



BushNet

News from EMMANUEL INTERNATIONAL

PARTNERING WITH CHURCHES IN SERVING THEIR COMMUNITIES

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El's Jubilee Year



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Celebrating 50 years of Emmanuel International!

In the Bible, the Jubilee year was designated for the 50th year after 7 cycles of 7 years, following the end of the 7th sabbath year.

The Jubilee year was a year of acknowledging Sovereign God, His grace, His provision, His heart for His people. It was a reset year, a year when slaves were to be freed, when property was to go back to its original owner, when debts were to be forgiven. It was to be a year of rest and freedom... a reset year.

The heart of this Jubilee year was a demonstration of God's heart for compassion, an unparalleled expression of goodness and care for His people, surpassed only through the gift of His son, Jesus. Can you imagine the joy, the relief that the Jubilee year would have been to people whose lives had been battered by poverty and loss, who felt trapped in an endless cycle of need? For those giving back, can you imagine the challenge of giving up possessions and slaves? The Jubilee year required that people in poverty would trust God to provide. And it required the rich to trust that treating people in obedience to God's way would in turn be best for themselves.

Trusting and obeying a just and generous God with thanksgiving. That is the heart of the Jubilee year. Looking back and looking forward.



Emmanuel International (EI), as an international organisation, was registered in Canada on 11 September 1975. During this past year, from 12 September 2024, we celebrated EI's 50th year of recognized existence. Our 50th year, our Jubilee year!

This was/is an opportunity for us to praise God with all our hearts, souls, strength and minds. With Samuel of old we raise our Ebenezer, for truly, "hitherto has the LORD helped us."

Each week, for our Jubilee year, we posted on social media a memory or a story of EI's history. Do have a look!

 www.eiuk.org.uk/jubilee

 facebook.com/EIUK84

 eiuk.tumblr.com

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El Jubilee Event in Canada



*"Oh how good it is
When the family of God
Dwells together in spirit
In faith and unity.
Where the bonds of peace,
Of acceptance and love
Are the fruit of His presence
Here among us."*

Based on Psalm 133:1, the words of this song by Keith and Kristyn Getty resonant the memory of this celebration. The smiles, the hugs, the joy of seeing friends from years past, friends with shared memories, friends who are all a part of the family of God. One person remarked, "EI is a family and if you have worked with EI, you are a part of this family, no matter how long it has been."

On 21 June 2025, sixty-six people gathered at the EI Canada office in Stouffville for this

event: alumni, current staff, supporters and friends of EI. The purpose of our celebration was to praise God, to thank God for His goodness through the 50 years He has given EI. Hannah and Melody Maxson led us in songs of praise. Terry Ratcliff shared a fascinating history of the Ratcliff brothers who opened their hearts and doors to this building we were in which has housed the EI Canada office for over 45 years.

Mark Middleton, past Director of EI, reminded us that Jesus' final words to His disciples were "Go Ye." Starting with your neighbors, then your province, then other nations, the message to us remains the same: "Go Ye." Mark reminded us that times change. Generations see things differently. While the missionaries before us were a part of the industrial age, we are a part of the technology age. Methods and approaches adapt to the times.

The message meant for every heart is unchanged: Jesus died so that we might live. Jesus said, "Go ye."

We thank God for the privilege of sharing His love. We thank Him for the years he has given us as EI. We look forward to whatever He has for us going forward.

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow!

Helen Jones

It was great to be at the celebration, to worship together, to be encouraged by what has happened, listening to stories of how God has made a difference in the lives of those who served as much as the lives they served, acknowledging how the way we do things has changed over the years but the reason for doing it has not.

It was a lot of fun seeing so many friends too, some of whom I haven't seen in probably over 30 years! and meeting others

I had only heard of. The EI family is large and I'm glad to be a part of it.

It was maybe a bit more powerful for me as I had had the privilege of being in Brazil just a few weeks before and met a young man who was only 7 when the EI team first came to his village, to hear the difference it had made to the community and to him all those years before and how the projects were still having an impact now. I was told ministry is a circle and was surprised to hear I was part of the story too as I had trained some of the missionaries that were on the team.

