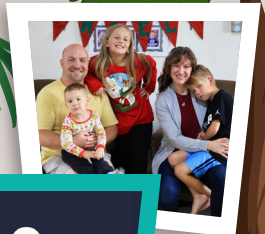


Evangelical Friends Mission

Let's Serve  
Written by EFM Families

Together!



## 2023 Family Missions Focus

*"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*

**Joshua 24:15**



EVANGELICAL  
FRIENDS MISSION

***“As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Joshua 24:15***

Did you know that (according to the Joshua Project), there are still over 7,000 people groups who don't know Jesus? This is about 3.23 billion or 41.6% of the world's population who has not heard the Good News of the gospel!

With such a great need, how do we encourage the next generation of Christ followers to continue this work? We hope that this five-day devotional serves as a tool to start conversations about missions between your family. Each day is designed to be completed in 5-10 minutes and can be used in a number of ways — over dinner, during children's programming, or in small groups just to name a few! You will hear from and learn from five EFM families on what it is like to serve together where they live. Each day will end with specific prayer requests for each family. At the end of the devotional, there is space for your family to work together to create a service plan of your own. We can't wait to hear how God will use you!

**You are receiving a copy of this devotional because you care for the work of EFM. We offer it as a gift and are grateful for your support.**

We pray that this devotional will ignite an interest in missions with you and your family. Whether you pray for a missionary, go as a missionary, or financially support a missionary, we all have a part in missions today and in the future.

**Let's Serve Together!**  
*EFM Staff*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS



**Day 1: The Carpenter Family** ..... Page 4  
Serving in Rwanda since 2006

**Day 2: The Gautam Family** ..... Page 6  
Serving in India since 2008

**Day 3: The MKL Family** ..... Page 8  
Serving in Asia since 2014

**Day 4: The Savage Family** ..... Page 10  
Serving with EFC-ER since 2019

**Day 5: The Sward Family** ..... Page 12  
Serving in Cambodia since 2009

**Make Your Own** ..... Page 14  
Family Serving Plan!

**Afterward** ..... Back Cover



## DAY 1 THE CARPENTER FAMILY

Serving in Rwanda since 2006

**Who is in your family?** We are Brad and Chelsea Carpenter, and we have three kids: Sara (10), Gideon (7), and Ian (3). We have been living and serving in Rwanda since 2006.

**What is it like to live in Rwanda?** The first thing you'll notice about Rwanda is the mild climate and beautiful rolling green hills that cover the

whole country. The temperature in our town is usually in the low 70s. We have rainy seasons and dry seasons, but it never gets too hot or too cold. Rwandan food is tasty and basic with a lot of potatoes, rice, cooking bananas, beef, goat, beans, greens, and tomato sauce. The fruit is amazing! Our family especially loves the small, sweet bananas, mangoes, watermelon, and passion fruit. We eat a lot of American foods as well, like pizza, tacos, and macaroni and cheese. All 3 kids go to an international school each day and really enjoy their teachers and classmates from Rwanda and other countries as well. On weekends we like to go swimming, play in the yard, go to church (sometimes a big church where they only speak Kinyarwanda and sometimes a small church with a few missionaries where they speak English) and play at friends' houses or invite them to play at our house.

**What does a day in the life of your ministry look like and how does your family work together?** Brad spends his time discipling, supporting the Rwandan missions-sending movement, and studying for his Master's degree. So, he will sometimes work in our home office, sometimes he will be on coaching calls or attend coaching meetings. Sometimes he will travel to other cities or other countries to disciple, coach, and encourage our Rwandan brothers and sisters in their discipling and missions ministries. Chelsea spends a lot of time helping run the household and helping with emails, communications, and finances. When she is not at home she will often be found downtown at the bank or the grocery stores. The kids sometimes are able to help with various tasks in the home and they are sometimes able to travel with their dad to church services, meetings, and home visits. They help a lot by praying with us for different friends and different needs. The kids also have a very important ministry in their daily lives at school. They are learning how to be loving and serving to their friends and teachers and are making an impact in their friendships.

**What brings joy to your family as you serve in Rwanda?** The Lord has blessed us with some great long-term relationships with our Rwandan friends who help us, pray for us, and work with us. We are also really blessed by our friendships and feelings of unity with some other missionary families here in Rwanda.

**What are the challenges of serving in Rwanda?** We are familiar with the culture and language, but that doesn't mean we're always comfortable in cultural situations. It can be tiring for our minds and bodies sometimes to be living in a different culture.

