

PRAYING FOR KINGDOM COME



EMM
Eastern Mennonite Missions

INTRODUCTION

Jesus provided us with a clear vision when he taught his disciples how to pray: “your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9-10). This hope-filled prayer is the driving force behind Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM). We are dedicated to seeing this vision of God's love and justice realized everywhere, and this Praying for Kingdom Come booklet is your invitation to join this essential work.

We created this guide because we know that prayer is the bedrock of every successful mission. It is the primary way we support our workers and partners around the globe. The locations selected are representative of some of the places in our priority regions where we have EMM workers. This resource is designed to inspire you to clear, focused intercession, moving beyond general goodwill to specific, informed support. Our purpose is to connect your heart with the daily realities, challenges, and joys of our teams serving in places like Central Asia, Central Europe, Southeast Asia, and West Africa, and to refugees in Lancaster, Pa.

Your commitment in prayer empowers these ministries and provides encouragement to our global workers.

The booklet is structured to make your prayer time impactful and meaningful. Each section guides you through a focused experience: READ the scripture to ground your spirit, TALK through the reflection questions to process the challenges, and PRAY the specific requests to lift up the current needs of the teams. These requests focus on practical needs – asking for wisdom in sensitive conversations, supporting their ability to form genuine connections, and praying for their well-being. By following this rhythm, you become a collaborative partner, helping to advance God's peaceful kingdom across the world. This guide also works well in small groups, Bible studies, or Sunday school classes.

Thank you for joining us on this pursuit of praying for kingdom come. Your commitment to praying with us is critical to God's work through EMM.

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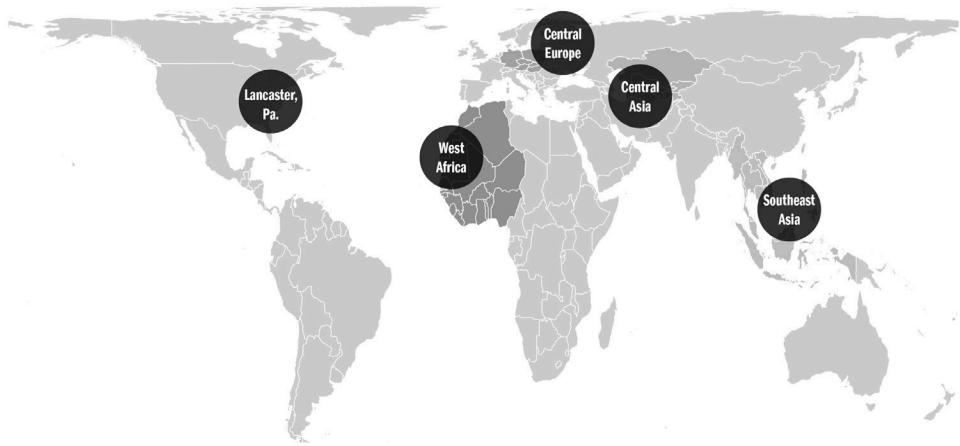
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KINGDOM MULTIPLICATION *vision*





With God's love, grace, and provision, by 2028, Eastern Mennonite Missions – in collaboration with church partners and other agencies – will have identified, equipped, and sent missional leaders to serve on multi-generational and multi-ethnic teams who invite people to follow Jesus as maturing, multiplying disciples that will nurture transforming communities of worship. Special focus will be given to unreached people groups of Central Asia, Central Europe, Southeast Asia, and West Africa, and to refugees in Lancaster, Pa.

We have spent several years listening to where God might be leading us in the next season. Based on where EMM and our partners have current connections, we have determined that our ministry is best focused on these five regions. We hope that this resource will help educate, inspire, and challenge you as you join us praying for the people in each of these parts of the world.

While this resource can be used individually, we believe it's most effective when you use it with a group of people. We encourage you to use it for congregational worship, a Sunday school class, prayer meeting, or small group gathering.



— OUR STORY —

Three billion people don't have access to the gospel or proximity to a follower of Jesus who can tell them about this good news. Another 2 billion people may have access to the gospel but have not experienced its life-transforming power. Very simply, our work is to share the good news of Christ's transforming love with people who don't know him.

EMM's story begins with a boy who asked, "Why?" In 1869, 11-year-old John H. Mellinger was sitting in a church service when he heard Matthew 28:19-20:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The preacher spent the entire service focused on the "teaching them to obey" part of the passage but didn't say anything about going and making disciples of all nations. John asked his father, "Why?" John's father couldn't answer him. For the next 25 years, John wrestled with the Great Commission until he and 11 friends gathered to pray together and started what would eventually become EMM. When EMM officially became organized in 1914, John would become EMM's first president.

In 1934, EMM sent our first international missionaries to least-reached people in what is now Tanzania. For the many decades since then, we have engaged in mission around the world, facilitating the development of more than 20 church multiplication movements and many other ministries.

We praise God for the work he has done through EMM in more than 100 countries over the past century. Now, we are focused on multiplying disciples among least-reached people in several priority regions.

Among our earliest international work, no doubt, workers faced great challenges. However, despite, and even sometimes because of those struggles, came movements of people coming to know Jesus. EMM's global work began with this movemental vision, and we are praying that God might continue to use us much in that same way.

Elam Stauffer arrived in Tanganyika (now Tanzania) in 1934, and he met up with an African Inland missionary named Emil Sywulka. Elam was one of the four first global missionaries sent by EMM (then called the Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities). Elam and Emil were being given a tour around the Musoma District by the chief of the local tribe. Standing on Katuru Hill, Chief Nyatega pointed out

toward the field and said, “Here is where I think you ought to build.... That’s your field.”

