

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.

## Tony and Agi Frei | Serving in Hungary

It is my desire and pleasure to share with you, my experience and thoughts about the EFM Worldwide Missionary Gathering that took place in Chiang Mai, Thailand between December 2-7, 2022.

Originally, I was not going to participate in the Gathering in person due to my battle with long COVID-19, but David (William)'s and Adrian (Halverstadt)'s love and encouragement during an EFC-I Zoom meeting convinced me otherwise. The flight from Hungary to Thailand was 30 hours there and 26 hours back. On the way back, I caught a cold. It made my work in the church over Christmas more difficult, but our Father helped me through it.



The time I spent in Chiang Mai with my brothers, sisters, and fellow workers was like a dream. The beautiful environment was like the entrance hall to Heaven! In fact, my ten-year-old students in the Primary School where I teach watched the video I made while there and one of them asked, "Uncle Tony, is it, Heaven?". This is what Jesus says, "All people will know that you are my followers if you love each other" (John 13:35). I believe that we all felt this Godly love coming from each other. English is not my mother tongue, yet I felt loved and accepted by all present, despite the language barrier.

I am convinced that no online platform or virtual conference can replace in-person interaction and time spent together. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to get to know my brothers and sisters in person. I have received tons of love and encouragement from them.



Our brother, Alan Amavisca's teaching from 1 Samuel Chapter 14 was particularly interesting and valuable for me. It is a seldom preached passage of the Bible. We received a profound message from him, which then we discussed, applied, and internalized in small groups interactively. Special thanks to sister Lisa Halverstadt, who kindly and lovingly helped Sabino, his daughter Clariver, and me, whose first language isn't English, during the small group discussions.



I am grateful to God that this is the church where we started planting churches 25 years ago, in accordance with Romans 15:20-21, which is our scripture of calling. We worked with our brother, Dr. John Williams for 20 years, and it is his love in Christ that I experienced in Chiang Mai from all the EFM and the EFC-I Council leaders. (I should mention everyone by name here really.) Jesus says, "The one who leads should be like one who serves" (Luke 22:26). I observed and felt this kind of serving love and humility by all the leaders in the EFM and the EFC-I Council.

On my return, I had a wonderful testimony to share about the Chiang Mai Conference. Numerous photos and videos brought the events to life for my brothers and sisters in Hungary, Serbia, and Croatia. We all feel blessed and grateful that we can build our church in Hungary and Europe as part of EFM. God has given us a real home in this family. We are so thankful for you all.

In Christ's love,  
Antal (Tony) Frei

## From the EFM Office

### *Praise God...*

- For the transition of Friends Southwest missionaries to EFM. Many people have worked hard to make this transition as smooth as possible.
- For the growing interest in missionary sending that we are observing in yearly meetings like those located in Bolivia, Burundi, Rwanda, Nepal, and the Philippines. The Lord of the harvest is expanding the workforce!
- For the tremendous response to the 2022 EFM Christmas Catalog. Gifts given through the catalog are blessing many, many people around the world right now!

### *Please Pray...*

- For the EFM staff retreat which will be held in Southern California from February 8-12. This will not only be a time for connecting with one another as staff but also with leaders and churches in Friends Southwest.
- For Dan Cammack and several other Friends leaders who will travel to Asia in mid-February to celebrate the retirement of B. and D. A. from 28 years of missionary service with EFM. The yearly meeting born out of their ministry will also be part of the celebration!

## 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 100+ North American Friends who are exploring whether God is calling them to serve him as missionaries.
- That the monthly EFM Luke 10:2 Gathering has been going on now for two years! Please see below for how you can join this online prayer meeting.

### *Please Pray...*

- For the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest fields.
- For the Luke 10 Exploration Trip to Northern India that will be taking place from February 20-March 4.
- That there will be at least 15 future missionaries getting field experience this year. Pray also that this field experience will help everyone involved discern who should apply to EFM for missionary service.

**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/five-year-goal-pray/> some prayer points and the link for the gathering a few days before the event.

## From Gabriel and Suzanna Massey

### **Serving in India**

#### *Praise God...*

- For the good Christmas Program as a witness for the people about the coming of Jesus Christ by the local Friends Church.
- There was good progress in the building of five more classrooms at the Christian English College.
- For keeping us warm through the cold season (which is still here).

#### *Please Pray...*

- For the India Friends churches gathering at Trivandrum from March 1- 3. We are planning to send two delegates from the school to participate.
- For the day of blessing on February 6 at the school when we pray for the students individually who are going to appear for X and XII class board examination.
- For the Lent days meetings starting on Ash Wednesday in the church. Pray that these days may be helpful for people to think about the passion of Jesus for saving them from sin and providing them salvation.

## From Tony and Agi Frei

### **Serving in Hungary**

#### *Praise God...*

- For our relationship with Anita and her nine children. We were at her house this week and visited with them. Glory to God, Anita reconciled with her husband, Christian. They are raising their children together again. They are in peace, and they have opened hearts to God.
- Everybody has a job in our mission despite the difficult world economic situation. Nobody is unemployed.
- In Ozora, there is a new mayor. After the elections, the locals voted for a man. We met him today. Glory to the Lord, he is also friendly, as the previous mayor was. He supports our mission work, and he expressed his cooperation.

