



# Evangelical Friends Mission

## June 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.

### D. K. and Choity Sarkar | Serving in India

We are at war. The whole world is fighting against an unseen enemy. We do not know who will be affected and when they will be affected. Still, we are fighting. We do not have enough weapons to fight. Still, we are fighting. We are fighting because we do not want to die; we want to save our lives. We are using masks so that the virus cannot enter into our body, keeping distanced so that we should not come in touch with others. The enemy keeps us so busy that we cannot reach others. So, no preaching, no evangelism, no prayer meetings, no fellowship, and no outreach programs. The churches are shutdown; we are hiding ourselves.



Dear believers of Christ, in India, the second phase of the virus is so powerful that it is increasing every day. The death toll crossed 10,000 per day. There are no beds in the hospital, no medicine, no oxygen. People are dying without receiving any medical treatment. New channels are covering the procession of the dead. Everywhere there is lamentation, weeping, and great mourning.



Temporary burning place outside Gjjipur in Uttarpradesh.

Still, there is some good news at EFM Kolkata. We had to close our service for eight months. There was no house fellowship or staff meetings. Even we could not send the money to the tour staff in time. Still our staff worked hard to win souls. The church was closed but our staff visited house to house and preached the gospel in and around our homes God is good. He saved us from all kinds of sickness, especially from COVID-19. He gave some reward; some fruits.

Here is brief description of our reward:

- **Church and House Fellowships** – By his grace, we started a church in another district named South Dinajpur. Also, we started a church in North 24 Parganas district. The name of the place is Ichhapur. Another new church was started in Nadelli, Nainital, Uttarakhand. We have established 60 new house churches in different districts in West Bengal and Uttarakhand. Praise the Lord. Thank you very much for your prayer.
- **Holy Week Program** – Last year in 2020, we could not have any holy week program due to lockdown. This year, by the grace of God, we had a very good holy week program. We distributed tracts, and booklets and organized programs in different churches.
- **Baptisms** – On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, we had public testimonies of baptism. In Kolkata there were four, in Malda three, in Murshidabad one, in Gosaba one, in Shyanagar four, and in Nazatt six. This the reward from the Lord. Praise be to his name.
- **Coaching Centers** – Our five coaching centers are running well. These students are very poor. With the permission of Wabash Friends Church, we distributed relief among the parents of the coaching classes. The local people are very happy seeing our attitude to the poor. A total of 130 families received the ration from our church.
- **Relief Distribution** – With the help of EFM, we distributed relief among the poor people. We had two disasters: 1) Cyclone Amphan, and 2) COVID-19. Many people of the coastal area lost their houses due to the cyclone. Then, because of COVID-19, people lost their jobs, businessmen lost their businesses, and common people were in serious trouble. The hospitals were full – no beds, no medicine, no oxygen. In this situation, people were surviving. Many people died and many are still suffering. We distributed rice, dal, soyabean, and oil to 600 families around our churches. The name of the Lord and his churches are glorified. Praise the Lord.
- **Administrative Work** – We had only a one-time in person monthly staff meeting in the last few months. However, we were able to meet four times through Zoom. We shared the word of God, our prayer points, and we prayed together. We had a wonderful time with the Lord. Praise his name.



Please pray in spite of all the oppositions and obstruction, we can preach his salvation. We are called for that job. May God give us wisdom and strength.

## From the EFM Office

### *Praise God...*

- For the good EFM Board meetings that took place on May 27 and 28 at Quaker Ridge, Colorado. Board members enjoyed spending some time with future missionaries and also being part of the national Luke 10 Think Tank. See the next section of this prayer letter to learn more about these two things.
- For the birth of Mila Ruth into the Alvarez family. The mother, Krista, is EFM's Communications Assistant. Mother and baby are doing well!