As we continue to celebrate what God has done over the 50 years and look forward to what's next, we are thankful for the many people who play a part in this ministry - the large majority of whom are praying for us regularly and supporting us, a part of the story too.

Sue Fallon



Some of EI's stories through the years...

There are many stories to tell of the experiences of our missionaries or about our work, that took place in the 50 years of EI's existence. We have been sharing some of them in our social media posts, but gladly share a few with you here.



Excerpt from “The Emmanuel Experience” by John Carroll

“The first two UK partners with EI were Joy Carroll and Peter Warren. Joy took a gap year to work in the needy country of Haiti with its political unrest and its fear of voodoo.

Peter had a tough assignment to a refugee camp in Somalia.

Many others were enquiring about going out to serve God with us and, in 1978 I had an invitation from George Middleton to become the official British representative of the International Organization based in Canada. Little did I know what this would involve or what great things would develop.”

John and Thelma Carroll maintained their ties with EIUK to the end of their lives, in 2024 and 2023 respectively. Well-loved and well respected, the EI family are grateful for the encouragement and example of John and Thelma through their nearly 50 years of support.



The story of Shem Catanus

The partnership of Emmanuel International and Kabankalan Fellowship Baptist Church (KFBC), Negros Occidental, Central Philippines, began in the later part of 1979. Shem was chosen by KFBC to lead the Team.

Shem reports: “In September 20, 1979, I went to Canada for the two months training program. There were six expatriates who joined with me in that training - three Filipino-Canadians from First Filipino Baptist Church, a Canadian young couple, and a German young nurse.

After the training, I returned to the Philippines together with the expatriates. The partner church selected six nationals to comprise the whole team.

After a brief orientation, in December 1980, the community development projects and church planting ministry were started. It was a four-year holistic program launched in the rural areas of Kabankalan. The

expatriates had only a one-year contract in the program. A new expat team was sent each year to work with us.

The projects were composed of medical and dental missions with free consultations and medicine, health and sanitation, water, and goat raising. After the four-year program, seven local churches were established in different areas of the project sites. All of these churches are still existing and growing by God's grace. I was in the ministry serving the Lord through Emmanuel International from December 1980 to March 2021. I thank the Lord for giving me this opportunity and privilege to serve Him. How I came to know about EI and how I came to join the organization happened not by accident but by appointment. I believe it was all by God's plan. I thank EI and I praise the Lord for what He has done!"



Andy and Angela Sharpe worked in Iringa, Tanzania from 2010-2015. Andy is a Water and Sanitation Engineer and Angela was a school teacher and office accountant. The Sharpes recall: "Our settling to life in Iringa was made so much easier through the preparation, love and support that we received from Andrew and Miriam Wingfield in Iringa. Our time in Tanzania expanded

our views on Christian faith, different cultures and God's world, lessons learned from all sorts of EI staff." In 'retirement,' Andy is still working for EI Tanzania from time to time, visiting Iringa to give a word of advice, preparing proposals for water projects, applying for funding. As well, he is an EIUK Board member. We are very grateful for Andy's continued service on behalf of EIUK and EI Tanzania.

One of the Sharpes' favorite memories is Christmas dinner with the Wingfields and Mongers in Iringa, Dec. 2013.



Jon Cox from the UK served with Emmanuel International in Damazin, South Sudan from 1985 - 1986. A trained casualty nurse, Jon went to what was then Central Sudan with a team of volunteers to work as a nurse, health teacher and team leader in this very rural town. This was a small community development outreach, providing education and immunizations. Emmanuel International's training school prepares one to be ready for anything... but even so, to suddenly become a refugee centre! Which is what happened to Jon and his team. With three days' notice and no supplies, the team welcomed 600 weary and ravaged refugees who had crossed the

desert on foot from Ethiopia. Shelter, food and water, God provided it all, including translators. Jon has written about this in his book, "Life to the Max". Jon says, "We saw some amazing answers to prayer, which clearly saved hundreds (thousands actually) of lives which really (obviously) encouraged me in my faith.... John 10:10"

Jon wrote his story, the story of a young man's willingness to 'live the adventure of faith', an adventure that started in Damazin. We encourage you to read his whole story: "Life to the Max".



