



Evangelical Friends Mission

December 2023 Prayer Letter

www.friendsmission.com
efm@friendsmission.com
303.421.8100

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.

D.K. and Choity Sarkar | Serving in India

Greetings in his matchless name. This is a brief and specific report of our ministry in West Bengal. By his grace and because of your prayers our ministry is expanding each year.

In West Bengal - At present, we have twenty-three churches and around sixty house churches. We are working among the Bengali People, Santali people, Muslim people, Dalit (untouchable) people, and in the red-light area.

Other states ministry - We could expand our ministry beyond the state of West Bengal. At present, we have ministries in Uttarakhand and Andhra Pradesh. For your kind information, Uttarakhand Christians are facing persecution because of their faith in Jesus. Still, our two brothers OM Prakash and Raj are working there. I praise God for them. Andhra Pradesh ministry will be started in January 2024. Brother Peter Sethy is working there. The progress is very good.



Red-light Area Ministry - Thanks be to God for the red-light area. Choity goes there each Thursday. Our friend Peter and his wife Leonora started a business in the red-light area for the financial development of the girls there. The ministry started with five girls and now there are thirty-five girls. Often, the girls are daughters of women who have worked in the sex industry. The mothers hope that their daughters choose different paths and do not pursue the same profession. Now they are living with honor and dignity. Eleven of them came to the Lord and made a public testimony of baptism in Kolkata Friends Church. Praise the Lord.

Muslim Ministry - In the year of 2023, twenty-eight people came to Christ and made a public testimony of baptism from the Muslim community. Our Muslim ministry is growing by his grace.

Tutorial Center - We have five tutoring centers in Shyamnagar, Nazatt, Gopalpur, Krishnapur and Habibpur. There are 30 – 40 children in these centers. The local poor children are receiving free tuition for two hours, three days a week. This ministry is for the poor people of the locality, because of the tutoring centers, EFM Kolkata gained a good reputation in that district. The tutoring centers are also a good tool for evangelism. We teach the children the word of God, songs, etc., and invite the parents and their friends to our different programs. They hear the word of God in those programs. These five churches got new believers through the tutoring centers.

Bible Correspondence Course - We also have a Bible correspondence course for high school and college-going students. At present, there are more than three thousand students. It is a five-step course where the stories of creation, the birth of Jesus Christ, his teachings, his death and resurrection, and eternal life are written. The students go through this course. When they complete all five steps, we invite them to the church for better learning and fellowship. A few students gave their lives to Jesus through the correspondence course.

We are trying to reach the people through the gospel in all possible way, so that the people will have the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Please pray for us.

D K & Choity Sarkar



From the EFM Office

Praise God...

- For the unity and encouragement, we experienced during the 2023 EFM National Luke 10 Think Tank, the EFM Board meetings, and the 60th Anniversary Banquet for EFM. All of these events took place November 8-10 in Portland, Oregon. Thank you for your prayers. They were answered!
- That the fundraising goal for the 60th Anniversary Banquet was met. In fact, the total of what was given before, during, and after the banquet exceeded the goal! These funds will be used to help train the missionaries who will be approved by the EFM Board to help launch at least six new fields (possibly nine!) by the end of 2025.

Please Pray...

- For the A. and M. A. family and B. and D. A. as they finish their deputations.
- For Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj as they travel to the US to celebrate Christmas with their son, Prateek, who is a student at George Fox University. Samson and Priscilla will remain in the US through May of next year. The upcoming months will include a sabbatical deputation.
- For David and Tricia Howell as they also travel to the U.S. Their deputation starts in January.
- That the year-end giving to EFM will be strong.

EFM Five-Year Goal:

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

Praise

- For the 75 Friends who came to Portland, Oregon, for the 2023 EFM National Luke 10 Think Tank. Among them were leaders from all our supporting regions/yearly meetings as well as some future missionaries, several who are still serving as missionaries, and a few who are retired from missionary service. The full EFM Board was also present.
- For faith that the Lord of the harvest would have us as Friends launch more than five fields by the end of 2025. Six were approved at this Think Tank (Mexico, Shuar of Ecuador, South Sudan, Refugees in Greece, NE Brazil, and Immigrant Workers in the Gulf States) and more are likely to be approved next year.
- For future missionaries who are already taking steps to prepare themselves for service.

Please Pray...

- For the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest fields.
- As we begin to define more clearly the missionary strategies for each of the newly approved fields and the gifts and abilities that will be needed to carry out those strategies. We are definitely going to need pioneer-type missionaries of all ages to launch these fields. At least twelve households (and likely more after next year's National Luke 10 Think Tank!)
- For future missionaries who are in the application process already with EFM. Pray also for the EFM staff and board as they walk with the applicants through the process.

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 D.K. and Choity Sarkar

Serving in India

Praise God...

- We had a wonderful camp. The total attendance was around 100. Friends churches in Hooghly district did a very good job.
- God provided the funds through different Friends churches.
- Our health is doing good now.

Please Pray...

- For the retreat in the Kolkata church.
- For our Christmas program.
- For Pastor Profulla Hembram who is going to be installed as Assistant Director on December 16 at our Christmas Program.

From Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj

Serving in Nepal

Praise God...

- For keeping us safe from all the natural disasters occurring frequently and sometimes so near us living in Nepalganj. Earthquake jolts are even now occurring (on a lower intensity) in Jajarkot district, and many people are out in the open living in makeshift tarpaulin tents, as the mud houses have cracked or some have collapsed.
- For the CHE and LEAD discipleship trainings conducted, with good attendance in Rautahat and Gol Bazar by Suleman and his group of trainers during the Hindu festival season.
- For two of our CHE leaders- Gokarna (Jhunjhure-Chitwan) and Ashok (Mahida-Rautahat), who were commissioned as pastors in their respective churches to carry out this additional responsibility besides the CHE work. Also, for the two young Musahar men - Nathuni and Prakash from Eden Church CHE committee (Rautahat) who are giving their time voluntarily to teach underprivileged Musahar kids in their community.