### *Please Pray...*

- For the search for a new Executive Director for EFM. Pray especially for the EFM Board members who are involved in the search and that just the right person will be chosen in the near future. Dan and Matt remain in their current roles of Executive and Associate Directors until the new E.D. is able to start work, and then they will move into the new roles the Board has created for them.
- For strength, wisdom, and resources for the staff, missionaries, and national leaders as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our lives and ministries. Pray especially for those in India and Nepal where the epicenter of the pandemic seems to be right now.

## 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 Future Missionary Retreat that took place May 24-27 at Quaker Ridge, Colorado. There were 15 potential missionaries from five regions/yearly meetings who participated in the retreat along with 15 missionary mentors (also from five regions/yearly meetings). It was a rich time of learning, fellowship, and exploring God's call to missionary service.
- For the national Luke 10 Think Tank that took place on May 27, also at Quaker Ridge. There were about 60 people in the room! And they came from six regions/yearly meetings. Among them were future missionaries, church leaders, EFM Board members, and people with missions experience. Ten areas of the world were chosen for exploration through Luke 10 Trips over the next year and a half. These ten areas are in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and South America.

### *Please Pray...*

- For the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest fields.
- For those who participated in the Future Missionary Retreat as they reflect on what they learned and continue to seek the Lord's guidance in regards to missionary service.
- For those who will participate in a Future Missionary Short-Term trip which will take place during the first part of July. It will be a time of learning what missions looks like in real life. Pray that it will be helpful to those who are trying to discern whether God is calling them to be missionaries.
- For the regions/yearly meetings as they begin to plan Luke 10 Trips to explore the 10 areas of the world that were selected at the national Luke 10 Think Tank.

**SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:** Join us on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 10-11 AM PST for our Luke 10:2 Gathering via Zoom in support of EFM's Five-Year Goal. If you would like to participate, sign up at <https://friendsmission.com/prayer-gathering>. You will receive some prayer points and the link for the gathering a few days before the event.

## From Babir and Lalita Gautam Serving in India

### *Please pray...*

- For our nation from the second wave of COVID-19.
- For the village of Purnea. People are coming to faith.
- That we can reach more families with food.

## From Kathi Perry Serving in Ireland

### *Praise God...*

- Ireland has had one of the strictest COVID lockdown regimens in the world. Our contact with others, and being limited to a 5km radius from home has created challenges for ministry. At the beginning of May, the government instituted a "phased reopening" and I am so thankful for the opportunity (even limited!) to see friends again. On May 11 religious services (with many guidelines and limited numbers) can resume.
- I'm thankful for resilient relationships and the loving, compassionate care for one another (and for me) that has been so evident in the past year.

### *Please Pray...*

- As Ireland "re-opens" the future of Mother and Baby/Toddler groups is still unclear. Please pray for clear leading from the Spirit as decisions are made about where to go from here.
- I'm looking to update my social work credentials/qualifications in Ireland. Please pray that I would find a supervisor, and the coursework I need to make that happen.
- I'd like to visit my family this year. Travel restrictions, quarantine requirements (in Ireland), vaccination delays (and an allergic reaction to the first jab) are complicating my plans! Please pray that these issues can be resolved.

## From Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj Serving in Nepal

### *Praise God...*

- All our CHE trainers and their families are well and safe in their own homes. Out in the villages, life is not so bleak but some places having higher populations are seeing sickness and even death. CHE training or meetings in any form has been suspended until we receive permission from the government to proceed.
- Our families in India and elsewhere are also safe thus far.

### *Please Pray...*

- Prateek, our son, is in Oregon and has finished two years at George Fox University and has applied for a job to see him through summer vacation. He is applying this week for his social security number, so that will be useful for a regular job and thus a source of income to support himself. Thank you for your prayers and we solicit your continuing prayers as we get back to work in a couple of weeks (hopefully). Thank you all our friends who have been so supportive in our work and personally in our lives. We have so much to thank you guys for.
- Currently we are in a lockdown state, as the Nepal government tries to cope with this crisis, and essential supplies are available for two hours in the market every morning. By God's Grace we have a vehicle which allows us to go to the nearest supermarket and get all our supplies in one go, weekly. We also have curfew passes issued by the hospital where Priscilla works. Almost everyone we know has lost someone close or in their family, and the sound we are getting used to is the haunting sound of the ambulance siren as they are busy ferrying sick patients or dead bodies. The army had taken the responsibility of cremating the corpses, as it was too overwhelming for the crematorium staff to cope with the sudden increase in numbers of corpses.