**What is a meaningful verse for your family?** *"Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand."* Isaiah 41:10.

It's very encouraging for us to remember that God is with us no matter where we go or what we do. We love remembering his promise to help us at school, at home, and while we're travelling.

**What does missions mean to your family?** We believe God loves everyone in every single people group in the world, and that he wants to be in relationship with them! He is actively pursuing them, and our mission is to join him. We want to do what we can to help people know that God wants to be their King and Helper in their everyday lives, and that he can heal their relationships with God, with others, with their own self, and with creation.

**How does your family talk about missions?** We remind each other of how much Jesus loves us and how special it is to be able to be in relationship with him. And then we think about people who are living without Jesus in their lives and how hard and hopeless it must be! And that's why we love them and pray for them and talk with them, so that they can have hope in Jesus too.

## HEAR FROM THE KIDS:

### What does your family do?

- Sarai (10): Go to different churches and preach and learn language to show people that we love them and tell people about Jesus.
- Gideon (7): Because we are missionaries. Dada has to go away a lot to be a missionary.
- Ian (3): Play!

### Why is it important that you serve in Rwanda?

- Sarai (10): Because we want everyone to know Jesus and how he loves us and we want everyone to be in heaven.
- Gideon (7): Because we need to be a missionary and because we need to preach to people who don't know Jesus.
- Ian (3): Because we live here.

## PRAY:

### Would your family take a few minutes to pray for The Carpenter Family and the work they are doing in Rwanda?

- For Brad, he continues his education while still doing the work of the ministry.
- For Chelsea for all the responsibilities she has while managing the home.
- For the kids as they develop relationships for Jesus at their schools.



## DAY 2

# THE GAUTAM FAMILY

Serving in India since 2008

### Who is in your family?

I am Pastor Babir Gautam, and I am married to Lalita Lakra. We have three girls - Deepshikha (17), Sanyogita (15), and Ashishita (13). We live in Bihar, the northeast part of India.

### What is like to serve in India?

Our family life is tough here. As good education and medical is very expensive. Bihar comes under most poor state in India and percentage of literacy is very low. Normally for food we eat rice and dal and vegetables for lunch and for dinner we Indian bread and vegetables. Mainly three seasons comes here Summer is very hot temperature goes up to 50 degree Celsius, the summer starts from Mid of March to June, then comes rainy season which more terrible because of humidity it is worse than hot season, some part of Bihar get flooded every years and many families lose their home and they have shift to different parts. Rain is also too heavy. The rainy season lasts from July to mid-September. Last comes the winter and winter is also to cold. It starts from October to February and the worst cold appears in the month of January. My daily routine is once a month I visit to the field for one week stay there interact with believers and participate in house church, rest three weeks of month I am in Patna and two days in week visit each member of our church for prayer and fellowship, one day I meet with pastor in Patna sit together and pray for god's kingdom and try to learn their situation.

**What does a day in the life of your ministry look like and how does your family work together?** My children participate in Sunday school. They arrange Sunday school for children of the church. We also have family prayer time before going to bed. I have a separate personal time with God.

**What brings joy to your family as you serve in India?** The joy is going out in village and changing their life in Jesus.

**What are the challenges of serving in India?** Travelling to villages in summer, winter and rain. It is very difficult to ride a bike in these seasons. Then there are many challenges like poverty and illiteracy in their villages as well as persecution.

**What is a meaningful verse for your family?** *"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* Joshua 24:15

Because we give our lives to Jesus, and we will serve till the end of our lives. We find joy when we see people lives transformed in Jesus.

**What does missions mean to your family?** Mission means to our family keep sharing gospel with different unreached group in Bihar and Jharkhand.

# PRAY:

**Would your family take a few minutes to pray for The Gautam Family and the work they are doing in India?**

- For God to bring helpers so that they can have a Sunday School program.
- For travel this summer because the weather can make it difficult.
- That God would continue to open doors to share the Gospel with unreached groups.





## DAY 3

# THE MKL FAMILY

Serving in Asia since 2014

**Who is in your family?** Hello! We are M & K and we live in Asia. We have served in our village for 8 years now! We have 6 kids (soon to be 7) and their names are N who is 10, A who is 8, H and L are twins and are 6, A is 3 but will be 4 in May, and B is 1 and will be 2 in June (the same time our new baby is due)!