Please Pray...

- For the preparations in getting the CHE work in Chitwan registered under the government as a society providing training and relief work to the community in the whole district. Eight churches in Chitwan are working together in this effort, and have submitted their application and a model of their constitution to the government's CDO office for approval.
- For CHE Trainer Arun Mandal of Aurahi (Janakpur), as he slowly regains function of his right upper limb after the accident almost a year ago. He has limited movement at his elbow joint and the wrist and shoulder recovered movement faster. His house fellowship in Aurahi and the Children's CHE work is continuing and some of the older girls are now taking responsibility for holding house fellowships in their families and communities with the help of Babli (Arun's wife).
- For Narayan and Saru who have a meat shop as well as a stationary shop as a small business, and their fellowship in Tapara (Bardia). They are struggling in the face of stiff competition and some opposition from the locals also running similar businesses, and are making best use of their clean image as believers allowing them to testify about their faith in Christ. Please pray for Ganesh Pun, a young man in their fellowship, who helps organize meetings for the young people in the Tapara fellowship besides also helping in the stationary shop.

From Tony and Agi Frei

Serving in Hungary

Praise God...

- We are preparing for a public testimony of baptism service. Some brothers and sisters received Jesus Christ and they would like to give him their life.
- In November, I had a serious health problem called sciatica. I couldn't move and had to use a crutch if I did move. I couldn't go anywhere, because of the big pain. Glory to God, I'm better now. It was a hard period for me.
- Some unbeliever families from Tolna supported our Ukraine mission. They gave us donations (mainly clothes). The church also collected clothes donations. Mary from Ukraine made the sweet packages for the Ukrainian children and food packages – toiletries for the Ukrainian families.

Please Pray...

- For our public testimony of baptism service and please pray with us for our brother's and sister's new life in Christ.
- Because of my health situation, we postponed our mission journey to Ukraine. We plan to go from November 29 to December 2. Please, pray for our journey with us.
- For me- it will be a long journey to Ukraine and my health situation isn't perfect after the sciatica, please, pray for my full recovery, only God can help me.

From Molly Morton
Serving in Ireland
Praise God...

- We have begun a new youth Sunday school class for our middle school and younger high school-aged children.
- We hosted a very well-attended and fun Harvest Party last week. It was a joy to see our church community offering a safe and fun space for the wider community.
- Last month, I preached on Mary and Martha. It is becoming more natural and less nerve-wracking to preach. Thank God for meeting me in my study and sermon prep.

Please Pray...

- As we enter into Advent, please pray for myself and my pastoral team colleagues, Tim and Luke, as we guide our congregation through this sacred time in the church calendar. May we not lose sight of Christ during this busy time.
- For flourishing and deepening friendships for me. I am a part of a lovely Thursday morning Bible study where I have found some really nice women. Pray for those friendships.
- For my family and me as we navigate the holidays apart.

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

- For Yosapa and Mana's leadership as they work in the villages of JaSoPa and JaTaw. We are thankful for their steady progress in facilitating lessons helping the believers in the churches in these villages they are working with grow in hope and in a shared vision for village transformation and growing in understanding the root causes of the problems they face.

Please Pray... (Thailand)

- For a deeper understanding of the barriers their villages face through the root cause analysis lessons. This knowledge will be important leading towards their curriculum list of the key issues they need to be disciplined in, which are the problems that Yosapa and Mana get to coach them to problem-solve through.
- Pray for The Way Foundation leadership of Chiang Rai, Thailand as they ask important questions about their overall vision and purpose as an organization

Praise God... (Bolivia)

- For the opportunity to facilitate an "Empowerment, mentoring and coaching" workshop with Food for the Hungry Bolivia leaders along with some leaders of other organizations. Praise God also for the opportunity to facilitate an adult learning and Bible-telling workshop with people who will implement Discipling for Development in their communities. These workshops take place in early December.

Please Pray... (Bolivia)

- For leaders to understand and evaluate well their own leadership and purpose to become empowering leaders. Pray for our Discipling for Development leaders to stay healthy in Bolivia and not get sick. Pray for participants to also commit to learning how to teach in an adult learning way. Pray the Bible Telling tool would be well understood and that many would practice it and multiply this effective way to interact with God's Word.

From Abe and Diane Bible
Serving in Ukraine
Praise God...

- We successfully got new documents for another year in Ukraine! Always a relief as sometimes this journey has had more than a few hiccups. Thank you, Lord!
- For a couple of family times in November. We are blessed in that we have a daughter and her family who live in the same country. How often does that happen in a missionary's life?! November is a big birthday month for our family. Always wonderful to celebrate life!
- One of the "side effects" of war is that Ukraine has become the second most generous country in the world—more even than the US or Canada...etc. And we have seen how people have given here in many ways since the war started. A beautiful thing to think of as the month of November just passed when we focus on Thanksgiving and our generous God.

Please Pray...

- The critical prayer request right now is that people would step forward for training in evangelism and church planting with the view to start Christian communities (Centers of Hope) reaching out especially to displaced people. A new round of training will begin in January. The news is being spread but we need the Holy Spirit to speak to people's hearts. And we need willing hearts to respond. This is a struggle especially with men being called up regularly for military service as the war drags on. 300 pastors in the Ukrainian Christian/Baptist Union alone have been called up, so the impact is being felt all across the country in the churches who are led without leadership. And yet, the spiritual hunger is deep.