



Evangelical Friends Mission November 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 Carpenter Family | Serving in Rwanda

“What has the Pandemic been like in Rwanda?”

We were asked this thoughtful question many times during our stay in the U.S. (May 2020-July 2021) and have reported that, like everywhere else, it has been very difficult. Various lockdowns, masking mandates, and social distancing and movement guidelines have seemed to be very helpful at containing the spread of illness, and for that we are extremely thankful! However, isolation, lack of ability to work and to worship the Lord with others have had severe consequences both physically and emotionally to many people whose livelihoods depend on day-to-day jobs and whose hearts depend on being with other people in every situation.

While we were gone, the Lord sustained the leaders in the Evangelical Friends Church of Rwanda (EFC-R) and gave them creative ideas such as taking turns writing and sending devotions to each other by phone messages, joining in regular video calls to encourage each other, recording sermons, and responding to local churches to help their most needy church and community members. They have also initiated the Pastors’ Development Fund to help pastors with their livelihood. With EFM joining in partnership, pastors can develop income-generating plans and work with a local group of leaders to refine that plan and take out a loan when needed. This is exciting to see pastors more able to take care of their families as well as their congregations, and we hope that these bi-vocational skills and experience will be useful in the future as we dream of pastors and leaders being sent to where there are no churches, even across borders to the *mission fields!*



In D for D, specifically, leaders focused on discipling their families, and we have seen encouraging testimonies of families growing closer to Jesus and all that he wants them to be. Without being able to travel, they’ve remained connected to Congo and Burundi discipleship groups by phone, encouraging them to continue following up on their group members’ progress. Through all this, we believe the Lord is empowering and growing leaders in discipleship, and we pray that growth will continue exponentially into the future!

Brad has embarked on a challenging but exciting new journey! He has started a Masters’ program through Fuller Seminary (online) for the purpose of learning and preparing for the future task of helping our African friends to raise up, train, and send their own missionaries.

Though we originally thought we would only spend a few months in the United States, living life through a full year with our extended family nearby was very special. Our transition back to Rwanda has had its ups and downs, but we are very grateful that we have mostly settled back into our life and home in Rwanda at this point.

Sarai (almost 9) and Gideon (6) have enjoyed being back at Virunga Valley Academy (VVA) for school, learning and playing with friends. They both have expressed missing their family in the states, especially their cousins, but we can see that they are appreciating some of the special people and opportunities in Rwanda too.



Ian (1) has not skipped a beat since touching down in Rwanda. He loves exploring, running, and playing everywhere. He loves going on walks to see the neighborhood goats, cows, and vehicles on the nearby road. We are thankful that he also loves reading books and has gotten to know and love our Rwandan friends that work in and around our home.

Brad and Chelsea are thankful to be in their Rwandan home again but are still finding it challenging to figure out new rhythms, having added an active toddler and Brad’s schoolwork to the mix!



From the EFM Office

Praise God...

- For those who were able to participate last month in some gatherings sponsored by EFM in Kansas and Texas. Friends gathered to eat dessert and receive updates on how God is using EFM to help fuel a worldwide movement of people who seek first the kingdom of God. Stan Leach and Matt Macy gave the updates.
- For the ways in which the Lord continues to unify Friends in North America to carry out the Great Commission in the spirit of the Great Commandment.

Please Pray...

- For the EFM Board as it meets in Canton, Ohio, November 11 and 12. Pray specifically that the Lord will continue to knit our hearts and minds together with his so that we can accomplish the work he has given us to do in his way.
- For wisdom for EFM as it continues to explore how to be helpful to yearly meetings around the world who are feeling led to send missionaries of their own.

EFM Five-Year Goal:

To send 10 new missionary households from North America to launch 5 new fields by December 31, 2025.

Praise God...

- For all the groups around North America who are working on plans for next year's Luke 10 Trips to at least ten destinations.
- For many women and men from our regions who continue to move forward on the path of discernment regarding God's call on their lives.
- For the Luke 10:2 Gatherings that have been taking place once a month via Zoom since January of this year. It is always encouraging to see Friends from most of our regions in North America participating in these gatherings along with several from Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. If you would like to join in this prayer effort, see the special announcement below.

Please Pray...

- For the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest fields.
- For the women and men who are exploring God's call on their lives as well as the local churches that they belong to. May the Lord work powerfully through these bodies of believers to make his will known.
- For the various groups that are planning Luke 10 Trips that will hopefully take place in 2022. Most of them are still in the process of setting the dates, discerning who should be on the teams, and setting the itineraries. As you can imagine, the worldwide pandemic continues to be a challenge when it comes to planning!

