



Evangelical Friends Mission

February 2024 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.

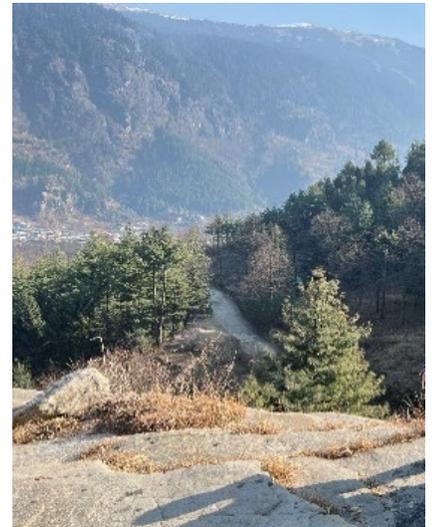
M. and K. L. | Serving in Asia

As we write this update to you, our village and surrounding villages are in a time of “quiet” and observation for their idol. They are not allowed to work the dirt or harvest any crop, make loud noises, or even play music or videos during this one-and-a-half-month-long period. It is a time for their god to go into meditation and then make predictions for the coming year. But for us, we see it for what it truly is—a way for the enemy to hold more people in bondage. During this time women are not allowed to work, and so they should be more energetic and encouraged; instead, year after year we have seen how weary and discouraged many people become during this time. Typically, there is more illness, and frequently deaths occur during this season. And, although we are not bound like our neighbors and we do not live in fear of doing the “wrong” thing, the darkness still affects us. The obvious way we are affected is by the mandate to follow all of the “rules” for this stretch of time. But the less obvious ways, and the much more challenging ways, include feeling the darkness all around us, watching our friends struggle, and having many more spiritual and physical attacks against our family. Despite all of the evil and the attacks, we rejoice because greater is he that is in us than he that is in the world. We get the joy of knowing how the story ends. We are on the side of the light and the side of victory. And so, we keep fighting during the times of darkness and we keep shining our light in any way we can to those around us. We do this even when it feels pointless or challenging or just exhausting, so that, they too, may come to live in his light instead of living bound and in fear, they can live in the freedom of Christ.

A large part of shining our light includes opening our home to those around us. We pray that our home would be a place of peace and a place to feel loved for everyone, from the youngest to the oldest. Lately, we’ve shared our home for birthday parties, for local festivals, for game times, and for fun nights of making pizza or homemade chicken tenders for groups of friends. We are continually thankful for the opportunities to strengthen friendships, create new relationships, and share about Christ with those around us. We get to pray with and for friends whose little children are in the hospital and pray with friends who come over to share a meal with us. We try not to take these little moments for granted and trust God to use these sometimes seemingly insignificant interactions to fight the darkness around us and step-by-step, prayer-by-prayer win more ground for the light. We are honored to have you alongside us, encouraging and praying for us and for them, and we are so thankful to be with you as we all seek to further the kingdom and bring more people into his light.

In Christ,

M. and K. L.



From the EFM Office

Praise God...

- That EFM ended 2023 in a strong financial position. We are grateful for everyone who helped make this happen!
- For the time Dan Cammack, EFM's Field Director, was able to spend in Peru and Bolivia promoting the sending of missionaries to the unreached peoples of the world.
- For three days of meetings the directors of EFM were able to have in Southern California towards the end of January. Among the things they worked on were the next steps in the process of launching new fields together with the regions/yearly meetings of Evangelical Friends Church-North America.

Please Pray...

- For A. and M. A. as they return to their country. Their time of deputation was a great blessing for them and their supporters.
- For Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj as they take a sabbatical while based in Newberg, Oregon.
- For David and Tricia Howell as they visit churches and supporters in the Pacific Northwest.
- For Matt Macy, as he spends time in Burundi and Rwanda exploring next steps in the launching of new fields in Africa.
- For Dan Cammack, as he spends time in Chiang Rai, Thailand, with David Thomas, Ben Kibbe, and others. The purpose of this visit is to strengthen the partnership with The Way Foundation.

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 three young adults who have begun an apprenticeship in Southern California through the North County Project. This apprenticeship will go through October of this year. The young adults are Grace Anderson from Oregon, Erik Nilsen from California, and Garry Norton from Kansas. They are learning what it means to be disciples of Jesus Christ as well as how to make disciples. This is a major step in discerning whether the Lord of the harvest is leading them to become missionaries with EFM.
- For many others who are actively exploring whether God is calling them to be part of the next wave of missionaries that go out through EFM.

Please Pray...

- For the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest fields.
- For Grace, Erik, and Garry as they participate in the apprenticeship program mentioned above. Please include prayer for their funding.
- That in the next few months there would be greater clarity for many of those who are discerning whether God is calling them to be missionaries.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: Join us the 2nd Thursday of each month (10-11 AM PST) for our Luke 10:2 Gathering via Zoom in support of EFM's Five-Year Goal. Sign up to participate [here](#).

