

MESSENGER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER & PRAYER GUIDE



Dave Houser riding a yak in 1999.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR

DREAM BIGGER by Dave Houser

I have a photo hanging in my office (the one pictured above). It's one of my favorite pictures of myself. I'm riding a yak in front of a mountain. Traveling to that remote area was a dream in my heart. I had heard it was one of the most unreachable places in the world, and I began to pray for the people there to know Jesus. When I got the opportunity to go, I started telling people that I was going to ride a yak while I was there. It was just an idea that I thought of

and called it my dream.

While we were driving one day, we passed by a group of nomadic herders. They brought over a specific yak that they said would be the best to ride. The funny thing about the photo is that one of the team members was lining it up to get the perfect shot of me sitting on the yak with the mountain in the background, and right as he clicked the photo, the yak moved. It probably only walked about 20 feet or so,

but the picture makes it look like we were flying along at breakneck speed.

As we all got back in the Land Rovers to continue our trip, one of the team members asked me, **“So what are you going to dream for next?”** I think she just asked it kind of flippantly because she was celebrating that we actually got to do what I had been talking about. But the question really touched my heart, and it stayed with me

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for a long time. It's easy to dream of things that seem fun or exciting for me personally. But the reason we went to that part of the world was because of the need for the gospel there. And here I was, dreaming about what I would get from the experience.

I was telling this story and my reflections on it to a group recently, and their leader encouraged me to hang a copy of the photo with the words "dream bigger" in my office. As I look at it today, I think about the whole concept of short-term missions. We, as followers of Jesus, want to go because we want to make a difference in the world somehow. We have our little dreams of experiences we want to have along the way.

People sometimes ask why EMM has an Advance program and why the outreach part is 5 months. The reason is that we want to offer an opportunity for young adults to spend a year exploring missions and experiencing parts of the world. It's a first step, not a long-term, rest-of-our-lives commitment. It starts with 3 months of training, where we put together some local service opportunities with teaching, encouragement, and interaction.

The 5 months that come after that give an opportunity to experience what it is to live in a place, not just visit. So it's not this long, drawn-out thing, but it is long enough that we can't just fake it. It's a little harder to just endure it. A participant has to overcome obstacles, make adjustments, and finding one's way through to bond with the culture, learn some of the language, and do life in new ways.

I ask young people all the time, "Where do you think God is calling you?" It's fine if we don't have an answer, but I ask it because sometimes there is something there —

like a spark that God will use in their lives. **Sometimes, the little dreams point toward the bigger dreams.** What we want is to set our hearts on what God wants to do in the world and then join Him in what He is doing. We want to serve with humility, learn, and grow. Maybe, to do that, we have to lay down some of our ideas about what our lives should look like. Maybe there are things we have to let go of. And yet, not everything has to be set aside. **What we really need, is to dream bigger.**



Dave Houser serves as EMM's discipleship coach.

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO SHOULD CHECK OUT ADVANCE? GIVE THEM THIS FLIER AND ENCOURAGE THEM TO APPLY BY MAY 31 TO GET A \$500 DISCOUNT.

"I've been serving in Cambodia for outreach since January as part of Advance Global. Prior to this, I knew God's presence was important, but I'm learning every day what it looks like to fully be leaning on him. In times of anxiety, sadness, and being uncomfortable, I'm learning God sits with me and helps me overcome. Also, in times of joy, fun, and rest God is there too. I find this concept of God's omnipresence shows in my work. There is no way I could teach the way I teach, connect with the students, or engage with the kids the way I do without God. It hasn't been the easiest months of my life, but it has been amazing getting to experience and help partner with what God is doing in Cambodia."

— Lena Kauffman
Advance participant in Cambodia



"My time in Germany has been flying by quickly, causing me to reflect on God's purposes for me during this time. How can I make an impact for God in only five short months? Well, I've realized that a better question is, "What is God calling me to do today, or this week?" Sometimes we can focus on doing big things for the Lord, when the "big thing" he is asking of us seems insignificant or small. So, the Lord has been teaching me to be faithful with the opportunities I have, whether it is leading worship at Soli Deo's youth group, playing basketball and foosball with strangers turned friends, or discussing the meaning of life with a skeptic."

— Matthew Baugher
Advance participant in Germany

MAY DAILY PRAYER

1 MIDDLE EAST | Pray for Jonathan Bornman as he plans and prepares for a trip to the Middle East this summer. Pray for the leading of the Holy Spirit as the Christian-Muslim Relations Team dreams and plans the possibility of organizing a “peace camp” for youth and young adults.

2 THAILAND | Pray for God to call pioneer church planters into the harvest field of Thailand to join the team there.

3 GLOBAL | Pray for Advance participants Holly, Lena, and Matthew, as they wrap up their 5 months of outreach and prepare to return to the U.S. Pray that their times end well.

4 CAMBODIA | Pray for wisdom for Kandace Glenn as she meets with and relates to students. Pray that she can continue to be a light in the darkness.

5 U.S. | Pray for Michael and Ruthy* as they use their gifts and experience to help the Christian-Muslim Relations Team continue to grow in prayer and equipping others in prayer as a vital part of mission.

6 GLOBAL | Pray for God to call Advance Global participants for the fall of 2024, to the regions of West Africa, Germany, and Southeast Asia.

7 COSTA RICA | Pray for Daryl and Jen Hoover as they continue to support the discipleship network of VidaNet. Pray for wisdom for their son Joseph and that the right job will open up for him after graduation.

8 WEST AFRICA | Ask God to strengthen Mandinka believers with boldness and love to share the gospel with other Mandinka people.