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 in this gathering you can sign up for it 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 Brad and Chelsea Carpenter Serving in Rwanda

Praise God...

- For the emotional and physical health of our family after having walked through such a big transition.
- For the way he has helped and is helping Rwandan Church leaders even during these tough months and years.

Please Pray...

- That the Lord will stir in our hearts and in the hearts of his Rwandan people the desire and the call to go outside of Rwanda to bring the message of his kingdom to people who need it!
- That God will intimately take care of and answer the prayers of those struggling with finances and livelihood.
- That he will continue to heal Brad's back and empower him in his new studies.

From Voicu and Ana Marian Retired EFM Missionaries in Romania

Praise God...

- For beautiful fall days, good harvest and plentiful produce in the open market and stores.
- For protection from the deadly pestilence and the terror around it; the good (salvation and sanctification) that the Lord is working during this time.
- The blessing of being back here to encourage our brothers and sisters, and to help some people in their time of need.

Please Pray...

- For wisdom and obedience to God's leading in all we do. We postponed our trip to visit John and the ministry in the South, in the light of current COVID-19 crisis. There is record high of reported cases, despite government restrictions and more people (even children) getting the vaccine, some taking the 3rd dose.
- For open doors for the gospel and open hearts for Jesus in this culture of strong religious tradition. We'd like to resume our Bible study meetings, and to invite a few new ladies, some former students, and their moms. Continued protection from sickness and from fear for us all.
- The missionary team John works with has been waiting a very long time for important government approvals for a sports facility, (so they can use it to full function and capacity) but local officials are corrupt and purposely block the team's endeavors. Please pray for a breakthrough so Christ's kingdom can advance.

From Abe and Diane Bible Serving in Ukraine

Praise God...

- Diane spoke at a ladies retreat in October on the topic "Lord, Teach Us to Love." Many ladies were grateful for the spiritual input, the weather was beautiful, and Diane was blessed to be used this way.
- Abe has initiated evangelistic workshops in three new areas of Ukraine, besides the one held regularly in Kyiv. Praise God for men who are interested in reaching their communities.
- Diane has been released from further doctor's visits for her shoulder injury. Now it's all about exercise! Looking forward to NO hospital and doctor visits for a while!

Please Pray...

- We have lived in the same house in Ukraine for almost 20 years and due to the death of the landlady and her brother, all within one year, and lack of an heir, it seems we may have a legal right to receive it. There is a court date on November 9 to present the evidence to the judge. Pray that he may look on us with favour.
- COVID-19 cases are again increasing in some areas of Ukraine. Pray that even in the midst of new restrictions on travel etc that workshops can be held—and people saved!
- For wisdom for Abe as he meets in November with denominational leaders to counsel and mentor. He is also meeting monthly (speaking and giving advice) with a group of businessmen and spiritual leaders who are seeking to establish an interdenominational organization with the purpose of reaching out to men! (We have a matriarchal society here.)

From B. and D. A. Serving in Nepal

Praise God...

- During the biggest Hindu festival in Nepal we had our evangelistic meetings and 104 Hindus accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Please Pray...

- Diligently for these new converts as they will be persecuted by their families and their caste.

From Tony and Agi Frei Serving in Hungary

Praise God...

- We restarted the mission station of Pécs in October. We were able to make a deal with the local community house, so now we rent it for our meetings.
- As you know we participated in the Budapest's community days and we invited many people and families while we made handcraft with the children. Now, one mother start to visit our meetings with her three children. We are thankful to God because he always open doors even if a city seems like a difficult place.
- For our church members. When we heard about the family in Ozora who became homeless our members were helpful and generous. Good to see that God is working in our church and he can use anybody who ready to obey him.

Please Pray...

- Two weeks ago, we got bad news. Our good friend and Pastor, Géza, had suffered an accident when he was coming back from Romania. In the first days he was in the emergency room, between life and death. Now he is past the critical days but now he is in coma. Please pray for our brother, Géza and his wife, Éva. She is much better than her husband, but she needed an operation because she broke her arms and sternum.
- In the last week, a house burned down in Ozora village. One of our members searched for us to help this family. They do not visit our church, but we help them with durable foods, clothes, and some money. We hope to find God even in the midst of difficulties.
- Now in Hungary we have a rising tendency in COVID-19. Glory to God because now everything still open and operate normal. But please pray for us because we would like to continue the life without quarantine. For example, in our neighbour country Romania have serious problems with COVID-19.

From Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj Serving in Nepal

Praise God...