**What is it like to live in Asia?** We eat a variety of foods in our home. Sometimes we cook American foods (every Saturday night we have nacho night!), but we also love Indian food. We have a lot of rice with dal, which is beans/lentils in a gravy like sauce; some of the beans in the sauce are pinto beans, chickpeas, or black-eyed peas. We also have a tortilla with many of our meals and drink chai at our friends' houses (a sweet milk tea). Our weather is usually very nice! We have snow in the winters, but it doesn't get too cold, and then we have beautiful springs and warmer summers. After summer we have monsoon season, which is the rainy season. Sometimes this is hard because it will cause flooding and our village-built wood bridges can be washed away regularly. Once monsoon season is over, we have fall, and this is when all the apples are ready for harvest all around our house! The weather is wonderful, and the apples are delicious. Normal activities for our family include homeschooling and playing in the mornings. We also have a lot of visitors to our home, bringing us things, asking for help, or talking about our business. After lunch we usually will go outside and play with friends in the village, help different people with different things they are doing in their fields, go for family walks, or stay home and friends will come and play at our house.

**What does a day in the life of your ministry look like and how does your family work together?** A day in the life of our ministry looks like a typical day for us. Our lives and our ministry cannot be separated. We are with our neighbors many times throughout the day. During these interactions we are being intentional to share the love of God. We are telling our friends about Jesus, but we are also showing them how we live a different way of life because of how Jesus wants us to live. Our kids help show the village and people around the village how Christians behave - that they can be kids and still serve God and do what is right. They go with us when we visit homes and help in the fields. They are there when we take blood pressures (K is a nurse) and pray with those that don't feel well. The kids help build different things and fix different things when M is asked to help. The kids have opened many doors for us to be a part of lives and for showing how different we live our lives. As a matter of fact, we would not be near as effective or welcomed if it wasn't for the family God has given us.

**What brings joy to your family as you serve in Asia?** A joy of life is getting to live life with our neighbors. We get to be part of their lives and they are part of ours. We also love how beautiful our home is and how we can walk down to the river and play with friends by the river in the sand, in the trees, on the mountainside, or even in the water! We love how much slower our life is and how much we get to live in community!

**What are the challenges of serving in Asia?** Learning and always communicating in a new language is a challenge! It is hard to always be the ones that look and act differently. It is hard to always be watched and many people want a picture with us (especially with our



kids). Life is very simple, but it isn't always easy. All the food has to be made from scratch, and there aren't many fast meals to make.

**What is a meaningful verse for your family?** *"We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too."* (NLT) 1 Thessalonians 2:8

This verse is very meaningful because it is what we strive to fulfill — too long to share not only the Good News but also our very lives. It's not always easy, and it takes great intentionality. However, out of this sharing, we are hopeful and prayerful that many will come to know him and worship alongside us.

**What does missions mean to your family?** Missions means intentionally living in a way that shows everyone around us who Jesus is. It means showing others how to be disciples of Jesus, both before and after they receive Jesus as their Lord and Savior. And it means telling them who God is and what he has done for all of us.

**How does your family talk about missions?** We tell our kids that God wants us to show those around us his love. There are lots of different ways to do this, but we will tell them to try and always share God's love to our friends and even those that are hard to love. We talk about each of us being called to live in Asia and that God has brought us all there to teach them who Jesus is and for them to especially show His love. We talk about all the wonderful things God has done for us and how it is an honor and joy to share with our friends who have never heard or haven't accepted him yet.

## HEAR FROM THE KIDS:

### What does your family do?

- N (10): To bring people to Jesus.
- A (8): To tell people about Jesus.
- L (6): To teach the people more about Jesus.
- H (6): To help and be nice and play with our friends because God wants us to be there.
- A (3): We play with our friends, and we are there because God sent us to Asia

### Why is it important that you serve in Asia?

- N (10): So people can come to know Jesus and they can go to Heaven.
- A (8): So that when they die, they don't go to hell.
- L (6): Because God likes it.
- H (6): Because God wants us to be there.
- A (3): Because He sent us there.

## PRAY:

### Would your family take a few minutes to pray for The L Family and the work they are doing in Asia?

- For rest because their ministry and family lives are so busy.
- That they would learn the language and be able to communicate well.
- That they would be able to disciple new leaders.