9 SOUTH ASIA | Pray for Clara* as she joins her husband in pioneer witness in a predominately non-Christian setting. Pray for her as she also teaches English and engages in intercession.

10 U.S. | Ask the Lord to bless EMM’s Board of Directors as they meet in Lancaster, Pa., today. Pray for ears attentive to the Holy Spirit, wisdom, and clarity of thought and communication.

11 VIETNAM | Pray for Gerry and Donna Keener as they train Vietnamese pastors and church workers. Pray for wisdom for curriculum development.

12 GLOBAL | Pray for the leaders of All-nations Association of Bible Schools as they continue to support and empower leaders who are dedicated to spreading the gospel and serving their communities. Praise the Lord for two new member schools and pray for their success and growth. Pray for those planning the sixteenth international conference in August.

13 CZECH REPUBLIC | Pray for Vojta and Stacy Prknovi as they, along with 4 to 5 others, explore starting a home church in their community. Pray for the men in prison that Vojta meets with each week for the Discipleship Explored course.

14 U.S. | Pray for God to call young men to serve on Kingdom Team summer staff this summer. We praise God for the excellent team of young women which is already taking shape.

15 CENTRAL ASIA | Join us in prayer for Alexander and Maria* as they serve with their family in Central Asia. Pray for Maria and the boys as they finish out the school year. Pray for their sons as they plan to spend the summer in the U.S.

16 CAMBODIA | Pray for workers to be called to the work of young adult outreach and discipleship in Cambodia.

17 CENTRAL ASIA | Pray for physical and emotional strength for Elizabeth* in a busy time. Pray that God would use Elizabeth and the many opportunities she has had to learn and resource others to bring many to enter his kingdom.

18 COSTA RICA | Pray for Ethan Horst and the others in Vida220 as they wrap up their outreach time and begin preparing to host youth groups for the summer VidaMissions program.

19 U.S. | Ask God to move among the Afghan people who are being resettled in Lancaster. Pray that they would encounter the love of Jesus in the believers they meet here.

20 CHILE | Pray for mission interns to join the work of camp ministry in Tenglo Island, Chile.

21 U.S. | Pray for Binsa* as she teaches young people to follow Jesus. Pray also for her as she teaches women and serves in leadership at her church.

22 WEST AFRICA | Pray for individuals and families to be called to join the work of leadership development and church planting in West Africa.

23 THE GAMBIA | Pray for Nate and Krystle Thorne and their children who have recently arrived in The Gambia. Pray for them as they transition and settle into their new home and community.

24 CZECH REPUBLIC | Pray for an increased spiritual hunger for the Czech people. Ask the Holy Spirit to soften their hearts and reveal to them the truth and love of Christ.

25 FRANCE | Pray for supporters to gather around Jennifer Weaver and her Missionary Support Team to bless them with prayers, interest in her ministry, and financial resources.

26 GLOBAL | Give thanks for the memories of Jesus’ faithful servants who obeyed his call to go to multiply disciples of Jesus, especially the nearly 7,500 who have served with EMM.

27 GLOBAL | Pray for Leon and Naomi Zimmerman as they serve globally, providing theological teaching, leadership development, and encouragement to EMM’s partners.

28 FRANCE | Pray for workers to join a developing team in Marseilles, France, to establish a witness and to reach out to the many immigrants in this city.

29 GLOBAL | Ask the Lord to pour abundant resources into the Impact Fund through the generosity of his people, so EMM can multiply disciples of Jesus around the world.

30 LANCASTER, PA. | Pray for Becca Sauder, the new Kingdom Team director, as she prepares and plans for a busy summer of leading youth groups through Kingdom Teams in Lancaster.

31 HONDURAS | Lift Austin and Griselda Zuercher in prayer as they serve in Honduras. Praise the Lord for the many opportunities Austin has to train and equip leaders. Pray for wisdom for Griselda as she gives leadership to El Nido. Pray for unity and good direction for all of those working at VidaNet Honduras.

*Names changed for sensitivity reasons.



Eastern Mennonite Missions

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

▶ ADVANCE

People want to know why they should do Advance. When you step into the calling of God, you are going to learn and grow in at least three key ways. **You will learn more about God, yourself, and the world.**

You will learn more about God. By walking with God, studying Scripture, and joining together in community with others who are doing the same, you will come to know God more personally and more deeply.

You will learn more about yourself. By stepping out into new experiences, you will learn ways that you are gifted, things you are interested in, and things that you aren't. You can stoke your passions, fanning into flame the most important desires of your hearts.

You will learn more about the world. As you meet people from other cultures and other nations, you will see how God has created them and their unique gifts. You will gain new perspectives, seeing the bigger picture of human creativity, human need, and how you can get involved.



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THE IMPACT FUND FOR 2024 NEED IS \$1,359,255

When you support EMM's Impact Fund, you enable us to recruit, equip, and send EMM workers around world.

\$433,200 RECEIVED AS OF APRIL 8

\$1,792,455 GOAL



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Your life will never be the same.

APPLY BY MAY 31
TO GET A \$500 DISCOUNT

 **ADVANCE**

The Kingdom of God is advancing and he longs for you to join him in what he's doing in the world. Be equipped with discipleship teaching and hands-on learning, then dive in and serve alongside seasoned mission workers. **Your life will never be the same.**



Spend 9 months exploring God's calling for your life.



Engage in hands-on, cross-cultural discipleship training in Lancaster City, Pa.



Share Christ's love in outreach settings like The Gambia, Germany, Thailand/Cambodia, or cities in the U.S.



Build lasting relationships with other young adults in a team setting.



Be mentored by experienced mission leaders with an Anabaptist perspective.



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