



Evangelical Friends Mission

February 2021 Prayer Letter

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Our purpose and passion is to fuel a worldwide movement of people who seek first the kingdom of God, planting churches that live and die to carry out the Great Commission in the spirit of the Great Commandment.

The Retnaraj Family | Serving in Nepal

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season."

2 Timothy 4:1-2



The **Musahars** are a Dalit group found in the Terai of Nepal. They speak the Bhojpuri dialect of Hindi and Nepali. They were traditionally rat-catchers, and there is still uncertainty as to their exact origin. The word Musahar is said to be derived from "mūs," a local Bhojpuri and [Sanskrit](#) (mūṣ) word for a rat or mouse, on account of their traditional occupation as rat-catchers. They no longer engage in rat-catching and are now mainly landless agricultural laborers. They are one of the most marginalized groups in Nepal & India and have suffered discrimination. They believe in a number of tribal deities, and a small percentage of these people have accepted Christ.



In the rural areas, Musahar are primarily bonded agricultural workers, but often go without work for as much as eight months in a year. Children work alongside their parents in the fields or as [rag pickers](#), earning as little as INRs 25 to 30 (\$ 0.20 to 0.30) daily. The Musahar literacy rate is 3% but falls below 1% among women. By some estimates, as many as 85% of some villages of Musahars suffer from malnutrition and with scant access to health centers, diseases such as malaria and [kala-azar](#), the most severe form of leishmaniasis, are prevalent.

Our CHE ministry is involved in a Health & Nutrition Program among some Musahar children and women, and through this program we also provide school tuition to school drop-out Musahar children through a Community Learning Centre (CLC). We have about 25 children in Aurahi village, which is approximately 12 kms from Janakpur in the Dhanusa District. Arun Mandal and his wife, Babli, are CHE Trainers who are actively involved in teaching children from a Childrens' CHE syllabus. It has lessons in health and hygiene and incorporates simple a Bible Study using Bible stories. Other CHE leaders like Sanjeev & Kiran and also Sahendra Mahto are actively working among this people group with our ministry in Mahottari and Dhanusa Districts.



Prateek was able to get back to college in the U.S. after a brief time with us and the rest of our family in India without any additional problems caused due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for praying for his safe journey.

Shalom!
Samson, Priscilla, and Prateek Retnaraj
Nepal



From the EFM Office

Praise God...

- For the strong finish to EFM's 2020 financial year. We are grateful for the Lord's provision and his people's generous giving during a very unpredictable year.
- For how quickly Maria Giron and Krista Alvarez are learning their roles on the EFM staff. Maria is our new Administrative Assistant and is serving on an interim basis. Krista is assisting Kimberly Mer in the area of communications, database management, and other initiatives. Both Krista and Maria work part-time.
- For the training that has been taking place for EFM coaches under the leadership of Matthew Zoller, our Field Support Mobilizer, and Stan Leach, the Director of Equipping Leader Ministries based in Southern California.

Please Pray...

- For the search for a new Executive Director for EFM and for Dan Cammack and Matt Macy as they get ready to move into new roles with EFM. Dan and Matt remain in their current roles of Executive and Associate Directors until the new E.D. is hired (hopefully no later than spring of this year). You can find the announcement [here](#).
- For Matthew Zoller as his position on the EFM staff as Field Support Mobilizer is phased out. Matthew is currently searching for a job. He will be with EFM through the end of March unless the right job comes before then. Matthew has been instrumental in strengthening our coaching program as well as getting the Field Support Teams system up and running. We are very grateful for him and his contribution to EFM!
- For Dan, Matt, and David Thomas as they spend time at Barclay College during the last week of February and lead the Personal Evangelism Seminar that all students are required to take before graduating.

EFM Five-Year Goal:

To send 10 new missionary households from North America to launch 5 new fields in the next 5 years.

Praise God...

- For the first prayer gathering that was held in support of this goal. More than 20 people met via Zoom on January 14 and nearly all the yearly meetings in North America connected to EFM were represented. The next gathering is on February 11 and there's room for more participants! See the special announcement below.
- For the local churches that are showing the Five-Year Goal videos and the regions/yearly meetings that are planning Luke 10 Think Tanks for this coming spring. These think tanks will help discern where to send teams to explore potential new fields (called Luke 10 Trips).

Please Pray...