- The people who recently took a public testimony of baptism in Cha'pur from four churches. The fellowships in Mahida and Judibela are encouraged and growing.
- Ms. Renu Sada and three other young Musahar (Dalit) girls from Aurahi who were part of a Children CHE ministry have now grown up and took a public testimony of baptism and helped with the evangelistic crusade organized by Arun and Babli in their village among Dalit communities.
- Deborah and Ritu Majhi as they conduct a house fellowship in the Durmus Foundation campus set up for Dalit (Musahar) families in Cha'pur area.

Please Pray...

- Four young people (Karuna, Bishwas, Asish and Sarah) from Rautahat area who after the LEAD training last month took a public testimony of baptism and decided to enroll in a BTh and secular graduate (bridge course) in Hetauda. Asish is the son of Ashok Pariyar who leads our Mahida fellowship.
- For the LEAD 3 training and CHE Vision Seminar in Kumargadhi (Bara District) to be conducted by Suleman Rai and Ps. Raju Theeng of Cha'pur.
- The decision to start adult non-formal education in Aurahi and JhurJhure as the need for Bible study classes grows.
- For Ms. Gowrie (Friends Bardia), Ms. Ra Maya (Friends JhurJhure) and Mr. Nathuni Majhi (Eden Church Rautahat) as they will start Small Business with grants from the Christmas Catalog in December 2021. They will be helping their local churches in the coming months and years from the blessings in these business for chicken, goat and pig farming.

From David Thomas EFM Whole-Life Discipleship

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

- For our leaders, pastors Tertulien, Gerard, Augustin Simparinka, as well as many other leaders like Dancila, Gaudance, Verena who are faithfully stewarding their property, livestock, crops, businesses, etc. Thank God for their mentoring other leaders in God-honoring stewardship, and thank God for all the family needs that are being met through believers using well the abundant resources God has given them!
- That Lusungu was able to return home to Uvira, DRC, and then travel down to Baraka. Continue to pray for the thrombosis in his big toe to fully dissolve and his foot to heal, and for his overall health to improve.

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

- For our Congolese believers and their neighbors who are often caught between fighting factions in the High Plateau areas above Fizi. Pray for peace and provision and Holy Spirit's comfort and protection for these displaced people.
- For Burundi Friends church D4D leader Bernard as he seeks to effectively disciple 270 new believers in the town of Kirundo. Pray for God to raise up leaders from this group whom he can mentor directly. Pray for wisdom for Augustin Simparinka (Rwanda D4D) as he coaches Bernard in this process.
- For God to open the borders for our Rwandan D4D leaders to be able to travel again to Burundi and Uvira, Congo to continue mentoring and coaching our D4D teams in those places. Because of political tensions and now COVID-19 our leaders have been unable to meet in person for coaching. Pray the boarder with Uganda will also open.

Praise God (Thailand-Lahu)...

- For, Ja Bo, our D4D leader in Ja Taw and in the neighboring Pa Mo villages and his investment in building relationships and in supporting their local church. We also praise God for Mo Pa working in Ja Sa Pa village. Praise God for Yo Sa Pa who is weekly mentoring these two leaders, and often visits them in their villages.
- For raising up new people to join The Way Foundation's D4D team. Thank God for Solomon, Yosapa, Chalee, Ben, Majise, Ma-e', Pim and others who are discipling and mentoring these new members

Please Pray (Thailand-Lahu)...

- For someone to translate for D4D coaches Scott Purser and David Thomas to be able to connect better, encourage and coach our Lahu D4D leaders as they continue to disciple and mentor team members and leaders in their two communities.
- For blessing, wisdom and favor for Mo Pa and Ja Bo as they visit friends and neighbors in the three villages. May Christ's light shine brightly in Ja Sa Pa, Ja Taw and Pa Mo villages!
- For Ben's work visa to come through and for his (hoped for) November visit. Pray for him to have a great connection with the team and to encourage them. Pray for David and Marilyn Kibbe as they move back to Chiang Rai and setting into life and ministry/work with their Way Foundation team.

Praise God (Cambodia)...

- For Scott Sward's passion for empowering Kavet young leaders to learn to write and produce oral and written Christian resources in their own language.

Please Pray (Cambodia)...

- For God to continue to strengthen and sustain his people. Most congregations (except for small village groups) are unable to meet in person.
- For wisdom and strength for church leaders, as they try to care for their people during this time.
- Christian leaders and missionaries from various denominations in Stung Treng have begun working together to develop a new leadership development program for our province. Please pray for Christ to lead us, and continue to give us unity of mind and heart.