



Evangelical Friends Mission

June 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.

Scott and Andrea Sward | Serving in Cambodia

The Lausanne Movement was founded by Billy Graham in the 1970s and is a collaborative effort of evangelical Christians worldwide. As a movement, they have a fourfold vision: 1) the gospel for every person, 2) disciple-making churches for every people, 3) Christ-like leaders for every church, and 4) kingdom-impact for every sphere of society.



With this third goal in mind (“Christ-like leaders for every church”), ten Cambodian and foreign Christian leaders met last year to discuss how we could work together to form and equip Christ-like leaders in the province of Stung Treng. The result of this meeting was what we’ve begun referring to as Monthly Bible School (MBS).



Like the rest of Cambodia, most people in our province live in rural areas. The majority are poor farmers. And while most church leaders do their very best to serve their flock and fulfill their calling, many have had little education and/or almost no pastoral training.

When we launched MBS in January, our hopes were modest. Given the time and money required for most church leaders to travel to the provincial capital, we knew it wouldn’t be easy for them to attend. Maybe we’ll get 15 people, we thought. Instead, we got 50. Since then, the number has only increased. We closed enrollment in March with 62 students.

Students come from churches of various denominations, spread all over our province. They meet for one full day every month. Classes are taught by Cambodian leaders and foreign missionaries. There’s a Bible overview class; a lunch-time elective on miscellaneous topics (currently on how to conduct Christian weddings and funerals), another class on how to study, teach, and preach the Bible (which I’m responsible for); a literacy class that runs parallel with mine; and a class on Christian doctrine. It’s a very full day!

To me, the unity among teachers and enthusiasm among students is evidence that the Lord is in this. There’s been no attempt to plant organizational or denominational flags. Instead, teachers and students alike are motivated by one thing—to see the Kingdom of God come in greater fullness in our lives, churches, and province.



In the future, if the Lord directs, we’d like to start a new MBS cohort every year; and, perhaps, even offer night classes for working professionals. However, as is so often the case in missions, we don’t lack for students, but for teachers.

“The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Mt. 9:37-38).

Scott and Andrea Sward

Praise God...

- For his work in the lives of 22 youth, who just completed a two-week Discipleship Training School.

Please Pray...

- That we'd learn to abide more deeply in Christ, in order to bear fruit that remains.
- For the 62 students enrolled in our Monthly Bible School, that they'd grow in their knowledge of God and love for him.
- For Battambang Friends Church, that the Holy Spirit would help them overcome divisions and lead them into greater unity in Christ.



From the EFM Office

Praise God...

- For the successful completion of the Central Africa Missionary-Sending Learning Conference that took place in April in Burundi, Africa. As far as we know, this is the first event of its kind in EFM's history. More than 50 Friends participated in this conference, most of them from Central Africa. Together they identified the main components of a missionary-sending strategy that yearly meetings can put into practice. Each yearly meeting represented also identified the next steps that it will take in sending missionaries. It was a wonderful event!
- For the visit Dan Cammack was able to make to Ireland in April on his way to the conference in Burundi. It was good to have some face-to-face time with the EFM Ireland Team.
- For the Stateside staff that the Lord has given EFM at this point in its history.

Please Pray...

- For the yearly meeting leaders in Central Africa as they put into practice the things that they learned at the missionary-sending learning conference (see above).
- For the Stateside staff mentioned above. EFM's Five-Year Goal and the Luke 10 Initiative have created a lot of extra (but good) work for the staff.
- For D.K. and Choity Sarkar as they come towards the end of their deputation in the U.S. Pray that they will return to India fully funded.
- For the EFM Board meetings taking place at the Quaker Ridge Camp in Colorado June 1 and 2.

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 work that is being done through the yearly meetings of Evangelical Friends Church-North America to organize the second round of Luke 10 Exploration Trips. A trip to Mexico has already been completed and, at this point, it looks like six more will take place before the National Luke 10 Think Tank meets in November 2023.
- That there will be 26 future missionaries (people exploring whether God is calling them to be missionaries) and 24 mentors (people with missions experience) participating in the National Future Missionary Retreat that will be held at Quaker Ridge Camp in Colorado May 29-June 1.
- That since 2021 through this year EFM has been able to help facilitate field experiences for eleven potential missionary households. There are two households in the application process with EFM right now for missionary service.

Please Pray...

- For the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest fields.
- For the team of six people who will be making a Luke 10 Exploration Trip to the Shuar of Ecuador June 5 through 16. Four of them will stay on for another month and a half to gain more experience in working with the Shuar. Two more will join them in July. That makes a total of eight people participating in this exploration trip. Four of them are from Northwest Yearly Meeting, two from Friends Southwest, and two from Mexico.
- For all those who will be at the National Future Missionary Retreat and also all those who are getting some field experience (see above). Pray that they will be able to clearly discern God's direction for their lives.