Elam was confused by this statement. He responded, “To whom shall I preach? The trees? The people are down there.” He was right: the people were down there. But what Elam didn’t realize at the time was that even though the people were down there, the people also went up to Katuru Hill. That day, Elam had to learn that sometimes mission work doesn’t make sense. God spoke to Elam through Chief Nyatega, because soon after that, the Eastern Mennonite missionaries begin holding meetings under a tree on that hill. People came. They heard the gospel and a movement had begun.

While this isn’t the complete beginning of EMM’s story, it is in fact the beginning of international, cross-cultural work. I am certain that Elam learned something critically important from that interaction: trust where God is leading.

READ

MATTHEW 28:19-20

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have

Elam may have chosen to go with what made sense, but instead, he chose to listen to God speaking through Chief Nyatega.

It’s through this persistent patience and faithful long-suffering that God multiplied EMM’s early mission fields. Out of these ministries became multiplication movements that continue to grow and see lives being transformed by Jesus. We are convinced that this same missional impulse that we felt decades ago is the same force that can drive EMM into a new century of mission. This missional impulse, which comes from the Holy Spirit, will push us forward as we listen, and then take action. It’s quite likely that whatever those actions are, they won’t always make sense at first – much like planting a church in a grove of trees in Tanganyika. Wherever God is leading, may we be faithful in following.

TALK

1. Matthew 28:19 starts with “Therefore go.” What is one specific action the Holy Spirit is prompting you to take this week to reach someone who doesn’t know Christ?
2. Elam Stauffer trusted God when the mission didn’t “make sense.” When is God currently asking you to follow Him in a way that defies your logic or comfort?
3. Two billion people lack life-transforming power. What keeps you from sharing Christ’s transforming love that is evident in your own life?
4. John Mellinger questioned the neglect of the “go and make disciples” command. What part of the Great Commission are you currently neglecting, and what is a small step you can take to obey it?

PRAY

- Pray for the 3 billion people who have no access to the Gospel to meet a follower of Jesus this year.
- Pray for the 2 billion people who lack life-transforming power to experience Christ’s love and salvation.
- Pray for courage to trust God’s leading when the mission does not “make sense,” as on Katuru Hill.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit’s “missional impulse” to drive forward new church multiplication movements globally.



— LEAST-REACHED —

We are invited into this mission to join God in his work of reconciling all of creation to himself. This is why sharing the good news of Jesus with the least-reached people of the world is so critical to EMM's work.

So what do we mean when we say, "least-reached?" Let's start with what it is not. Sometimes, you will hear people use the term "unreached," which is not a bad word, but implies that we're trying to find "uncontacted peoples" around the world. There are only about 10,000 people in the entire world who would be identified as "uncontacted" — that is, hunter-gatherers who avoid or do not have interaction with the rest of the world. (Ironically, the continent with the lowest number of least-reached people is actually the place with the most uncontacted tribes: South America.)

When we say least-reached people, we are referring to a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group without outside assistance. This often means that a people group has fewer than 5% Christian adherents and is less than 2% evangelical. (Definition adapted from the Joshua Project.)

EMM has done mission work around the world for more than 100 years. First, we began with local missions in the U.S., and went on to carry out international missions in more

than 100 countries, leading to the formation of more than 20 church multiplication movements. Our first international work among the Luo people in Tanganyika was working with a least-reached people group at the time. Throughout the decades, that has continued to be our focus.

Asia is home to most least-reached people. More than 60 percent of the world's population lives in Asia. In fact, 5 of the 10 largest countries by population are all in Asia. This is one of the reasons that EMM has created two focus regions on this continent: Central Asia and Southeast Asia. We're eager to do this work together with Asian Christians who are passionate about reaching the least-reached people in this region.

Africa is home to both many least-reached people and a lot of Christians. It would be an understatement to say that Africa is a huge continent, in terms of both geography and population. While nearly half of Africa identifies as Christian, it also has nearly 1,000 least-reached people groups. Being able to partner with African Christians in mission is critical for our work in places like West Africa.

The Western Hemisphere is very reached. South America and Oceania (including Australia) have significant access to the gospel. There are fewer than 1 million and 2 million least-

reached people in each region, respectively. North America is not least-reached, but there are people here who are. We can look to these regions to partner together in sending workers to unreached parts of the world.

Migration changes everything. Least-reached people in North America and Europe are generally immigrants who came from communities around the world that are least-reached. This is one of the reasons why we focus on Central Europe and Lancaster, Pa.

“Christian” does not imply that people have an active relationship with Jesus. Many people around the world who identify with Christianity are nominal. It’s also worth noting, that just because someone is “evangelical,” doesn’t mean that they have an active relationship with Jesus either. However, we generally find that people tend to have more active relationships with Jesus when they identify as “evangelical.” This is why we’re focused on mission in Central Europe which has a strong history of secularism.

READ LUKE 15:4-7

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says,

‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

TALK

1. How does the parable of the Lost Sheep (Luke 15:4-7) challenge you to prioritize the one least-reached person in your local community (immigrant, nominal Christian, etc.) over the “ninety-nine” already reached?
2. The text defines “least-reached” as lacking indigenous Christian resources. What is one specific resource (money, time, skill, prayer) that you are being called to give to a global least-reached community?
3. The text warns against “mission from above” and stresses partnership. What is one lesson or gift you believe you could receive from Christians in Africa or Asia, rather than just what you could give?
4. Reflecting on Luke 15:7 (rejoicing over one sinner who repents), how can you personally pray or act this week to encourage genuine repentance and an active relationship with Christ among nominal believers?

PRAY

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead workers to the “one lost sheep” among the least-reached until they are found.
- Pray for genuine spiritual awakening and repentance among nominal Christians worldwide, especially in secular areas like Central Europe.
- Pray for a massive church multiplication movement among the least-reached people groups in Central and Southeast Asia.
- Pray that least-reached immigrants in North America and Europe would encounter bold believers who share the Gospel.
- Pray for effective and humble partnerships between Western Christians and the vibrant sending churches in Africa and Asia.