## Day 4 The Savage Family

Serving with EFC-ER since 2019

**Who is in your family?** Our family lives in northeast Ohio in the United States where Rusty has served as the Director of Multiplication for Evangelical Friends Church – Eastern Region since 2019. His ministry focus is on church planting, cross-cultural ministry in the U.S., and global missions. He also serves on the EFM board and

teaches some courses at Barclay College. Kara works at a local hospital as a labor and delivery nurse and homeschools our four children: Henry (11), Stella (9), Graham (7), and Claire (4).

**Tell Us About Your Family Life in this Country! What foods do you eat, what is the weather normally like, and what sort of activities fill your days?** Right now, the weather is beautiful here in Ohio. Everything is coming to life again after a long winter. Because we live so close to the Great Lakes, we get a lot of snow in this part of the country; but in the spring, everything is green, and the weather is very nice.

We love to eat food from our garden, especially sweet corn, tomatoes, and green beans. We also love fresh maple syrup from here in our hometown. When the thaw begins in the spring, we see hundreds of buckets hanging from trees collecting sap, which is then boiled to make maple syrup. Rusty recently delivered a bottle of local maple syrup to some of our missionary friends in Thailand!

As a family, we love to hike, camp, play board games, and cheer for the local minor league baseball team: the Akron Rubber Ducks. Kara enjoys running. Rusty is working on a degree. Henry and Graham both play baseball. Stella and Claire do gymnastics. We all love to read.

**What does a day in the life of your ministry look like? How are your kids involved in your day-to-day or month-to-month ministry?** Rusty spends a lot of time visiting different EFC-ER churches and pastors. We have churches in 14 different states and parts of Canada, so he needs to travel fairly frequently. Since he focuses on cross-cultural ministry for EFC-ER, most of the churches we visit speak a language other than English. (Every Sunday our EFC-ER churches worship in 8 different languages.) Most of the time, Rusty will preach when visiting a church, but sometimes we just go to worship with them and be an encouragement. Kara and the kids travel with Rusty as often as they can to visit the churches. The kids have learned to greet people in many different languages. Henry even learned “Jesus Loves Me” in Swahili and sang it for one of our new church plants with families from central-east Africa.

**What is a joy of life on the field for your family?** One of our biggest joys is being able to encourage pastors and their families. Since we also served in pastoral ministry for many years, we know the unique challenges that come with that family calling. We enjoy having opportunities to sit down for a meal with our pastoral families, listen to them, and pray for their ministry and family needs. Helping others succeed in ministry is one of the greatest

joys of our current role.

**What are the challenges of serving in EFC-ER?** The biggest challenge for us as a family has been the difficulty of not being as connected to one body of believers as we used to be. When we pastored in a local church, we were deeply connected to our church family as friends and partners in ministry. So much of the rhythm of our family life revolved around our church and its people. Now we get to be with many different churches, but it has been hard to be less connected to a single home church.

**What is a meaningful verse for your family?** *“Lord, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure. The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; surely I have a delightful inheritance.”* Psalm 16:5-6

**What does missions mean to your family?** To our family, missions means joining Jesus in announcing the kingdom of God to every nation and every neighbor.

**How does your family talk about missions (or the work that you do)?** We try to talk about “life-as-mission” in our family. Even though we live in the U.S., we want to be on mission with Jesus right where we are. We talk about what it would look like for the kingdom of God to come in the spaces we live, work, learn, and play. We want our kids to see themselves as God’s ambassadors in this world no matter what vocation they choose. Each night we pray for one member of our own family, one EFM missionary family, and one family in our own neighborhood.

## HEAR FROM THE KIDS:

### What does your family do?

- Henry (11): Visit churches, preach, help pastors and churches, take care of our missionaries.
- Stella (9): We encourage pastors and help them start new churches.
- Graham (7): Preach.
- Claire (4): Daddy preaches.

### Why is it important that you serve in Eastern Region?

- Henry (11): So pastors can get help.
- Stella (9): So people can tell others about Jesus, even if it’s hard.
- Graham (7): So people can know Jesus.
- Claire (4): I don’t know.

## PRAY:

### Would your family take a few minutes to pray for The Savage Family and the work they are doing in Eastern Region?

- For Rusty’s busy travel schedule.
- That their family would be able to deeply connect with a body of believers.
- For their kids to see themselves as God’s ambassadors in the world now matter where they are at!