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

### *Praise God...*

- That at Easter 2021 one Buddhist, one Muslim, and 52 Hindus gave their lives to Jesus.

### *Please Pray...*

- For Nepal. A second wave of COVID-19 is here, and country is in total lockdown.

**From Abe and Diane Bible  
Serving in Ukraine  
Praise God...**

- At the evangelism workshop in May, the men actually went out on the street for two hours, a group of about 25, and they made contact with over 130 people—holding conversations, praying for them!
- COVID-19 restrictions seem to be lifting even though we hear of many cases. But these are people who just get sick, some worse and some less—including our own daughter and her husband and daughter who also live in Ukraine and lead a church they planted some years ago! They are all well again! No one in their church was even hospitalized. Vaccines are becoming available, but people are not “excited” about them.

**Please Pray...**

- Abe will hold one more evangelistic workshop June 11 and 12. Pray for these faithful people who are excited about the Lord and looking for him to work in their communities.
- For the ongoing work of putting up a Ukrainian and a Russian website to help pastors and leaders have resources to encourage them and help them lead better. These are materials that Abe has developed over the last 20 years, including about 100 videos.
- As plans and strategies are laid for the fall time. We just need the Lord’s leading in what his desires are for the coming church year. God forbid that we get involved in busy work! We are looking for fruitful.

**From Tony and Agi Frei  
Serving in Hungary  
Praise God...**

- In the past, Agi had a very big pain in her waist and the doctors removed 1.5 liters of liquid from her body. The cause is unknown to this day. She had a big operation because of it. She was asymptomatic for three years. Earlier this month, the pain came back, and she went to the emergency room. Agi got an infusion and she could go home. Praise God, she got better more quickly than in the past and she is fine now.
- A few people applied to receive a public testimony of baptism. I am so thankful for them. This June, we will organize a public testimony of baptism church meeting.
- If you remember, I wrote about Daniel Domján. Dani is a young man from our mission. He lives in Budapest, and he is a very loyal boy to God. Daniel lost his job this winter. He worked in a hotel in Budapest (as a receptionist) and next to it, he studies tourism at university. In April, he got a new job at Lake Balaton and it’s much better for him. He will work as a front office manager. He has a good chance to practice and make money. We are also thankful for it and so is Dani. He started in May.

**Please Pray...**

- For my younger sister, Gyöngyi. She has had an autoimmune disease (systemic sclerosis) for five years. She works in a Baptist nursing home and she works very hard there. Last week, Gyöngyi got a high fever, she was very weak, fell, and had joint pain. She didn’t have COVID-19, but went for some testing (blood draw, lung function, etc.). We are waiting for the results and are praying that her condition doesn’t get worse.
- For Eve from our church. Eve is an old lady; she has been our church member for more than 20 years. She has an autoimmune disease with her joints. She started having chest tightness and a feeling of drowning at night. She is better, but very weak. Please pray for her with us.
- For the Boros family. Joseph Boros and his family are members from our church, too. His oldest boy, David (who is sixteen years old), has an ear problem. He went to the hospital in Pécs for an operation. Before the operation, he had a COVID test and it was positive, but David didn’t have any symptoms. Now, the all family is in quarantine, so please pray for them and for David.