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 Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj

Serving in Nepal

Praise God...

- For Arun's right upper limb slowly and miraculously getting healed. The skin grafting surgery went well, and the first dressing done this week showed a 100% take. God has been merciful in not only saving his life from the jaws of death in the accident but now healing the huge wound and multiple compound fractures in miraculous ways.
- For Prateek as he finished this semester at George Fox University. His graduation will be next year in May or June 2024 as he will have to complete a couple of subjects that he could not complete in time because of some issues.
- For the CHE Vision Seminar held in Kohalpur, West Nepal where 21 participants from three local churches participated and were challenged in their life on how to bring about church growth and plant new house fellowships and new churches in the communities around their church.

Please Pray...

- For our CHE Trainers as they travel to conduct CHE and Small Business Trainings in the Rautahat and Bara Districts of Nepal in June. Pray for the trainees from at least three or four churches as these trainings are to be held in new areas, and as they train to help in their churches with this Bible-based CHE training to bring about multiplication and transformation in their communities.
- For Mudebas, Parevakot, and Kupantole communities as they are working towards building toilets (bathrooms) in their individual homes.
- For the six or seven new believers from Cha'pur who have asked for prayers as they make the important decision to make a public testimony of baptism. It is scheduled for June sometime, and some of them have already started facing opposition from their families and community.

From Maria Giron

Serving as the Missions Mobilizer for Hispanic Friends

Praise God...

- For a very productive second Luke 10 Exploration Trip to Mexico with a great sense of God's presence in each place we visited. We were very blessed by each encounter and opportunity to talk, pray, and meet new people.
- We are amazed to see even more openness in the hearts of people in traditional towns, to learn more about the scriptures and have an encounter with Christ.
- For a great Second Luke 10 Trip Mexico team formed by God. Each one contributed in a special way so that the exploration trip was successful.

Please Pray...

- A young couple from Mexico City, who was part of the team, are praying and interested in starting a new church in one of the towns visited in Jalisco. Pray that God would guide them and provide for them throughout the process and that they may achieve their hearts' desires.
- Edwin and I will be part of the second Luke 10 Exploration Trip to Ecuador. Please pray for our time there. One of the main intentions is to strengthen relationships with leaders with whom EFM and NWYM have had contact for several years.
- Another reason for going on this trip, is to take two young future missionaries from Mexico for more opportunities to continue exploring their calling. One of them, his name is Jose, has the intention to be a full-time missionary among the Shuar people. Please pray that if it is God's will, Jose feels confirmation and peace in his heart.

From B. and D. A.

Serving in Nepal

Praise God...

- We praise the Lord that in spite of all the difficulty from families, the new converts are standing strong in the Lord.

Please Pray...

- For our Pastors and leaders as the villages in the Terai gets very hot, that they will have sufficient grace from our Lord to do the ministry.

From David Thomas
EFM Whole Life Discipleship

Praise God...(Luke 10 Missionary Sending Planning Retreat
Kibimba, Burundi)

- For the clear and practical testimony of missions sending from Guatemala and Honduras Friends for their missions work in Cambodia. Our Rwandan and Burundian participants were able to apply the "framework for missions sending (that they came up with at the beginning of the retreat)" to the Guatemalan example as well as apply it to their own process of missions sending. They finished the retreat with clear next steps to take toward their own mission sending. The Rwandan Friends Church leaders have unique ownership and momentum for missions sending at this time.

Please Pray... (Luke 10 Missionary Sending Planning Retreat
Kibimba, Burundi)

- A blessing over the Rwandan Friends Church leaders as they take the next steps forward in preparing to send their own missionaries. They are casting a missionary sending vision in all their churches, as well as raising funds for this work. Pray for the right couple to come to the surface to be the first missionaries sent out from Rwanda (there are already some wonderful options)! Pray for our two Burundi yearly meetings to come to unity and for the inner motivations of all leaders to become completely Christ-focused.

Praise God...(Thailand)

- For an excellent week of coaching, enjoying Holy Spirit's clear guidance throughout. Right after arriving Sunday night, I found out that my fellow coach Scott Purser had COVID-19 and could not join me in Chiang Rai. By the end of my coaching week, he was well enough to fly back home with me. I praise God that my Thailand D4D team is now working well together with Yosapa delegating important responsibilities to Mana, and Mana learning a lot from Yosapa. I got to observe them plan, teach, ask great questions, and interact with the Lahu leaders they are mentoring. I got to pass on to them four excellent lessons they will be using in the months ahead. I am also thankful for excellent translations both written and in real-time (Julie, Achi Po, and Jason).