LANCASTER, PA

In 1711, the first Anabaptist Christians arrived in what is now Lancaster County. They met a “new world,” and they were strangers in this new place. Early Mennonite families made their new homes on the lands of the indigenous peoples who lived here for time immemorial. The indigenous neighbors included nations such as Susquehannock, Lenape, Nanticoke, Piscataway, Seneca and Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Shawnee, and others.

Despite the fact that various indigenous nations faced the gradual loss of their land, there was relative peace among the indigenous nations and the Mennonite settlers. This relationship created a precedent, that we believe, exists to this day: a legacy of welcome. Susquehannock peoples welcomed Mennonites, and Lancaster provided a place of refuge for economic opportunity and the expression of religious liberty. Tragically, this kind of relationship was not reciprocated by all. Eventually another group of settlers murdered the majority of the Susquehannock people who lived in this area.

Today, Lancaster City, the county seat, remains a home for many immigrants from many nations. Lancaster was named

“America’s Refugee capital”, by the BBC, as Lancaster had more refugees per capita than other U.S. cities. This is one of the reasons EMM made the decision to move its central offices to the city and focus on reaching people that have come here.

EMM’s Neighbors Community Center is a multi-use space where people connect, learn, and celebrate. Currently, it serves as a welcoming and cross-cultural connecting place for new immigrants and the Lancaster community. It is also available as an event space that can be rented by the community for corporate or private functions.

But Neighbor’s Community Center is more than a community center and events space – it’s also a place set aside for connecting the people and learning from one another cross-culturally. It was created out of a vision to use the space to connect with immigrants and refugees here in our local community, establishing relationships providing space for needed services. All programs at the center are run by community volunteers.

READ

MATTHEW 25:31-46

31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

34 “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

37 “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for

one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’

41 “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

44 “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’

45 “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’

46 “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

TALK

1. Think of a time that you felt like a stranger. Share about the kinds of emotions you felt.
2. Do you think Jesus ever felt like a stranger? Why or why not?
3. As you reflect on the idea of being a stranger, what sticks out to you about this passage?
4. What is God telling you about how you interact with strangers?

PRAY

- May each immigrant who comes to the center experience the welcoming presence of God.
- Pray for each person who is serving at the center to be guided by God's spirit as they support the programs.
- Ask for more people to serve at NCC among those who have been welcomed here as refugees and those who will come in the future.
- Pray for the various programs at the center to be blessed as they provide these important services.



MOROCCO

Marrakech, an almost millennium-old imperial city is the fourth largest of Morocco, home to about a million people of Berber and Arab ancestry who pride themselves in giving a warm welcome and legendary hospitality to almost 4 million visitors every year.

With its enchanting mix of tradition and modernity, and a jovial, easy-going spirit, Marrakech has grown to become one of the most visited places in the country, aided by the dozens of budget airline flights from almost anywhere in Europe into the city every day.

However, beneath the joviality and hospitality shown to foreigners lies a deep-seated, tribal-like commitment as a group to family honor and to its national Muslim identity. Despite the extensive but always discrete catering to many anti-Islamic nightlife vices, any public questioning of the majority religion is actively discouraged. There are sizable and quite dynamic churches exclusively for expatriates (mostly Sub-Saharan Africans) but the police who guard their premises also tend to make it quite difficult for any Moroccans to attend.

National believers either keep their faith hidden from others or meet discreetly in small home fellowships or house churches – something the authorities generally tolerate as long as there are not complaints from neighbors. But the most feared opposition or persecution is that of the extended family for whom having a member who is known as a Christian still carries great social shame. Although this seems to be slowly changing as more and more young people openly espouse agnosticism, atheism, or other non-Islamic worldviews. There is a growing number of younger Moroccan followers of Christ who are willing to be known as such, with a focus less on confrontation and condemnation of their surrounding society and more on being a blessing and making a positive contribution.

In this complex context, EMM workers seek to be winsome ambassadors of the Messiah helping as many people as possible to understand who He is and what He has done, to receive some of His many blessings, and to experience individually and in community His renewing and reconciling power.

READ

MATTHEW 16:13-18, 21, 24

13 When Jesus and his disciples were near the town of Caesarea Philippi, he asked them, “What do people say about the Son of Man?” 14 The disciples answered, “Some people say you are John the Baptist or maybe Elijah or Jeremiah or some other prophet.” 15 Then Jesus asked, “But who do you say I am?” 16 Simon Peter spoke up, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus told him: Simon, son of Jonah, you are blessed! You didn’t discover this on your own. It was shown to you by my Father in heaven. 18 So I will call you Peter, which means “a rock.” On this rock I will build my church, and death itself will not

have any power over it.

... 21 From then on, Jesus began telling his disciples what would happen to him. He said, “I must go to Jerusalem. There the nation’s leaders, the chief priests, and the teachers of the Law of Moses will make me suffer terribly. I will be killed, but three days later I will rise to life.”

... 24 Then Jesus said to his disciples: “If any of you want to be my followers, you must forget about yourself. You must take up your cross and follow me.”

TALK

1. How might the disciples have known about the diversity of opinions about Jesus? Who have you conversed with lately about the all-important question Jesus asks in v. 15? Could you perhaps find a Muslim neighbor or colleague to ask this week?
2. What can we learn from such a great revelation and declaration as that of v. 16 having happened in such a remote and “unimportant” place (v. 13), after more than two years of Peter experiencing Jesus?
3. Where have you seen or heard of Jesus’ church triumphing over “death and hell” (v. 18)?
4. In what ways has it been – or could you foresee it becoming – costly or painful for you to follow Jesus and be part of His church?