From D.K. and Choity Sarkar

Serving in India

Praise God...

- Our Christmas celebration was very good. We visited house to house with carol singing. Our team also visited village to village with Christmas songs and booklets.
- We could start a few house fellowships in the villages and also in Kolkata. Our team members Tapan, Chandan, Suvankar, Debdas, and Orafulla worked hard to distribute the booklets. We pray God will bless their hard work.
- We could make a new church building at North 24 Parganas. The building was inaugurated on January 1, 2024.

Please Pray...

- For all the new house fellowships to become a church in 2024.
- For those who are ready for a public testimony of baptism.
- For the five tutorial centers that have started their work in the beginning of January 2024.

From M. and K. L.

Serving in Asia

Praise God...

- For God's goodness and faithfulness in the midst of all the darkness.
- For continued health for our youngest, now 7 months, (and, really, all of us) even despite all the sickness we've been exposed to.

Please Pray...

- For our village during this season. We're praying against deeper bondage and that they would question their ways and begin to seek the creator.
- For good health and protection for the days and weeks to come.
- For all the details and travel for our visa renewal trip coming up in March – we've also had to apply for new passports for two of our children, which are needed prior to our departure.

From Scott and Andrea Sward

Serving in Cambodia

Praise God...

- For the opportunity to begin studying the Bible weekly with inmates at the local prison.
- For the completion of the first year of Monthly Bible School, with more than 50 students on track to graduate at the end of 2024.

Please Pray...

- For a church in every commune. There are 34 communes in Stung Treng (1 commune = +/- 500 families). Thirteen of those 34 communes don't have a church of any kind. Please pray for church planting efforts in each of these locations.
- For the gospel for every people group. Stung Treng is one of the most ethnically diverse provinces in all of Cambodia. Pray for people from every people group to open their hearts to Jesus. Please pray especially for the Lao, Kavet, Lun, and Cham peoples.
- For training for leaders in every church. The majority of the church leaders in Stung Treng have had very little formal education, systematic Bible teaching, or leadership training. Our Monthly Bible School is an attempt to address that gap, but more is needed.

From Maria Giron

Serving as the Missions Mobilizer for Hispanic Friends

Praise God...

- For the opportunities to serve him in different ministries in the last months of 2023. Especially in the ministry of Missions Mobilizing. We are grateful and blessed to have been able to be part of the Friends Summit, for the first time, that took place in Houston, TX. It was very hopeful to see a big group of young people gathered to worship God. It truly was a great end to 2023 and the beginning of 2024, injected with energy and joy from all the young people present there.
- In November God gave us the opportunity to visit the Friends Church in Sinaloa, Mexico together with leaders of Haviland Friends Church, in Kansas. The brave pastors Jaime and Lupita León have been serving in this ministry for six years in such a difficult and dangerous place! This visit filled our hearts with joy as we saw the growth and fruit that the congregation has had. We could really feel an environment where God is moving and transforming, not only people but also the community. There is evidence of leadership development and a lot of prayer. Glory to God!

Please Pray...

- For the Mexico Yearly Meeting (Central) sessions, taking place the first weekend in March in Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Mexico. VM32 Church Planting Project will continue to be promoted and we wish to see more people saying, "Here I am, send me."
- We begin 2024 with proposals to get involved in conferences and projects related to church planting and missions' mobilization. Please pray that God will continue to use us and to be effective and productive wherever he sends us this year.
- For health and safety when we are traveling.

**From Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj
Serving in Nepal**
Praise God...

- For the six believers from Jhurjhure church in Chitwan who made a public testimony of baptism in December during the Christmas week celebration. One of them (Angel Lama) is facing severe persecution from her family and has to be sheltered in the church for a week. The goat distribution program is multiplying fast as the first fruits are brought back to the church to be given as gifts to other families.
- For the renewal of the Rautahat CHE CLC registration (Cha'pur) with the Nepal government, and for Desh Raj who worked hard to get it. For the evangelistic work carried out during Christmas celebrations in Rautahat, Chitwan, Aurahi, and Tapara (Bardia), where almost 500 people heard the gospel, some going out of the way to come to the celebration.
- For the new house fellowships started in Bikrampur near Aurahi (Dhanusa), and Ampani near Mudebas in Chitwan. These were started by people influenced by the Friends' CHE trainers and the CHE training in the community.

Please Pray...

- For the Women's Seminar at Cha'pur (Rautahat) which Asha Rai plans to organize in March 2024 using CHE lessons from Women's Cycle of Life and Spiritual Life. Resource persons from Chitwan and Kathmandu are expected in this day-long seminar for about 50 participants.
- For the Jhurjhure Youth, and Gokarna their teacher, as they study the word of God systematically. A team of three women from the Jhurjhure church won the first prize in the recent quiz program for all the churches of Piple.
- For Narayan and his wife Saru in Bardia as they shoulder the responsibility of an additional resource of two lakes awarded to them on government land, to grow fish which will ultimately help their fellowship, and also provide for the widows and old ladies living in their community regularly.

