



Evangelical Friends Mission

May 2023 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

Discipleship

The D for D team is following up with teams from five local churches in Rwanda, ten Burundian team leaders, and three Congolese team leaders. Each of these teams is working to finish the phase of whole-life discipleship called "Mobilization". We are helping them to lead their communities to catch a vision for whole-life transformation, to recognize with joy the many resources that God has given them and the main barriers that are holding them back as a community, and to catch a passion to use what God has given them to pursue solutions towards wholeness related to each barrier. Please pray for each group to successfully finish this process so that they can enter into the "Empowerment" Phase.



Missions-sending

The Lord continues to stir the hearts and minds of Evangelical Friends church leaders in Rwanda and Burundi toward sending out their own missionaries. When you receive this message, we will have finished a gathering of key Friends leaders from Central and East Africa focusing on God's heart for the redemption of the nations. We will seek to learn and share from each other and seek God's direction for the next steps for each of our groups to obey God's call. Please pray for the Holy Spirit to remove barriers that might prevent us from reaching God's plan for this time and pray that the Spirit will illuminate and empower each participant to hear and respond to God's loving invitation to work with him.

Masters' Studies

Brad has continued taking courses through Fuller Seminary. The courses have been challenging and enlightening in the areas of interacting with people from other cultural contexts. He has been especially struck by the vision of the Gospel fully taking root and being translated into each culture. Brad is recognizing that it is very difficult to fully surrender our own cultural biases to be open and ready to learn from our African Friends and their perspectives and insights into the Gospel and Biblical teachings. These insights feel especially important as we look towards Central African Friends and EFM partnering together to start new mission work among other people groups.



Family

It has been a joy to have Brad's parents here for several weeks; we love anytime family can visit! We've had some wonderful family time, and also times of refreshment when they took care of the children and helped us in different ways. Chelsea is staying busy with home and family tasks, as well as some financial, communication, and administrative work. Sarai (10), Gideon (7), and Ian (3) are entering their last month of school before summer break. They like their school but are also looking forward to a fun and busy summer!

Thank you so much for all your prayers and support. We are so thankful you are on our team and that we are all on God's team!



Praise God...

- That he has been helping Brad to work hard and learn a lot in his classes. He is so thankful for the relevance of all that he is learning.
- That Brad's parents were able to come visit.
- That Chelsea was able to participate in a small women's retreat with some dear friends in a beautiful place.

Please Pray...

- For the D for D teams moving through the Mobilization phase into community-specific lessons that address their main concerns and for God to help them move forward.
- For God to raise up people from among our African churches to go as missionaries and others to send them.
- Pray for Sarai, Gideon, and Ian as they finish up the school year. Every day at school they navigate academics, relationships, spirituality, language, and culture.



From the EFM Office

Praise God...

- At this writing, the Central African Sending Conference (where attendees from at least six countries including EFM representation) are meeting to listen, dream and think about how God can use African missionaries (perhaps collaborating with EFM missionaries) to introduce the gospel to unreached villages in Central Africa is going remarkable well.
- Again, at this writing, the news from the second exploration trip to Mexico is going well.
- God continues to provide financially for the work of EFM. We are grateful for God's kindness and his people's generosity.

Please Pray...

- For the National Future Missionary Retreat, May 29 – June 1, at Quaker Ridge Camp. Pray that God would provide clarity to these emerging missionaries. Specifically, pray for discernment as to God's will for their life as well as wisdom for the next steps.
- For the EFM Board Meetings, June 1-2, at Quaker Ridge Camp. Pray for unity and faith as the Board guides the growth and health of EFM's service to the world, the missionaries (both present and future), and the Friends congregations in North America.
- For the Holy Spirit's inspiration, guidance, and power among all of God's people. This general prayer reflects Jesus' teaching: "If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13)

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 A. and M. A.

Serving in Bangladesh

Praise God...

- That the celebration was great on Palm Sunday. We have seen members of the church circumambulating the house of worship, swinging palm leaves in their hands, singing the song "Hosanna, Hosanna".
- We were able to visit churches in the northern part of Bangladesh. We had time to pray, worship the Lord, and fellowship with church members. We also enjoyed planting mango trees in one of our church lands.
- That our worship songbook printing is almost done. It will be a great asset for our church members in Bangladesh as well as lay leaders. It contains many devotional hymns, God's promises, the attributes of God, bible references, how to lead Christian ceremonies, the meaning of the biblical proper name, and many more.

Please Pray...

- For our upcoming training program for persecuted believers, "Standing Strong through the Storm." It is a three-full-day training program. Ask God to bring those believers who are in physical, mental, and social persecution. Sometimes many do not like to come because many of them work on a daily basis.
- For new pioneers to expand the ministry in other districts in Bangladesh. There are many places ready, but no workers. Ask God to send the right person to minister in those places.
- For the life transformation of believers and leaders. Ask God so that they know our Lord and build a personal love relationship to serve him faithfully.

From David Thomas

EFM Whole Life Discipleship

Please Pray... (Thailand)

- For an excellent week of coaching, May 1-5. Pray for God's blessing and favor to rest on Yosapa and Mana, our main D4D team leaders. Pray for our translators, Achi Po, Jason, and Julie to communicate clearly.
- For our D for D leaders to gain a clear understanding of the four main lessons they need for the months ahead until our next trip.

From Voicu and Ana Marian

Retired EFM Missionaries from Romania

Praise God...

- On April 13 we returned to Romania after a restful five-month winter break in the US. We are thankful for the wonderful fellowship with our American brothers and sisters, for good health for both of us, and for safe travels during this time.
- We managed to keep connected with the village church by having a weekly prayer over the Internet. Ana remained in touch with the two groups of ladies' Bible studies and continued to teach English to several high school students. Also, before Easter, she did a 40-day devotional (in English) with twelve of her advanced students from Sibiu, ages 16-22. Praise God for openness and hunger for truth that many young people have during these troubling times.

