmann for preparing the original Spanish version of this text.*

With the idea especially of attending to the children of the Slovene and German families that were congregated as Lutherans, it was resolved to form a first group of classes in the common room. The teacher who accepted the challenge of starting a small school, with ten students from first through third grade together in a single classroom, was Thea Uhlig, from Lübeck. The first day of class was January 11, 1948.



**Ms. Uhlig and some students early in San Pablo's history. The classroom in the background is currently the library.**

The idea of Rev. Jauck had been to found a school of the congregation, which the children of the members of the church would attend without cost. As the majority was not from the congregation, it was resolved to charge a monthly cost. Teacher Thea taught classes according to the Official Program of the Uruguayan state as well as religion, gym, and work classes, which were taught in German. With the increase in enrollment the following year, classes were given in two groups in the same classroom. All the activity in the school was done in a very collaborative form between the congregation and relatives of the students. Campaigns, carnivals, and other fundraising activities were organized to buy materials and necessities of construction. Following the Lutheran tradition of "beside every church, a school," there were many baptisms and confirmations of students from the school. To date, more than 90% of the members of the church were brought in through the school. The school grew in number of students and in its building structure, incorporating various annexes in the neighborhood.

## Scenes from our work in Uruguay

*Top: Angie leads the Sunday School / Christian Education teachers' workshop; One of the Special Bible School classes listens to a dramatic reading of the lesson; new confirmation students get together for a snack after school. Bottom: James teaches adult confirmation at the mission; mission member Jessie leads the sewing class with some ladies from the neighborhood; Sunday School kids pray with Pastor André before they are dismissed to their class, which was taught for the first time by Sofi (far left), one of the teachers Angie has trained. She did a great job!*



# Sharp \*Family\* News



Younger grades participants in our Special Bible School (kind of like VBS only not during vacation)

## PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- A great school year for the Sharp kids and all of our school community.
- Repentance and forgiveness and a way forward in the Canelones mission.
- A long-term solution for the location of the City Center Mission.

## GIVE THANKS FOR:

- Steady growth in numbers and in spiritual maturity in our missions and central congregation.
- Good health for service, including a good recovery for James who had some health issues.
- New volunteers and leaders stepping up to be equipped for service in God's mission.

## PRAISE GOD FOR:

- Our friends and supporters who take care of us, call us, write us, send us care packages, pray for us, and make this ministry possible.



*Kaley was a student teacher from Concordia Wisconsin last year who lived with us; we got to see her when she was in town for work representing CUW at an international college fair!*

The kids had a fun summer of “staycation” playing around the house and working on some homeschooling activities, but they are (mostly) excited to be back to school. Elias moves up from the primary school to what is called “liceo” which is kind of like a junior high school in the United States. He’s a “first grader” again as he is in “1<sup>st</sup> Liceo” (the equivalent of 7<sup>th</sup> grade). His new program is more flexible and he has enjoyed having more

responsibility. Ambrose is in fifth grade and had to choose between soccer and handball and chose... handball?? Mostly because he’s better at it. Callie is in 4<sup>th</sup> grade while Maggie is in 2<sup>nd</sup>, and they are both playing handball, too. Maggie’s teacher, Tonya, has had a Sharp kid four years in a row.

## (MORE) CONFIRMATION!

Elias was confirmed along with 14 of his classmates in (our) spring. Now Ambrose starts his two years of confirmation instruction! He has done a great job recruiting people from his class to participate in the optional after school catechesis.

## VISITORS

Besides our former student teacher, Kaley (pictured), we also had a couple of Lutherans from Minnesota, Dale and Monica Buchholz, who came in on a cruise ship and were able to join us for church at the City Center Mission, a quick tour around the city, and a real Uruguayan lunch! It was nice to be able to show them around and it was a great blessing for our little congregation to host a brother and sister from the United States. If you are going to be in Uruguay **for any reason**, please let us know!



*We know we would not be doing this important work without your help.*

*For your prayers, support, and encouragement, THANK YOU!*

*Yours in the True Light,*

*James, Angie,  
Elias, Ambrose, Callie, and Maggie  
John 1:9*



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](http://lcms.org/service). Click on “Service Opportunities.”

To support the LCMS through the work of James and Angie Sharp and family, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

**The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
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St. Louis, MO 63166-6861**

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks “Support of Sharp/Uruguay.” Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on our online giving page at [lcms.org/sharp](http://lcms.org/sharp)

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