## DAY 5 THE SWARD FAMILY

Serving in Cambodia since 2009

**Who is in your family?** We are the Swards! Scott and Andrea have served in Cambodia for 13.5 years. Cambodia is in Southeast Asia, sandwiched between Thailand and Vietnam. Zachary was born in Thailand while we were living in Cambodia, and he is nearly 11 years old now. Samuel was born on one of our home assignments in the United States and is nearly 8 years old.

**What is it like to live in the country you serve?** In Cambodia, people eat lots of rice, fish and vegetables. Our (Zachary and Samuel's) favorite dish is fried rice with beef. When we are at home, we eat mostly what our mom makes for us.

The weather in Cambodia is mostly hot!!!! It is humid too. We live near a big river called the Sekong River, so when it is hot, we like to go swimming in the river with friends and with our dog.

Our dad works in lots of villages teaching and leading Bible studies. Our mom is our homeschool teacher and makes all our food. And we study every day until the afternoons. Zachary is in 5th grade and Samuel is in 2nd. Zachary is taking piano lessons, and Samuel is looking for a new ukulele teacher.

**What does a day in the life of your ministry look like and how does your family work together?** We spend time with God in the morning, preparing Bible lessons, and then go out and teach Christians or seekers in the villages of our province. One or two Sundays per month, we make family trips to village church-plants.

**What brings joy to your family as you serve in Cambodia?**

Zachary and Samuel: swimming and playing with our friends and our pets.

Scott and Andrea: Seeing God transform people's lives and communities. And mangoes!

**What are the challenges of serving in Cambodia?** It's hard to be far away from our family in the United States.

**What is a meaningful verse for your family?** *"You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of Your inheritance, the place, Lord, You made for Your dwelling, the sanctuary, Lord, Your hands established."* Exodus 15:17

**What does missions mean to your family?** Joining God in what he is doing in the world.

**How does your family talk about missions?** God loves everyone. He wants to rescue people from the forces of darkness and teach us how to live in his kingdom.

## HEAR FROM THE KIDS:

### What does your family do?

- Samuel (7): We live in Cambodia because we are missionaries.
- Zachary (10): We live in Cambodia because we want to help spread the good news of God's love to every people, every tribe and every nation.

### Why is it important that you serve in Cambodia?

- Samuel (7): Because we teach people about God's love.
- Zachary (10): Because Cambodia is a tiny country in the middle of Southeast Asia that has only had the Gospel for 100 years. And because Cambodia is an important step in reaching closed countries in nearby Southeast Asia.

## PRAY:

### Would your family take a few minutes to pray for The Sward Family and the work they are doing in Cambodia?

- For their family because it is hard to be away from extended family that is far away.
- That God would rescue people from the forces of darkness.
- That God would continue to open up doors in Cambodia as well as the nearby countries in Southeast Asia.



# MAKE A SERVICE PLAN WITH YOUR FAMILY

What does a day in the life of your family look like and how does your family work together? \_\_\_\_\_

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What brings joy to your family as you serve together? \_\_\_\_\_

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What are the challenges of serving where you live? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is a meaningful verse for your family? \_\_\_\_\_

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What does missions mean to your family? \_\_\_\_\_

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Why is it important to serve together as a family? \_\_\_\_\_

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## AFTERWARD

Thank you for using this devotional! We hope that you found it useful in creating conversations about missions and would love your feedback. If you are willing to share the impact of these exercises, please email us at [efm@friendsmission.com](mailto:efm@friendsmission.com).

**Did you know that EFM has a Five-Year Goal to send 10 Missionary Households to 5 New Mission Fields by 2025? We need your help in reaching this goal! If you want to learn more about how to get involved, check out these resources:**

- Visit our Five-Year Goal at [friendsmission.com/five-year-goal](https://friendsmission.com/five-year-goal) for video resources and to find out where how God is working right now!
- Join our monthly Luke 10:2 Prayer Gathering on the second Thursday of each month. Sign up at [friendsmission.com/five-year-goal-pray](https://friendsmission.com/five-year-goal-pray).
- Learn how you or someone you know can “Go” with EFM at [friendsmission.com/five-year-goal-go](https://friendsmission.com/five-year-goal-go).

**If the Lord impresses upon you to financially support EFM, you can give:**

- Online at [friendsmission.com/2023-family](https://friendsmission.com/2023-family) or by scanning the QR code below.
- By credit card over the phone at 303-421-8100.
- By mailing a check to PO Box 771139, Wichita, KS 67277.





Let's Serve

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P.O. Box 771139  
Wichita, KS 67277  
efm@friendsmission.com  
www.friendsmission.com