#### *Please Pray...*

- Donatien, the doctor from EFC Africa, wanted to visit us in December. Unfortunately, his plan failed at the last moment. At the airport, it turned out that his visa is only valid up to France in Europe, not in Hungary. He was very disappointed and us too. Please pray that he could visit us in the future. May God give Donatien a new opportunity.
- For Anita's husband, Christian. He is unemployed now. Please pray for him, that he would be able to find a job to support his nine children.
- For Diana from Ozora. Diana is a young lady with five children who is in a hard situation after her husband left the family. We visited them with donations to help them during all their struggles.

## From Abe and Diane Bible

### **Serving in Ukraine**

#### *Praise God...*

- We both enjoyed very good health in January despite viruses swirling around us. Diane also had a checkup at the eye clinic and her eyes remain stable (from a detached retina two years ago).
- As of this writing it looks like we will be able to continue to rent the house we've lived in for over 20 years. A lot of uncertainty over the past few weeks, but praise God! And in the midst of war, in our micro area, we are not experiencing rotating power outages. Most people in our city have power on for four hours and then off for four hours. Just an extra unexpected gift from God!
- For now, it has boiled down to about 20 couples/families committed to running Centers of Hope. We feel blessed to see the beginning of this vision come together. Already at least 15 people have been saved in January.

#### *Please Pray...*

- For wisdom in the ongoing training of leaders for Centers of Hope. Our desire is for the whole ministry to be based on prayer—praying before people go out to contact “people of peace,” praying with the people they contact, praying as a primary focus in meetings of various kinds, praying together during training sessions, praying biblically and freshly. The second training session in February will be devoted to prayer—lifting it all up to Jesus.
- Sometimes the mass of hurting and displaced people is overwhelming. Pray that the Centers of Hope will focus on individual contacts as they pass out aid and help people. People need to be “seen” even more than having their physical needs met.
- In the early days we never imagined that Ukraine would be at war for a year. Loss of life, severely wounded, loss of homes, loss of jobs—Even though we are here in Ukraine, it is incomprehensible. And our constant prayer is that the Lord would intervene and bring a stop to this destruction. Incredibly, we are having one of the mildest winters in history. As infrastructure is constantly bombed, this means that in many places people can still have enough heat, soldiers are not suffering as much, and so far, the extended loss of electricity, for perhaps weeks at a time, has not happened. That in itself is a sign that God is at work! No one else controls the weather! (Russia also had the most bitter cold New Year in over 100 years.)

**From David Thomas**  
**EFM Whole Life Discipleship**  
**Praise God... (Thailand)**

- We had an excellent coaching week in December. When our main leader Yosapa came down with COVID-19 right before our meetings, we wondered what God was up to. It proved providential as his right-hand man, Manat, took responsibility for hosting and facilitating, and did an excellent job. Julie translated for us the last two days directly into Lahu, so we got to hear from D4D leaders Jabo and MaoPa directly about their work in JaTaw and JaSawPa. We finished with a clear plan for the next steps ahead.

**Please Pray... (Thailand)**

- For good health for David Kibbe, healing, and strengthening of his lungs and heart and ability to put on weight. He had a rough bout of COVID-19 with pneumonia and heart complications. David and Marilyn are beloved founding missionaries and have an important mentoring, coaching, and discipling role with The Way Foundation leaders.

**From D.K. and Choity Sarkar**  
**Serving in West Bengal, India**  
**Praise God...**

- For abundant blessings towards our Christmas Program. We organized open-air programs in many places. The local people attended the program and listened to the good news. We handed them a booklet and response card. We got many response cards back which will be helpful to do follow-up. Praise God that many have started to attend church, and many have opened their home for house fellowships.
- That there are nine house fellowships that have started in the district of Hooghly. In Shyamnagar there are four new house fellowships and in Malda, there are many new house fellowships.
- The staff are very happy because of the staff Christmas program in 2022. We could go for a boat ride in Sundervan (The forest where tigers live). Many staff also brought their families. Altogether we enjoyed the trip.

**Please Pray...**

- For the newcomers, the church could hold them and bring them to the faith.
- For the new house fellowships. Especially those who opened their house for fellowship. Let God bless them so that in the future there will be a church.
- I need to have an operation on my throat. Too much preaching is the cost of voice.

**From L.T.**  
**Serving in Sensitive Location**  
**Praise God...**

- One of my students told me she'd like to read a book about Jesus because she wants to learn more about my religion.
- We've started our new term.

**Please Pray...**

- That I'll select the right book for my student to learn about Jesus. I'm thinking about "Mere Christianity" by C. S. Lewis, which is one of my favorites.
- I have recently started language lessons. The teacher is good but moves really fast. Please pray that I can keep up and learn well.
- For more teachers to come.