PRAY

- Pray according to 1 Timothy 2:1-6 for God’s blessing on King Mohammed VI and all the other Moroccan authorities that they can govern with wisdom, justice and mutually respectful freedom and prosperity for all the 40 million inhabitants of the country.
- Ask that the increasingly cosmopolitan Marrakech, known as “the bride of the south,” can experience a spiritual awakening and become an example of wholesome enjoyment, true hospitality and brotherly love.
- May the church, the “Bride” of Jesus, in Marrakech (and elsewhere) be united and thrive in His love and be a real source of light, life, and blessing to both the million Moroccan inhabitants of the city as well as the millions of international visitors.



THE GAMBIA

The Gambia is a small West African Country, surrounded on three sides by Senegal and running along the Gambia River. The Gambia is also known as “The Smiling Coast of Africa” because of the hospitality and welcome extended to visitors of the country and its religious tolerance. This hospitality is often modeled when local Gambians tell foreigners, “You are highly welcome!” The Gambia is also home to various people groups, in which many people groups will often say of each other, “we are all one.”

Prior to colonialism, The Gambia was home to various kingdoms and empires, including the Kaabu, Malinke, and Wolof. These kingdoms and empires are represented in various people groups that exist in The Gambia today. Although colonial influence resulted in English being declared as the official language, various languages representative of each people group are most commonly used in daily conversation. It is also common for locals to know multiple languages, thus easily navigating conversations amongst various ethnic groups. The locals’ ability to speak various languages makes The Gambia ripe for seeing the gospel reach the various ethnic groups represented in The Gambia.

The hospitality of The Gambia extends beyond its ability to welcome foreigners, which is seen by its level of religious tolerance for differing beliefs. Islam accounts for 90% of religious beliefs, while Christianity accounts for 3%. Animism, however, has always been and remains an ongoing practice and belief amongst Gambians, even for those who claim Islam or Christianity as their religion. The small percentage of Christianity in The Gambia only amplifies the reality that there remains more work to do as part of God’s mission in reconciling the world to himself, and he desires to use the local Gambian church to do it. The biggest obstacle has been the belief amongst Gambian Christians that Muslims will never come to Christ, therefore most Gambian Christians lack a desire to disciple and have meaningful engagement with their Muslim neighbors in the hopes of seeing Christ revealed to them.

The Gambia, along with other countries in the West African region, is at a critical point of religious influence. We do not know how long this region of Africa will continue to be religiously tolerant. Therefore, it becomes all the more important and urgent for the Church to share the gospel of Christ so that this region can be won for the Glory of God. The overwhelming hospitality of The Gambia creates an open door for doing so!

READ

ACTS 10:44-48

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they heard them speaking in tongues[a] and praising God.

Then Peter said, 47 “Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” 48 So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

TALK

1. In this passage, God is helping Peter and other circumcised believers confront their own biases that Gentiles could be filled with the Holy Spirit. Is the Holy Spirit illuminating any biases you may have about who cannot come to Christ?
2. How might God want to open your eyes about people who are not Christians yet, but could be?
3. As you reflect on the people groups identified in this passage (circumcised and Gentiles) that God is declaring as worthy of his love and desires to pour His Spirit on, what people groups in your context do you sense the Holy Spirit wanting to pour out His love and Spirit on that you may have already “written off” for various reasons?

PRAY

- Ask for the church to mobilize as disciple-makers in their own country to see Muslims encounter and surrender their lives to Jesus.
- Pray that the local church would have their eyes and hearts opened to a new desire to see their Muslim neighbors come to Jesus.
- Pray for a revelation of Christ and a revelation of one's identity being found in Christ. For many of the local Muslim Gambians, Islam is not just a religious belief, but it is an identity. Many of them don't actively choose Islam, but rather they are born into it, thus presenting significantly more barriers to work through when hoping to see them become a follower of Jesus.
- May Muslims to have dreams and visions of encountering the person of Jesus Christ that can lead to conversation.



CHAD

Sahel is the Arabic word for shore or coastline. But most countries in the Sahel, including Chad, do not border an ocean. The word “shore” is used to describe where the Sahara desert to the north meets the more humid savannas to the south. The capital city of N’Djamena sits right along this coast, where the expansive deserts of Northern Chad meet the grassy prairies of Southern Chad. It also stands on the fault line of vastly different cultures, languages and religions. Central and Northern Chad are predominantly Muslim with economies that rely heavily on herding camels, sheep, and goats. Southern Chad is predominantly Christian with greater rainfall, allowing for a more agricultural economy. Colonial history has resulted in a single country comprised of over 200 ethnic groups and over 100 languages. Chadian Arabic is the common language of central and northern Chad, and French is the common language of southern Chad.

Chad is approximately 57% Muslim and 39% Christian, with traditional African practices common in both Muslim and Christian populations. According to some estimates, there are more unreached people groups in Chad than in any other country in Africa. The Chadian church is increasingly a missionary church with faithful followers of Jesus seeking to find ways to cross large linguistic and cultural divides

to reach fellow Chadians who do not speak, think, dress or act like them. An EMM worker has been involved in training Chadian missionaries who relocate to Muslim areas of northern Chad to share the gospel through long-term presence and friendship.

Chad is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 187 out of 189 on the human development index. Hunger is a constant threat for many Chadians. With climate change affecting rain patterns, access to clean water and adequate nutrition is an increasing challenge for most of the population. These problems are compounded by the fact that Chad is the largest refugee host country per capita in the world, receiving large numbers of refugees from the conflict in Sudan and other surrounding countries.