- For the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest fields.
- That the Lord will use the Five-Year Goal videos to stir his people to carry out the Great Commission both at home and abroad.
- That all the regions/yearly meetings will organize Luke 10 Think Tanks for this spring or plan to participate in ones being held nearby. These regional think tanks need to be completed in time for the national Luke 10 Think Tank which will meet in May of 2021 to determine at least 10 sites for exploration.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: On Thursday, February 11, there will be a prayer gathering via Zoom in support of the Five-Year Goal. It will take place at 10 AM PST and is available to anyone who would like to take part. Please send a message to efm@friendsmission.com if you would like to participate and we will send you the link for the gathering

From Maria Giron

Missions Mobilizer for Hispanic Friends

Praise God...

- That God has allowed me an even closer involvement with EFM by allowing me to assist a little in the administrative area.
- That God has allowed my family and me to start this first month of the new year with victory and with his divine provision.

Please Pray...

- That our outreach to Hispanic pastors and leaders will increase this year and that their involvement in missions through EFM would be higher.
- For Mexico Yearly Meeting session that will take place online at the end of February. That all the Friends Pastors of Mexico would have a sense of unity and would be a time of fellowship and edification for all, even though this time is all virtually.

From Kathi Perry

Serving in Ireland

Praise God...

- I'm really thankful for some (limited) connections with friends over Christmas, due to an easing of COVID-19 restrictions.
- I'm thankful that I've been able to connect with families in some new ways - through videos and writing a blog.

Please Pray...

- Unfortunately, the easing of restrictions over Christmas has caused a spike in COVID-19 cases in Ireland (as well as the new highly transferable strains). Ireland is in lockdown and that will continue into March. Pray for homeschooling parents, tired children, strained relationships, loneliness.
- Please pray that I can find effective ways to support and love the people around me, in spite of the restrictions in place in Ireland. And pray for protection, healing, vaccinations, grieving families... all the things you are experiencing in the U.S. as well.

From Tony and Agi Frei

Serving in Hungary

Praise God...

- Some of our church members go through the coronavirus infection and were healed. Glory to God!
- We are thankful to the Lord for our young church members. They have a difficult time at school with the online learning, but everyone can continue their studies successfully.
- We are grateful to the Lord that we have had the opportunity for online church meetings so far. In Tolna and Kolked we can start again the meetings personally by following the epidemiological rules.

Please Pray...

- Family of brother Jozsi (from Kolked) decided to place him in a nursing home. It is in a very nice environment near Kolked. Let's pray for he gets used to the nursing home and finds his place there as well.
- For Ildiko, who visited our church in Pecs. She fell over in her home and broke her pelvic bone. Please pray for her full recovery.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Dani Domjan lost his job (hotel receptionist). He lives in Budapest and it is a really difficult situation for him. Please pray for him!

From Rupak and Pramila Tamang

Serving in Bhutan

Praise God...

- On 10th December 2020, we issued 43 pastor and leader certificates along with the Lord's supper and a feet washing service.
- For that we printed 130 pastor and leader guidelines books and 130 certificates.
- For time to visit Dagana and Wangdi during lock down time. We recorded six more pastors and leaders there!

Please Pray...

- For open up lock down situations in Bhutan and visit many parts of Bhutan to record remaining pastors.
- For our training in Bible school in February 2021.
- For time to take a retreat in March to record pastors in Bhumthang.

**From Voicu and Ana Marian
Serving in Romania**

Praise God...

- Safe and joyful holidays in spite of restrictions; opportunity to share the message and love of Christ in tangible ways; for freedom to proclaim the gospel.
- New young ladies coming to Bible study; The Holy Spirit changing lives; our English students increasingly open to message from scriptures.
- God's protection of our health; Christina's safe return to US; all family members and close friends continuing to work during this time.

Please Pray...

- God's will for our travel plans to the US; safety and logistics, fulfilling his purpose in the upcoming months.
- Healing for the sick, many in the ICU; salvation for the lost; the peace of Christ which brings deliverance from any fear.
- God's wisdom and courage to do the good works he's prepared for us. Several people sought prayer and counsel in critical family situations recently; please pray for God's breakthrough.

**From Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj
Serving in Nepal**

Praise God...

- A short vacation with family in India and also meeting up with Prateek as he travelled home from the US to be with us for the winter break from college. He had a very adventurous journey to India and was not allowed to fly to Nepal directly because of issues the two governments are having and also because of the virus scare. After a couple of weeks at home with us in Kathmandu he again left for Newberg. Thank you for many who prayed and supported him and us during these days.
- All our trainers had achieved almost all their objectives in a end of the year assessment and are looking forward to a busy time this month to catch up with their targets set for the year before March. All had a good time with their families and churches and committees during the Christmas and New Year celebration fighting off all the odds created by the virus scare and the limitations brought on by social distancing. We thank God that we received all our wages in full for the whole year and the usual gifts during Christmas.
- The virus scare in Nepal is on the decline and life is slowly and steadily going back to normal ways. The infection rate and death rate from COVID-19 was much less as compared to the rest of the developing world and especially from India our neighbors. But there still are many viral diseases and common cold and cough is very rampant in places like Kathmandu because of overcrowding in the valley.

