



Evangelical Friends Mission

June 2024 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 Sward Family | Serving in Cambodia

“Teacher, please pray for me. I recently believed in Jesus, but I have no peace whatsoever!”

The young tribal man had quietly listened to the Bible lesson, and the discussion that followed, but he couldn’t contain himself any longer. He was desperate and confused.

Not knowing this young man, I asked him a few questions and prayed for him.

After praying, I asked him, “How do you feel now?” He slowly opened his eyes, and then blurted out, “I feel even worse!” Everyone’s eyes were now on me.

In the course of our brief interaction, I’d manage to piece together that this young man, Bunla, had made a profession of faith a month or so ago. However, as the small church in his village was less than one year old, and most of its members are illiterate, he hadn’t received any follow-up teaching or personal discipleship since then.



Because of the occult practices, illnesses, alcoholism, and overall chaos that characterizes many tribal families in NE Cambodia, usually, it’s necessary to lead new believers through a process of spiritual deliverance and inner healing prayer shortly after they make a profession of faith. However, before this is possible, it’s important to lay a solid foundation of core biblical truths. And that takes time.

Sitting across from Bunla, I knew I didn’t have the time necessary to really help him. So, I told him, “Bunla, I don’t know how to help you tonight. But Jesus does. He’s here. He sees you, inside and out and he loves you. Why don’t you ask Jesus about your problems?”

Bunla agreed. He closed his eyes and sat silently for a minute or two. When he opened his eyes again, I asked him if Jesus had revealed anything to him. Bunla’s demeanor had visibly softened. He looked at me and said, “Jesus said I don’t have peace, because I claim to believe in him, but don’t obey him.”



I was shocked. Bunla had never touched a Bible before and had received almost no Christian instruction apart from the simple gospel message. And yet, the Holy Spirit spoke directly to his heart, “convict[ing] the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment” (John 16:8).

Not long after, Bunla enrolled in our Discipleship Training School (DTS)—a three-month residential program for Christian youth in our province. Since then, Bunla’s understanding of scripture, his love for the Lord, and his eagerness to serve others has grown tremendously.



During these three months, there have been some tough times too. But through it all, Bunla continues to testify to the joy and peace that come from Jesus.

In a few days, Bunla and the other DTS students will return to their villages. Please pray that “in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation,” which accurately describes their society and ours, these young people would, “shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life” (Philippians 2:15-16).

Scott Sward

From the EFM Office

Praise God...

- For the EFM Board meetings that took place at the Quaker Ridge Camp and Conference Center in Colorado on May 30 and 31. We continue to update procedures and policies that will be beneficial to current and future missionaries (as well as the staff and Board).
- For new coaches being added to EFM's coaching program. These coaches meet with the missionaries they are working with about once a month.
- That the Carpenter family arrived safely to the U.S. They will start deputation soon.

Please Pray...

- For Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj as they settle back into their work in Asia.
- For David and Tricia Howell as they continue deputation. Pray that they will be fully funded very soon so that they can return to Ireland.
- For the staff as we recruit more coaches for our missionaries and form more Missionary Care Teams. These are great opportunities to come alongside our missionaries to assist them as well as learn about missions through them.

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 the ways in which the Lord of the harvest is using the Five-Year Goal to draw us more closely together as Evangelical Friends to carry out his mission.
- For the Future Missionary Retreat that was held at Quaker Ridge Camp and Conference Center in Colorado May 27-30. There were over thirty participants at this retreat, including those exploring whether God is calling them to missionary service and those who have missions experience who were serving as mentors.
- For the Multi-national Missionary Teams Study Group Retreat that was held in Denver, Colorado April 30 through May 2. Those who participated in person and via Zoom felt good about the progress made on this complex topic of multi-national teams. There is still much more to learn!

Please Pray...

- For the Lord of the harvest to send more workers into the harvest fields.
- For the Lord's guidance as the study of multi-national missionary teams continues, especially in regard to preparing recommendations for the EFM Board to consider in November of this year.
- For those who have been participating in EFM's Future Missionary activities (retreats, trips, online cohort, etc.) as they and those who know them well discern the Lord's will for their lives.
- For the Luke 10 Exploration Trip that will occur June 7-22. It will be led by newly approved EFM missionary candidates, Fred and Jonelle Liddell, and their two children. Two or three other adults will also be part of the team. They will visit Croatia, Montenegro, Bosnia, and Herzegovina. This is the second Luke 10 Exploration Trip to Eastern Europe.

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 Pastor Amen Thapa- EFC Nepal

Serving in Nepal

Praise God...