Many Chadians suffer from lack of access to healthcare. For every 100,000 Chadians, there are less than 4 doctors. In comparison, there are nearly 300 doctors per 100,000 people in the U.S. Chad is the second most dangerous country in the world for pregnant women. Since 2022, EMM has been supporting the work of Guinebor 2 hospital (G2H), an interdenominational missions hospital in N’Djamena. The patients at G2H are Muslims; all are offered prayer as well as compassionate, quality healthcare.

READ

LUKE 10:25-37

25 On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

27 He answered, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." 29 But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

30 In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. 31 A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed

by on the other side. 32 So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. 33 But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. 34 He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. 35 The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

36 "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" 37 The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

TALK

1. For Jesus' listeners, the Samaritans were people who got religion dangerously wrong. And yet Jesus presents them not only as neighbors, but as good. Would you be uncomfortable if Jesus referred to Muslims as good, and as your neighbors whom you should love as yourself?
2. How might God be calling you to love your Muslim neighbor as yourself? What can you learn from Chadian Christians who are learning new languages, customs, and ways of dressing in order to reach Muslims with the love of Christ?
3. When the priest and the Levite saw suffering, they moved away to the other side of the road. The Samaritan moved toward suffering. What does passing by look like when the suffering we see is on the other side of the world? What road (or ocean or continent) might God be asking you to cross to move toward suffering?
4. What do you think Jesus means by: Do this and you will live? Is he only talking about eternal life, or could he be alluding to a more abundant life that can be found in serving others?

PRAY

- Roughly one million people have been displaced into Chad by the war in Sudan. This means that one in twenty people in Chad is a refugee. Pray for an end to that conflict and for the provision for the needs of the people caught in it.
- Pray for wisdom and strength for the staff of G2H as they provide care for over 26,000 people a year. Pray that it would be a place that draws people to Jesus. Pray for the

- midwives who perform over 220 births a month without any obstetrician. Pray that God would send more medical missionaries.
- Pray for the Chadian church as it reaches out to Muslim neighbors, that it could faithfully reflect Jesus and build life-giving relationships. Pray for the seminary where an EMM worker helps to train church leaders and missionaries.



CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic has a rich history of prayer and mission. Jan Hus was a theologian, philosopher, and reformer, who contributed to the birth of the Protestant Reformation. Hus, along with others, paved the way for Martin Luther and other reformers. He died a martyr's death at the hands of the church.

The Moravian church was one of the first Protestant churches, dating back to the Bohemian Reformation of Jan Hus. The Moravians are known for starting a 24/7 prayer movement that spanned 100 years and for being one of the first Protestant denominations to send out missionaries.

Unfortunately, the Czech Republic today looks quite different than it did in the 15th and 16th century. Today, the Czech Republic is considered to be one of the most atheistic and godless nations within Europe, and the world.

EMM's work in the Czech Republic currently takes place in three different places – in the capital city of Prague, a nearby city called Dobříš, and the area of Teplice and surrounding villages (including Dubí). Workers are involved in church planting, assisting the local church, discipleship, prison ministry, and English teaching.

But there is hope for the Czech Republic and her people. With the power of the Holy Spirit, we can once again see the Czech Republic become a vibrant launching point for prayer and missions. A country where transformation is happening and people are coming to know Jesus.

READ

ISAIAH 9:2

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

ISAIAH 55:10-11

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

TALK

First the rationale of why these Scriptures were chosen: As the Czech Republic has been a sending place of mission and instrumental in a 24/7 prayer movement, many prayers have been prayed prophetically over and for the Czech Republic. These prayers will not return void or empty, but will accomplish all that the Lord intends; however, the current state is that the people are walking in darkness...

1. When have you felt like you were walking in darkness? What helped you to break through the darkness and see light?
2. Name a few things that people walking in darkness may experience. What does God offer instead?
3. Words have power. Reflect on a prophetic word you've received. How has it influenced your life and decisions?
4. God's Word will accomplish what it was sent to do. What are prophetic words that you may have for the Czech Republic?

PRAY

- Pray for the Holy Spirit to break down barriers to faith (like pride, apathy, distrust of organizations, etc.) that would enable the people to hear the words of Truth.
- Pray for a movement of people coming to know Jesus, for disciples who make disciples into the 3rd and 4th generation.
- Pray for the Czech believers to rise up in faith and boldness to engage with their family, friends, colleagues, and neighbors, sharing testimonies of how God has transformed them.
- Pray for the EMM workers as they minister with and among the Czech people.



GERMANY

Over the past 150 years, Germany has experienced multiple extreme political and societal shifts. Since the formation of the German State in 1871, the young country experienced defeat in both world wars, the rise and fall of the Nazi ideology, a schism between East and West, and a difficult reunification. The German people, who in the 16th and 17th centuries led the world toward church reform and scientific enlightenment, have been left with broken family trees and a deep sense of guilt.

The Eastern part of Germany was particularly ravaged by the tumultuous changes. Controlled by Russia after World War II, it was forced to pay retributions to Moscow for the heavy losses accrued during the war. Many scholars fled to the West and prominent wealthy families were exiled to Siberia. So, while the rest of Germany received assistance from the Allies (U.S., U.K., and France) to rebuild, East Germany was left in an economic depression.

The communist government in East Germany (German Democratic Republic or GDR) also controlled its people through fear. East Germans were not permitted to visit the West or watch TV programs from there. The secret police recruited secret agents to spy on people everywhere. Because the agents were anonymous, people stopped trusting neighbors, coworkers and sometimes even family

members. Churches that did not teach the government's agenda were viewed as a threat and Christians were often denied certain benefits like a university education, the best paying jobs and luxury items like cars.

East Germany also suffered under communism because of the social impact it had on families. During the early days of the GDR, men and women were both expected to work full time. Some daycare centers kept babies and toddlers from Monday morning until Friday evening which meant that they only saw their parents on weekends. In school and at youth clubs, children were encouraged to build stronger attachments with their peers than with their family members.