**From Voicu and Ana Marian  
Serving in Romania  
Praise God...**

- For a considerable decrease in COVID-19 cases, which led to new "relaxation policies." A general sense that this crisis will end soon.
- Access to internet and communication; being able to carry on with ministry during this time; having devotions with online students as part of the lesson - and their open hearts to it. Please pray the truth they heard remains and bears fruit.
- We just ended a series of ladies bible study. All the young women testified of God’s great movement in their hearts and are looking forward to the next study.

**Please Pray...**

- Airline tickets changed again, new dates for the US: June 10-September 6. Please pray this doesn’t change. And for good health, being able to get negative COVID-19 tests right before flying out of Sibiu.
- God’s will and work to prevail all over the world. Peace among people in the "troubled zones," but also across nations where there is division.
- Wisdom to wrap up things before leaving; clarity in deciding for the future; health issues for Ana.

**From David Thomas  
EFM Whole-Life Discipleship  
Praise God...**

- For the opportunity for the church world-wide to “stand in the gap,” on behalf of their people to intercede for their communities and their nations.
- For this time when people world-wide are more open and sensitive to hearing his voice. May all the barriers holding people back from an intimate relationship with him be removed through this special time in history!

**Please Pray...**

- That God would guard our leader’s hearts and minds with his perfect peace that passes all understanding as they rejoice in him, give thanks and intercede as the Holy Spirit leads them.
- For Christians world-wide to reach out and love their neighbors. Pray for their readiness to love by meeting needs and by being ready to lead people to Christ.
- For people at home who do not have ways to make more money, and who do not have the money needed to buy food at the markets.

**Praise God (Thailand-Lahu)...**

- For the stability and unity of The Way Foundation (TWF) team.
- That because Chiang Rai started social distancing early and that they have been able to stay COVID-free.
- Many of Thailand’s hill tribe peoples have gone home to their villages where there is enough food and the forests are also close by to gather other kinds of food.

**Please Pray (Thailand-Lahu)...**

- For the TWF staff to use technology well, to keep working as they can (from home), to stay connected and encourage each other and the people they work with in the communities.
- For Solomon, Yosapa, Ben and Ja Bo as they see how they can encourage village leaders in Ja Taw through this time. Ja Taw and Ba Mo are the neighboring communities where they are beginning their D4D work.
- For Mo Pa working in the village of Ja Sa Pa to have wisdom as he encourages the young church. Pray for favor in the eyes of the village chief, Ja Sa Pa (village carries his name) as they would also like to start a D4D work here as well.

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

- For planning Tertullien and others are doing to help their D4D teams encourage leaders and others to get their family businesses up and generating income for their families again after so long without economic activity.
- For the Carpenter’s late May trip back to the USA (Brad, Chelsea, Sarai, Gideon and Ian made it back to their family’s home in Wichita, Kansas.

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

- For wisdom for the local governments in Rwanda, Burundi and Congo as they seek to protect their people from the spread of COVID-19, and as they also seek to get their economies running again.
- The rains have slowed down, but many were affected by the flooding and landslides. Continue to pray for the city of Uvira in the DRC which lost two neighborhoods of houses and the city water tank when three rivers overflowed their banks (17-19 April). The UN, the DRC government and various NGO organizations have been helping, but the situation still remains critical. Pray for basic necessities to be met (food, shelter, drinking water) Pray for energy and courageous leadership for the Mayor of Uvira, and for our Friendship Church leaders Lusungu and Manasseh, along with leaders from other churches and organizations. Pray for an outpouring of blessing as believers seek to help those who have lost everything.

***Praise God (Cambodia)...***

- For many opportunities to support the Cambodian government in Stueng Treng. They have produced flyers and delivered them to many people throughout the province. They have been training village chiefs and police about how to deal with COVID-19.

***Please Pray (Cambodia)...***

- For strength and health for Scott and Andrea and Elise and all the YWAM leaders they work with in Stueng Treng and in Siem Pang near the Laos border. Pray for continued favor in the eyes of local government leaders as they work together with them helping train up as many community and village leaders as possible in how to handle this COVID-19 crisis.