Please Pray...

- The Learning Centre initiatives taken by Solomon, Gokarna, and Arun in faith in their respective areas. They now are making efforts to register the Learning Centre with the government to be governed by their Committees.
- Many people received blankets during this winter to try and get over the cold wave again this year. Many communities are also asking for help in this matter and this year the terrai (plains) is seeing a very severe cold wave again. We are planning to help children and older age people in Dalit communities in Mahottari and Dhanusa to help them stay warm.
- The need for public toilets (washrooms) in the community learning Centre at Chitwan, Chapur and Aurahi where they use the premises as a tuition centre for children and meeting room for adults and women's group meetings.

**From B. and D. A.
Serving in Nepal**

Praise God...

- That at Christmas evangelistic meetings we had five Buddhists and 57 Hindus accepted the Lord.

Please Pray...

- For these new converts that they will be disciplined well to endure persecution from the Hindus.

**From Abe and Diane Bible
Serving in Ukraine**

Praise God...

- We had a great trip to the USA to take care of documents and visit family.
- Abe was able to get new hearing aids. A real blessing. Makes it possible for him to continue ministering!
- The January workshops were held, and the evangelistic workshop was well attended. Financial Freedom had a low attendance, but many made a new commitment to lead groups this year and pass this course on.

Please Pray...

- For the February evangelistic workshops. Abe will start to focus on church planting even though things are behind schedule because of COVID-19 shutdowns and illnesses etc. But...all in God's timing.
- Diane is supposed to have another surgical procedure in February on her eye (detached retina twice in the fall). Pray that that will go forward. And pray that her vision would be restored. It continues to be blurry.
- Abe has been asked again to work with the denominational leadership on strategy—his gifting. Pray that the Lord will give him fresh and helpful ideas. And that they will be able to have productive meetings in February—that will breathe new life into the churches. Many of them are very tradition bound and barely surviving.

**From David Thomas
EFM Whole-Life Discipleship**

Praise God...

- That though the enemy intended destruction on the earth through COVID-19, God is turning it around, so he is glorified, many people set free, many workers released into the world's harvest fields, and many people brought into his kingdom!
- For the church world-wide "standing in the gap." That his kingdom come, and his will be done around the world!
- For the Holy Spirit's work and a world-wide softening of hearts!

Please Pray...

- For deeper intimacy with Christ for our leaders and colleagues around the world.
- God is never late! May he accomplish all his purposes changing hearts and bringing as many people as possible back into right relationship with himself!
- For believers around the world to come to know God as Jehova Jirah.

Praise God (Thailand-Lahu)...

- For, Ja Bo, our D4D leader in Ja Taw who has been visiting village families in their homes, praying for them, and sharing a Bible lesson.
- For the freedom to visit people in their homes and build relationships with everyone in the community during this time.

Please Pray (Thailand-Lahu)...

- For Solomon, Yosapa, Chalee, Ben and as they train up new team members in D4D lessons.
- For Mo Pa working in the village of Ja Sa Pa to have wisdom as he encourages a couple families in their young church. Pray for God to bring the headman (Ja Sa Pa- a former drug trafficker) and his children's families to repentance and to a right relationship with God!

Praise God (Rwanda, Burundi, DR Congo (Uvira and Goma)...

- For leaders rethinking how pastors can best serve their churches and support their families when the income from the church is insufficient to support them. Thank God for many leaders growing through D4D in being better stewards of their resources to better support their families.

Please Pray (Rwanda, Burundi, DR Congo (Uvira and Goma)...

- For the city of Uvira, DR Congo where flooding in April killed many, wiping out whole neighborhoods. With many new refugees fleeing the fighting in the mountains and settling in the Middle Plateau, forests are being cut down, and with the rains more erosion and new flooding is again destroying life and property this past December in Uvira. Pray for wholistic solutions! Pray for a D4D connection with the mayor of Uvira to develop into something to bless this city and advance God's kingdom there!

Praise God (Cambodia)...

- For Scott and Andrea's opportunity to bless young married couples in a small group Bible study.
- For Scott's growing relationships among the Kavet believers and growing churches in a number of villages.

Please Pray (Cambodia)...

- For bright Kavet leaders to emerge who have the gifts and Holy Spirit insight to be able to translate the scriptures well into their own Kavet language.
- For all the details to come together to eventually produce a Kavet Bible!