In the East German city of Halle, EMM has had a continuous presence since 1999. Over the past 25 years, EMM workers have interceded for the people, built relationships and started a "free church" (not a state church). Building relationships with East Germans is slow going because trust must first be rebuilt. But over the years, several East Germans have felt the weight of their brokenness, have called out to God and experienced transformational encounters with Jesus. Through prayer and building trusting relationships, East Germans are finding a new life in Jesus.

READ

ISAIAH 9:2

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

JOHN 1:4-5

In him [Jesus] was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

TALK

1. Has your relationship with Jesus given you hope that feels like light in your life?
2. What would it feel like if you knew that going to church would make life difficult for you or for your family members? Would the light that you experience with Jesus change your perspective on how to respond to fear?
3. Imagine growing up feeling afraid that someone in your family would be arrested for being a Christian that disagreed with your government. How would that change what you talk about and how you talk with strangers or neighbors?
4. In what ways can the light of Jesus transform communities and relationships coming out of a politically dark and oppressive past?

PRAY

- The children who went to the overnight daycare centers have grown up into 35 to 50 year old adults, many of which now have attachment disorders. Pray for their emotional healing and for a chance for them to experience healthy relationships.
- Many older people living in retirement have distant or broken relationships with their children and experience deep loneliness. Pray for opportunities for Christians to build relationships with them and introduce them to Jesus.
- Pray for the current youth and children of Halle, who are now four and five generations removed from World War II. Pray that this generation will rise up to repent for the sins of their people so that they can receive healing from God and can take their place in his kingdom.



CENTRAL ASIA

Turkic-speaking groups including the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and Kyrgyz make up the majority of Central Asia. These people share related languages and historical ties, largely rooted in semi-nomadic lifestyles that shaped their national identities. Most Central Asian countries are predominantly Muslim.

The region's ethnic map extends into neighboring Western China, where related Turkic groups like the Uyghurs reside alongside the Sino-Muslim Dungan people. This broader area shares historical connections and contributes to the complex cultural mosaic of the wider Central Asian space.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Central Asia experienced increased religious freedom, contrasting with decades of state-imposed atheism. This period facilitated a notable spread of Christianity, with local populations gaining the ability to explore diverse religious expressions.

While some parts of Central Asia saw significant growth of the Church after the collapse of the Soviet Union, most of it remains unreached, and those who have chosen to follow Jesus face increasing levels of oppression and persecution.

Since 1999, EMM has been involved in Central Asia, sending more than 50 short and long-term missionaries to the region. These missionaries have engaged in various activities, such as teaching English, education, community development, and developing business for transformation projects.

EMM personnel also work to support the efforts of local church planting and discipleship among new believers. They specifically seek opportunities to engage communities and share their faith message outside of the major cities, aiming to reach less urbanized populations.

READ

1 PETER 4:12-16

12 Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. 13 Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world. 14 If you are insulted because you bear the

name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. 15 If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people's affairs. 16 But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name!

TALK

1. What “fiery trials” or significant challenges have you faced or do you anticipate facing in your own life because of your faith in Christ?
2. What does “sharing Christ’s sufferings” mean for you in your own cultural and personal context, and what have you had to give up or let go of for your faith?
3. How is it possible to find joy in the midst of suffering for your faith? What is the connection between present suffering and the future revelation of Christ’s glory, and how can this hope strengthen believers facing significant losses for their faith in regions like Central Asia?
4. How can you, as part of the wider Christian body, actively remember and support those who are facing significant challenges and making sacrifices for their faith in places like Central Asia?

PRAY

- Pray for the believers who face persecution for their faith
- Pray for innovative and unique church planting and discipleship models to reach the rural communities
- Pray for groups of believers to form and develop among the minority groups like the Uyghur and Dungan.
- There are significant Central Asian and Muslim minority groups in Western China. Pray that the doors would open up to re-engage those communities.
- Pray for unity among the believers and for workers to be sent into the harvest.



INDIA

A nation of over 1.46 billion people, India has a complex yet rich historical heritage that has formed into the incredible and diverse nation that it is today. On the surface one may think of the many vibrant colors in textiles and clothing, the depth and complexity of spices used in their culinary dishes, the sights of incredible feats of architecture to the natural beauty of the land, the crowds in urban localities and the expanse of fertile fields, the abundance of sound from daily life and cultural celebrations alike, and rich traditions of music, dance, handicrafts, and the arts. Looking closer we see woven into this tapestry the diversity and complexity of culture, traditions, languages, religions, and community.

While being a predominately Hindu nation, India is home to the second largest population of Muslims in the world. In the state of Punjab, India the dominant religion is Sikhism. India is also the birthplace of Buddhism and Jainism. In 52 AD it is believed that Thomas the apostle came to India to proclaim the message of the Messiah to the Jews living there and then to the natives as commissioned by the risen Christ. At its core, India is deeply spiritual, and this is evident in it going beyond mere belief systems but really being a way of life – impacting culture, traditions, and moral values.

Hospitality is deeply ingrained in Indian culture and heritage. While this hospitality may look different from home to home or region to region, the guest will certainly not leave without being cared for abundantly.

India upholds in its constitution that its people have a fundamental right of freedom, however religious intolerances have seen uprisings of certain religious groups against other religious groups. Some states even have anti-conversion laws which were introduced initially to preserve and protect cultural identity and have moved towards the guise of protecting certain sects of people from being easily manipulated. This is one of the complications that any Christian may face as they go about the Father's work – facing persecution, false claims, imprisonment, harassment, and/or fines.