Please Pray... (Thailand)

- For continued focus, excellent planning, growing facilitation (teaching), excellent evaluation and feedback, and continued unity for Yosapa and Mana (our D4D team). Pray for JaBo and his wife, NaPoé as they lead in JaTaw village, and for MaoPa and his wife, Emé, along with LeBo and Eema leading in JaSawPa village - pray for them and their teams in their churches as they go through the next lessons (God's Redemptive Purposes, Appreciative Approach, and Resource Mapping) - Pray for Holy Spirit's leading as they come to see the many resources God has already placed in their communities.

Praise God...(Bolivia)

- We are amazed at the way God has brought two successful, well-known development organizations (Food for the Hungry - Bolivia and Compassion International - Bolivia) to us - asking us to mentor and coach them in the next few years as they go through some major organizational culture change moving from a program/project focus to a developmental bias focused on equipping/empowering/discipling leaders. These organizations combined have a lot of influence in churches throughout Bolivia. As they are equipped to empower local church leaders to disciple their families, members, and communities holistically, we will see significant growth in God's Kingdom.

Please Pray... (Bolivia)

- That I will have an opportunity to mentor someone who can facilitate and coach with me in Bolivia through this project in the next three-five years [someone who speaks Spanish fluently, has excellent discipling experience (preferably with The Navigators), and someone who wants to learn the skills and process of discipling leaders resulting in holistic family, church and community transformation]. Please pray God will release the right person to mentor with me in Bolivia! We in EFM are growing and will have many new missionaries to mentor in the future. Pray Holy Spirit will provide the mentors we will need to train and coach our new missionaries!

From Abe and Diane Bible
Serving in Ukraine

Praise God...

- God has been so faithful to continue to provide funding for the Centers of Hope. (No, not enough for 100.) But we don't have that many yet! And we know God will provide for what he desires done. We are blessed.
- God continues to give health and strength. We are blessed by such a faithful team of coworkers who are diligent and engaged and better than we are at what they do!

Please Pray...

- For Abe as he has challenged the Center of Hope leaders to develop a vision, then goals, and then weekly and monthly plans that will get them to those goals. This will be a priority for them in the month of June. Planning is a skill set that is mostly missing here. Pray that they will actually see how plans can help them to keep consistently moving in the right direction.
- We both are feeling a bit tired from the intensity of the ministry needs. The burdens of training and praying and helping. Pray that the Lord would refresh our spirits and use our weakness for his glory, and kingdom growth. That is our desire, but it is his burden to carry.
- For Diane as she will be presenting counseling materials to the leaders to prepare them to deal with people on different levels of need on June 13-15. And that the materials would help the leaders themselves who are dealing with trauma and pain on different levels. The main principle is—Immanuel—God is with us. In the pain. From that comes our peace and joy.

From Pastor Crisanto De La Cruz- PEFIM
Serving in the Philippines

Praise God...

- For a successful Annual Leadership Conference that we had last February which was participated in by PEFIM churches in Metro Manila, Samar, and Palawan. The presence of our faithful partners from Canyon Hills Friends Church brought so much encouragement.
- For the continuing livelihood programs being implemented in different churches here in Metro Manila, Samar, and Palawan. We are grateful to the Lord for his provisions through the partnership of Evangelical Friends Mission.
- For the recently concluded Women's Fellowship of different PEFIM churches here in Metro Manila. The event was a great success that brought encouragement and instructions from the Scriptures to the women who participated.

Please Pray...

- For PEFIM leadership as we continue to strengthen and expand the work of the Lord in the various islands of the Philippines.
- For God's continued provisions for the needs of PEFIM and its affiliate churches. A youth camp is scheduled this coming June 9-10 which will be held in Samar. Pray for safety and provisions for all participants. Pastor Cris is traveling to Samar to lead this event.
- For Friends Evangelical Accelerated School of Theology (FEAST) which is the primary discipleship and leadership mentoring program of PEFIM for its emerging leaders. Please pray for God's provision for our continuing operation here in Pasig.

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

Praise God...

- We spent a blessed time together at our general assembly. God's Spirit was with us all day.
- On our general community occasion, we were able to name our youth pastors of Tolna. My nephew, Manuel, and his wife, Kinga, are living in Tolna. They have a vocation to serve our youths with God's will. We are thankful for them, and we are also praying for them.
- Our foundation was 20 years old this May. We celebrated this anniversary, and I handed it over to Sylvia. Sylvia has been our co-worker for a long time and she is a social worker. I prayed for a new president and God showed me, that Sylvie is the best for this work. Kate (who is also a co-worker) will be Sylvie's secretary.

Please Pray...

- For our youth pastors and for our new leaders in the foundation. They need strength and wisdom in the Lord.
- For our journey to Mátészalka. We will go for a gipsy conference. I will bring five gipsy friends from our mission there. Please, pray for blessings.
- For our new members. We have some new faces in the church of Tolna, but they need to receive Jesus Christ. Please, pray for them with us.