- For the newly planted church in Gumba Chumba of Kawasoti Municipality, Nawalpur where 20 members are attending at the moment. Pastor Suryalal Mahato and his family started this new Friends church and the Nawalpur Friends Church Regional Yearly Meeting declared the church and dedicated the pastor and his family along with the Regional Women's Fellowship to the Lord on April 26.
- For the property that Sindhuli Friends Church was able to purchase which is 27,380 square feet of land (they had been praying for 5,476 square feet but God provided four times more) and for the new motorbike for the pastor.
- For Sunday School buildings built by Magarkot Friends Church, and Amptar Friends Church, and for government-provided budget for the Setopani Friends Church compound fencing bar.
- For the Sunday School teachers' training and the 25 new members who have declared their faith in Jesus through a public testimony of baptism.

Please Pray...

- For the United Evangelism Campaign organized by Nawalpur Friends Church Regional Yearly Meeting to win many souls for the Lord and build them in the Lord.
- For everything needed for the National Women and Youth Yearly Meetings and Regional Yearly Meetings.
- For our Bible College students who are appearing for their first board exam.
- For the land and buildings needed in Magarkot, Thali, Baguban, Janakpur, and Kathmandu.

From Samson and Priscilla Retnaraj

Serving in Nepal

Praise God...

- For a great deputation which ended on May 23 when we traveled back to India and Nepal. This trip brought us into contact with many of our faithful old supporters and many new friends in the US who signed up to pray for our ministry and support us financially. The Lord blessed us and kept us going physically and spiritually throughout our journeys by road and flights to get to churches and yearly meetings. We also attended the IWMC conference on CHE with special attention being given to more recent CHE basic health topics like Women's Cycle of Life, 1,000 days, Men Matters, etc.
- For Prateek who has a job for a year as a Behavior therapist, in and around the Portland area with a reputed company taking care of Autistic and ADHD kids. He will be continuing his graduate degree studies during this one year as a practical internship.
- For the continuation of the Jesus film shows through our ministry in very restricted areas. People who watched the film have shown much interest and a few have come forward to decide to follow Christ.

Please Pray...

- For our journey and transition back to our places of ministry which started when we left the US on May 23.
- For Suleman and Asha as well as the members of the Rautahat CLC as they continue their CHE activities with permission from the local government as an NGO, thus interacting with the local community for their needs. Pray for their needs of a CLC training room /center.
- For Gokarna and Sukmaya as they continue their efforts to get their CLC in Chitwan registered with the local government. Pray for the Mudebas community and their church in the hills of Chitwan as they continue to grow and reach out to nearby communities in holistic ways.

From Maria Giron
Serving as the Missions Mobilizer for Hispanic Friends
Praise God...

- With Mexico being one of the places that EFM has approved to send new missionaries and moving forward to develop the VM32 project, from June 10- 14 a Luke 10 Pre-Launch trip will be carried out to two states in Mexico where there is still no Friends presence. These states are Durango and San Luis Potosí. The team is made up of leaders from both Mexico Yearly Meetings, young people who are currently exploring their calling to missions or planting new churches, and Matt Macy, Edwin, and I representing EFM. We are excited and we thank God in advance for this opportunity to be together and be able to spend times of conversations, meals, and fellowship with people of God who are key in the development of the project to start new churches and continue to obey the Great Commission, being part of bringing the Gospel to all those who do not yet have a relationship with Jesus and do not know about his salvation.

Please Pray...

- That this Luke 10 Pre-Launch trip in Mexico will be productive, beneficial in the kingdom of God, and impactful in eternity.
- That all of us who are going to be part of the journey are sensitive to listening and seeing what the Holy Spirit wants to show us.
- For safety as we travel on roads that are not very safe and for the health of all team members.

From Tony and Agi Frei
Serving in Hungary

Praise God...

- The family day in Budapest was very blessed because we could invite some unbelieving families to our church again.
- We are preparing for two weddings in June. There is a young lady from Angola (EFC Africa), who is studying in Hungary. She is going to be a doctor. She is a member of our church in Budapest. Some months ago, she got married and she would like to celebrate her church wedding with our church members (from Budapest, Tolna, and Pécs). In the middle of June, Peter and Fruzsina (a couple of our youth group) also would like to celebrate their wedding ceremony with us. May the Lord bless these two couples' lives.
- Our youth group is preparing for their fourth youth camp this summer. There are a lot of applicants for it.

Please Pray...

- For the two young married couples' lives.
- For those unbelieving families from Budapest, whom we invited to our church from the handcraft party.
- For those unbelieving guests who were invited for the two church weddings. It's a good possibility to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.