EMM's primary engagement is to go to those who do not know Jesus and to share the Good News of the gospel with them. Many are putting their faith in Jesus because of the personal encounter they have with Him either through healing or freedom from spiritual oppression. As they accept His Word they share their testimony with others who in turn desire to know who this Jesus is. In this way many are coming to faith as they see and experience the power, love and compassion of Jesus.

READ

ACTS 4:13-31

13 When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. 14 But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. 15 So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. 16 "What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. 17 But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name."

18 Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! 20 As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

21 After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. 22 For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

23 On their release, Peter and John went back to their

own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. 24 When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. 25 You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David:

"Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

26 The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the Lord and against his anointed one."

27 Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. 28 They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. 29 Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. 30 Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

31 After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

TALK

1. What are attributes of being recognized as having been with Jesus? If people observed you, what or who would they recognize you as having been with?
2. Think of a time when someone discouraged you from freely speaking or sharing about Jesus? How did you respond in that situation?
3. Is there a time when you listened to or followed man's command rather than God's? Why or Why not? If so, what do you think was at the root of that decision? If not, what difficulties did you face afterwards?
4. What is God telling you about speaking His Word with confidence and boldness in the face of threats? What do they say God will do in the midst of that boldness? Do you believe this is for all of Christ's followers even today?

PRAY

- May the Body of Christ in India stand together with confidence and with one mind in the midst of persecution, trials, and difficulties.
- May more people come to faith as God brings healing and deliverance from spiritual oppression and addiction and as they experience Jesus's love and compassion.
- May the Body of believers not be afraid of man but be confident in God and His sovereignty over all. Make them as wise as snakes and as innocent as doves. Holy Spirit speak through them.
- Pray for the government of India to uphold the people's right of freedom even as it pertains to religion.



THAILAND

When you think of Thailand, what comes to mind? Maybe azure beaches, Pad Thai, tropical beauty, and the ubiquitous smile of the friendly Thai people. It may be hard for you to imagine that Thailand, as stable and developed as it is, is also one of the least reached countries of Southeast Asia with only 1.2% identifying as Christian, a number which includes nominal believers, both Catholic and Protestant. Most of this 1.2% is among two minority populations: the ethnic Thai Chinese in the city of Bangkok and the Hilltribes of northern Thailand. Imagine with me, a Thailand far off beaten the tourist track: rice fields and villages, forests and dusty farming towns sprawl across an area about half the size of Germany.

This is Isaan. The rural rice basket that makes up a third of Thailand's population and land mass. This is not a small people group; Isaan people are 22 million strong, roughly the population of Australia! And yet, Christians make up 0.2%. By some estimates, only 0.01% are evangelical. Very few Isaan people have had the opportunity to encounter the love of Jesus, as most live far from a church, do not know a single Christian, and have no understandable access to the gospel. Although 80% of Isaan people live in villages in rural areas, nearly all of the churches and church planting efforts are in provincial capitals or district towns.

Isaan people have a strong cultural identity as ethnic Lao people, with distinctive language, culture, music, and food. Lagging behind in good jobs, economic development, and education, many Isaan feel forced to leave their families and farms in search of opportunity. Migrant Isaan people form the foundation of the blue collar workforce in the capital city of Bangkok. Well acquainted with poverty, political oppression, and hard work, they pride themselves in their ingenuity, resilience, and tenacity. While economic development builds cities and improves life for a growing middle class in Thailand, Isaan people struggle to not be exploited or overlooked.

Isaan people tell you that they are Buddhist, but the reality is much more complicated. Community life revolves around a harmonious marriage of local animistic appeasement, magic and talismans, civic Brahministic worship, and Buddhist rituals, philosophy, and morality. In short, Isaan people readily invite many powers and principalities, gods, and demonic presences into nearly every moment and activity, public and private, individual and corporate. For the Isaan person, their spiritual need is intensely pragmatic: in exchange for my worship, what power can deliver physical healing, forgiveness, financial provision, protection, or spiritual peace? It is a shattering beauty to encounter a

loving Creator, who is not interested in transaction, but in relationship. A God who forgives by paying the cost himself! A God who lifts up those who are oppressed, and gives a voice to the poor! A God who comes down to seek them out and love them! A God who knows them by name!

EMM's work in Isaan took shape beginning in 1995 with a move of God during a period of intense evangelism and discipleship among rural Isaan people in the province of Ubonratchathani. A network of self-sustaining,

contextualized, indigenous-led house-churches, called the Life Enrichment Church (LEC), took root and survived many obstacles. Today this small but mighty church continues to grow in vision and capacity to multiply the good news of Jesus Christ in their region. For many years, supported LEC through theological resourcing and encouragement. But now EMM has a new vision to raise up and establish more pioneering teams in new parts of Isaan to birth new church-planting movements. This effort is called the Isaan Doorways Project.

READ

PSALM 24

1 The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;
2 for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.
3 Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place?
4 The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.
5 They will receive blessing from the Lord and vindication from God their Savior.

6 Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, God of Jacob.
7 Lift up your heads, you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.
8 Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.
9 Lift up your heads, you gates; lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.
10 Who is he, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty—he is the King of glory.

TALK

1. What are the promises of false gods in comparison to the King of Glory?
2. Are there ancient gates or doors that spiritually open or close?
3. By what authority do we say with the Psalmist, "lift up your heads, you gates ... that the King of Glory may come in?"
4. Who is this King of Glory? What is he like?

PRAY

- Compare the power of false gods, who only exploit and ensnare, with our God who gives abundant life and freedom. Worship with words of adoration and awe, exalt the name of Jesus, whose beauty and humility is beyond compare.
- Pray for demonic strongholds to be broken in the name of Jesus. In the name of Jesus, tell the ancient doors to open.
- Pray for the advance of the kingdom of God in the many geographical areas of Isaan that have never had Christian witness.
- Pray for Isaan people to receive blessing, vindication and honor in the name of Jesus. Imagine Isaan people shouting praises to God in their own language in the throne room of the King of Kings. Pray that at the end of time, Isaan people would be among the countless number of nations worshiping before the throne.