A memory from Sue Black: "I remember one time in the Philippines, Donna Aldridge and I were out for a walk and had stopped under the shade of a nice tree. Some children came by and started shouting "subay", "subay". Donna and I were trying to learn Illongo and started searching our minds to remember what "subay" meant. About 2 minutes later, we remembered because red ants had crawled up under our clothes and were ferociously biting us. I still remember the word to this day!

"During my time with EI I saw God "show up" in so many ways. God used the spiritual teaching from Training School, (including classes with George Middleton), and that

year in the Philippines, to expand my perspective, grow my faith and deepen my relationship with Jesus. I believe that God used it to change the course of my life and I will forever be thankful for that."

Sue served with EI in the Philippines in 1980 and then in the Stouffville, Ontario office until 1992.



Life in Haiti has been unbearably difficult for more than a decade, marked by political instability, economic collapse, and natural disasters that have left countless families struggling to survive. One is Andrice, the youngest of six children; hardship was all he knew. His mother died of breast cancer, and soon after, his father abandoned the family, leaving for the Dominican Republic and never returning. With no home, no support, and no sense of stability, Andrice was left to fend for himself.

One day, the pastor of OEBC church in Haiti*, Pastor Jovin, saw Andrice by the river, throwing rocks - alone, homeless, and without hope. It was a heartbreaking reflection of a broken system where children were left to disappear into the streets. That moment ignited a mission in Pastor Jovin's heart. He opened a boys' home in Jacmel,

where abandoned children could find refuge, structure, and love.

In the face of relentless hardship, Andrice found solace in faith. Within the OEBB church, he discovered a community and a passion for music. Despite never having formal lessons, he taught himself to play the keyboard and eventually became the youth choir director. Today, he continues to play an instrument at the Bethesda Delmas church, using his gift to inspire others.

By God's grace, Andrice also excelled in school. In a country where education is often an unattainable dream, he fought against the odds. His journey - one that began in an orphanage, surrounded by despair - has now led him to the halls of medicine. Today, he is a fourth-year medical student, proving that even in the darkest of times, light can still shine through.

*The OEBB is a partner church of Emmanuel International.



Vincent Stephen Gidudu is EI Uganda's first national missionary. He writes, "I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to share a glimpse of my journey as a support-raising missionary with EI Uganda, especially within the unique context of ministry here in Uganda.

As the first Ugandan support raising with EI, I want to begin by expressing my heartfelt thanks to God and to the EI family for the opportunity to serve with such an incredible team. When I first accepted this calling last year, I was filled with uncertainty, doubts, and fear of the unknown. But now, one year later and with the blessing of support-raising training and encouragement along the way, I can say this journey has been both humbling and faith-stretching.

Support-raising, I've come to learn, is not merely about seeking financial help. It's about inviting others to partner with God in fulfilling His global mission. In a context like ours - where support for missionaries is uncommon, economic challenges are real, and giving is typically ministry activities based, this path can feel daunting. Yet, even in those moments, God has been faithfully at work: refining my trust in Him, deepening my dependence on His provision, and showing me the true value of relationships over resources.

A special moment for me was Pedals for the Nations, where I cycled over 607 km to raise mission awareness and financial support. Through it, I witnessed God's provision in beautiful and unexpected ways; He stirred hearts, opened doors, and reminded me that He alone is our provider. I remain grateful for the few individuals God has already convicted to stand with us, and I trust He will continue to call more into this work.

This journey has its share of ups and downs, but each step has been an opportunity for growth, learning, and collaboration. I'm deeply thankful for the privilege to serve and learn alongside others, and I'm excited to see all that God has in store."