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

- Abe had a full attendance of 130 people at the Center of Hope training, which focuses on evangelism, despite some cancellations because of bad weather in eastern areas! Praise the Lord.
- Diane taught a two-day seminar on emotional healing. She managed to teach for 12 ½ hours in what was actually only a day and a half, and God gave her supernatural strength so that when she returned home, she did not feel more tired than normal from traveling five hours each way. What a gift from God. The people were very open.
- Many reports of people being saved through the work of the leaders of Centers of Hope in December. Always a cause for rejoicing!

Please Pray...

- Russia has increased its missile and drone attacks over the past month targeting Kyiv and other cities towards the east. The war seems so endless. There is a great keening rising up from mothers and wives and sisters who are losing their men. The grief, the trauma, and the hopelessness sometimes are overwhelming. And yet—we continue to pray that God would have mercy and bring an end to this senseless suffering. The question of evil confronts us daily.
- Continue to pray that in the midst of this, God's work will be done. And we know it is. Teams of men are being sent to the front to minister to the soldiers. Needless to say, they are thinking about eternity. Death faces them every day. One of the men Abe trained in evangelism a few years ago lost his arm, but he continues witnessing for the Lord, in whatever hospital he has been, wherever he goes. We need hundreds, thousands of people who will go out and speak peace and hope, to the soldiers, and to all the other, displaced people, those who are mourning their dead. It is a great harvest field. Pray for workers to respond! May God use this to bring revival and spiritual awakening everywhere across Ukraine.
- Abe has a full schedule of meetings in February. Some of them need "extra" wisdom. Always decisions to be made, counsel to be given. Teaching is the easy part! We value your prayers. God is the source of all we need.

**From Brad and Chelsea Carpenter
Serving in Rwanda**
Praise God...

- For a great coaching visit with David Thomas and our D4D team in January. It helped us determine the next steps in the D4D process in each of our groups
- That EFC-R (Evangelical Friends Church of Rwanda) is taking good steps in the preparation of sending out missionaries
- That we had a great time together as a family over the kids' Christmas break, and also that the Lord is helping us get back into daily rhythms well with better sleep than we've had before.

Please Pray...

- For wisdom as the D4D team helps each group work together with God to address the key, prioritized, holistic list of issues in their church and community.
- For wisdom for our Yearly Meeting leaders in Rwanda, Burundi, and Congo. There are many things they have to balance and many difficult issues and decisions they face.
- That Brad's knee injury would heal well without complications

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

- Our Thailand Lahu D4D team has made excellent progress leading their two village churches through root cause analyses of the barriers holding them down in poverty.
- For a whole week Scott and David get to coach the D4D team through the last lessons to finishing the Mobilization Phase and coming up with their syllabus list of the crucial topics they will work through in the Empowerment Phase.

Please Pray... (Thailand)

- For an excellent coaching trip in early February. Few D4D teams successfully finish the Mobilization phase, so pray for clarity, for the Holy Spirit's insight and guidance, and many "aha" moments. And pray for our two village churches to soon discover their syllabus list!
- For Scott, David, Ben, and Dan as they participate in discussions with The Way Foundation leaders looking at how the EFM can best partner with TWF in helping them reach God's purposes for them, especially in planting disciple-making, church planting movements throughout the Lahu people groups.

**From Tony and Agi Frei
Serving in Hungary**
Praise God...

- We have a new family in Batina, Croatia. They are a married couple with three daughters. They live near the border, and they can speak Hungarian. They are friendly and they have opened their heart to God.
- Our Christmas meetings were blessed everywhere. For example, in Budapest, there were some unbeliever families who heard the gospel. We hope that the word of God doesn't return empty.
- We have a new acquaintance, named Andrea, in Kölked. Andrea searched for a church in her environment and wrote to me. She attended the church recently and she liked it. Andrea has an open heart too.

Please Pray...

- For Kinga, who is my nephew Manuel's wife. They are our youth pastors in Tolna. As I wrote to you earlier, they are expecting their first baby. Kinga is going to the hospital soon for observation because her baby will arrive in the next few weeks. Please, pray for her childbirth.
- For Joseph and Susan's family (they are our co-workers, and Joseph is an assistant pastor). In January, Joseph's 27-year-old nephew, Daniel, died in a car accident. It is a huge tragedy for their family. Daniel was his mother's only child. Please pray for the grieving. There was a 15-year-old boy with him, who was in hospital with internal bleeding. Please, pray for Mark.
- Miklós is in the church of Tolna and he is a retired man. Some months ago, he lost his house. But nowadays he is better! He rents a little flat. We have many similar situations in our mission! Please, pray for these people!