Please Pray...

- That the Word of God would remain and bear fruit in the lives of these teenagers and young adults. Pray that they will not be ashamed or afraid to confess their faith in Christ, but that from among them God would raise up spiritual leaders for his glory.
- Although these dear people will always be in our hearts, we feel that it's time to wrap up our direct ministry here and return to the US. Please pray for the right buyers for the house, perhaps a young couple who would move into our place and continue to share the love of Jesus in the community as the Lord calls and instructs them.
- We want to obey the Lord in every detail so that we may see his provision both in Orlat, Romania, and in the next place, where he's calling us to live and serve until he calls us home.

From Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj

Serving in Nepal

Praise God...

- For our recently held staff meeting in Simra Birganj, where we were updated on how God continues to bless our ministry and use us for his glory in Nepal. We also got an opportunity to visit Arun in the Orthopedic hospital at Birganj and were briefed by the doctor and staff attending him.
- For Mudebas church and the community in Chitwan, where Chepangs are a majority and are living in the foothills. It is a joy to witness all the activities which they have initiated after CHE training in the last year and the impact it has had on their growth. The church has invited the whole village to be part of their "Harvest" festival and to join in as they start ginger and turmeric farming as a community this year.
- For Philip Rai and his wife as they moved from Cha'pur (Rautahat) to Bangadhi (Bardia) about eight months ago, answering God's call to minister to the locals in the community around them. Philip has been financially helped to start a small provision shop and also drives a rickshaw which helps him to meet many people every day and gives him an opportunity to share the gospel.

Please Pray...

- For the forthcoming CHE Vision Seminar at Kohalpur on May 7-8, there are fifteen participants from the local church of God including the pastor.
- For Arun, our CHE Trainer, to get well soon. He has a large wound where his forearm and elbow were crushed. We are praying that Arun's right upper limb will heal completely with our faith in God's amazing and miraculous ways. Pray for all the Dalit kids (and their families) in Aurahi, who come together in their village to attend our Children's CHE gatherings. Arun and Babli will be absent from their regular work among these children for a long time because of Arun's accident and hospital stay, and the need for Babli to be with him during these trying days.
- For all our CHE Trainers (and their families), as they travel to various places by different modes, so as to continue the ministry work planned for this month. Travel is very dangerous and full of risks because of bad roads and also bad weather conditions.

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

Praise God...

- We now have 22 functioning Centers of Hope with several more under consideration. Praise the Lord!
- Through the efforts of these Centers, they are averaging one person a day being saved in the last three months! May Heaven rejoice!
- The war drags on. I'm sure people who have been through these kinds of things understand. Yes, we pray for deliverance and freedom for the occupied areas, but we do praise the Lord for the opportunities it has brought to awaken people spiritually. We have fewer and fewer air sirens in our area of the country. We are also grateful for that but...our peace is in Christ. Nothing can compare to his peace.

Please Pray...

- That God would call more men and women to minister in the Centers of Hope. The greatest physical need is in the areas that have been bombed, or continue to be bombed. But, there are hurting people all across the country. They need spiritual awakening. Pray for continued spiritual awakening and workers for that harvest.
- Diane continues to work on trauma counseling materials. God has provided people to walk her through some of it which has been invaluable. Her goal is to have a seminar put together by the end of May, and then, all the materials will have to be translated into Ukrainian, meaning training would begin in September. Pray for this ongoing process and for the pieces to come together. Pray for simplicity so that "ordinary" people can help- ordinary people through the power and wisdom of Jesus Christ.

**From Kathi Perry
Serving in Ireland**

Praise God...

- For continuing recovery and strength following my open-heart surgery in January. I've received excellent care and follow-up, and a lot of love from people around me.
- For one of the mums who took on the baby group while I recovered from surgery. I'm able to participate in it now and I'm glad to be back!
- For an understanding professor, advisor, and administrative staff that allowed me to defer my degree at Barclay College while I concentrated on my "health crisis".

Please Pray...

- I will be starting Cardiac Rehab soon (they do not allow a person to begin until twelve weeks post-surgery- so I've been cleared for that!). Pray for continued strength and healing.
- The Mum and Baby Group has had several starts and stops this past year (past three years?). Please pray for a sense of continuity and belonging for the women who come, and for ongoing relationships to be formed.
- For me as I have also taken up my studies again, working to complete my final "Capstone Project," and hopefully - graduating in May with an M.A. in Practical Theology.

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

Praise God...

- We had a wonderful Easter in spite of great threats from the Hindu radicals. 154 Hindus accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Please Pray...

- For these new converts to be discipled well.
- That they will be able to withstand any persecution that comes their way.

**From Tony and Agi Frei
Serving in Hungary**

Praise God...

- On May 14, we will organize EFC-Hungary's General Assembly in our Mission Center of Tolna. We are happy that we could keep this occasion since COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted.
- At the end of May, we will go to Mátészalka. We received an invitation for an Eastern Europe gipsy mission conference. I will invite some gipsy representatives of our mission (Kölked, Serbia, and Croatia). We will go for two days. It's a good opportunity.
- My wife, Agi is better now, since her last health situation (mysterious pain), but doctors don't know what the real problem is.

Please Pray...

- There was a school registration this week. Parents can choose whether the child attends religious education (Bible lessons) or not. My wife and I, and also some church members invited some children to our primary school Bible lessons, we hope that some parents accepted our invitation.
- For all those living in Hungary. There is huge inflation in our country, so people are worried and also depressed. Please, pray for us.
- For my wife, Agi. We would like to know what the cause of her pain is. Pray that the doctors can find an answer.