CAMBODIA

When one considers Cambodia, the mind is often drawn to the awe-inspiring ruins of Angkor Wat, a testament to the might of the ancient Khmer Empire. This enduring cultural heritage has, for centuries, been inextricably linked to the spiritual bedrock of Theravada Buddhism, which is the dominant faith of up to 97.1% of the population.

The Khmer people's religious life is a complex tapestry woven from Buddhist philosophy and deep-rooted folk religion and animism. While Theravada Buddhism provides the moral and philosophical framework, traditional Khmer spirituality often involves veneration of ancestors and local spirits. This traditional worldview is intensely pragmatic, often seeking tangible blessings – like protection from illness or financial fortune – through offerings and appeasement. The pursuit of harmony and merit (*karma*) drives many aspects of daily life.

Against this deeply traditional backdrop, the Christian presence has historically been negligible, with official estimates of the Christian population reported as low as 0.3%. Yet, Cambodia is undergoing a profound spiritual transformation.

In 1992, a Cambodian church planter named Sarin Lay, who was pastoring a church in Philadelphia, felt called back to his homeland, asking the pivotal question: "Why not plant a Christian church there?" This conviction led EMM to formally enter Cambodia in 1996.

There is an of incredible openness to the message of Jesus, more than at any time in history. Beyond just EMM's work, Cambodia is experiencing rapidly multiplying believers, with the church growing so quickly that observers note believers are being added each day. This fervent expansion has given Cambodia one of the highest Christian growth rates globally, with one report citing the nation as having the fourth highest evangelical growth rate in the world.

What was once a closed mission field is yielding a massive harvest. EMM's work continues today by spreading the gospel throughout the country, both in the city and in the countryside.

READ

JOHN 4:4-24

4 Now he had to go through Samaria. 5 So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

7 When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" 8 (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.)

9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)

10 Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

11 "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water?"

12 Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water."

16 He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back."

17 "I have no husband," she replied.

Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. 18 The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

19 "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem."

21 "Woman," Jesus replied, "believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. 24 God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."

TALK

1. Where in your life do you still seek pragmatic blessings (like fortune or protection) from a transactional source, instead of the free, eternal satisfaction Christ offers?
2. How does Jesus' teaching on worshiping "in the Spirit and in truth" challenge your view of the importance of your own physical places or methods of worship?
3. What is one dominant cultural "blind spot" or historical pattern of idolatry in your own nation that the "truth" of Christ needs to expose and confront today?
4. What single, immediate step is God asking you to take this week to share the gospel right now?

PRAY

- Pray that the Khmer people would reject the dry, empty vessels of idolatry and find "living water" in Jesus Christ, the source of abundant life and freedom.
- Pray that the demonic strongholds and ancient doors of ritualistic, geographical worship would be broken by the power of the Gospel "and in truth."
- Pray that the Father would find the Khmer people to be the kind of "true worshipers" He seeks, resulting in a new sound of praise in the Khmer language.
- Pray that new believers would be as bold as the Samaritan woman, immediately witnessing to their communities.



— SENSITIVE LOCATIONS —

Every year since 1992, Open Doors USA has published a list of the 50 most dangerous countries for Christians. Countries are ranked by the severity of persecution Christians face, based on factors such as national life, community life, church life, and the use of violence against believers.

Most of the rankings on the list are not surprising. North Korea, Somalia, Yemen, Libya, and Sudan were identified as the top five most dangerous countries. However, some may find it surprising to see Vietnam (44), Ethiopia (33), Mexico (31), and Colombia (46) included. The list changes annually, but it's notable that EMM workers have served, or currently serve, in more than half of the 50 countries listed.

When EMM workers live and serve in a dangerous place, it impacts every aspect of their lives and service. This includes how they share prayer requests, communicate back "home," and even what can be written or said about them. Many workers are more concerned about the believers around them—often in underground or persecuted churches—than they are about themselves.

Consequently, details about worker locations or even their names often cannot be shared. This makes recounting stories of God at work in such contexts challenging. With approximately 44% of long-term workers serving in sensitive locations or ministries, it may appear to the casual reader that communications are vague or lack detail. As one worker, living in a highly restricted environment, noted, "Most of our friends have made mistakes that jeopardize us." Therefore, vigilance is necessary and prudent when communicating with workers or sharing their stories.

You are invited to join in prayer for the many workers — singles, young families, and older individuals — who have chosen to follow the Great Commission and live in challenging environments. Prayers are requested for their safety, their effectiveness in sharing the gospel, and for the day when Revelation 7:9a might be realized: "After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb."

READ

MATTHEW 10:16-31

16 I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. 17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

21 Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 22 You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved. 23 When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

24 The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

26 So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

TALK

1. Think of a time you had to be both shrewd and innocent in a challenging situation. How did you navigate that tension?
2. This passage speaks of being “hated by everyone because of me.” What does this tell you about the potential cost of following Jesus in the world today?
3. As you reflect on the command “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul,” what does this passage reveal about true fear and where our ultimate security lies?
4. What is God telling you about how you should proclaim truth when facing opposition or fear?

PRAY

- Pray for wisdom and discernment for workers in sensitive regions, that they may communicate authentically and safely while representing Christ respectfully.
- Pray for the protection and security of workers and their families in dangerous countries, including peace amidst uncertainty and safety from surveillance.
- Ask for deepening relationships and gospel effectiveness for workers, that they may share Jesus' love in culturally relevant ways leading to genuine encounters with Christ.
- Pray for workers to find strength and peace in trusting God amidst challenges like visa issues and communication difficulties, knowing He is always at work.

