

MESSENGER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER & PRAYER GUIDE



From left to right, Therese, Krystle, and Anna. Therese and Anna are living with the Thornes during their school year.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY THE AUTHOR

AFTER THE RAIN by Krystle Thorne

Last January, a few months into dry season, I was getting tired of the view and the dust; everything was brown. I decided to plant a flower garden to bring some color to my world. I planned out the area in our yard, but one strike of the shovel into the dry ground told me that this was not going to be easy. I poured bucket after bucket of water onto the area, but it was still no easy task to break up the hard, dry ground enough to get my flow-

ers planted. But I did it. I planted a small flower garden and even found an old birdbath to put in the center. It is a place of beauty, and even the birds that visit bring another vibrancy to the yard.

Then the rains came; three to four months of flooding downpours. Our once dry, dusty yard was now a mud pit, exploding with grass, moss, and other weeds. After the rain, when things had dried up enough,

we went out to clean up the yard. We pulled out the weeds and wild grass and carted away piles of fallen, dead leaves. What we found beneath this neglected part of the yard was dark, rich soil (it cannot compare to the soil in PA, but for our context, it was perfect for planting). I got the shovel, and with ease, I dug rows to plant a small vegetable garden.

We see this as a beautiful picture of how what we see happening in the

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Krystle's garden that features a birdbath in the center.

physical realm, God is working in the spiritual realm. For months, we struggled to do ministry and invest in relationships. The fair-trade company I worked with stopped their work for most of the year without explanation; we experienced cultural and generational miscommunication; and encountered the demonic world on several occasions. While good things were happening, the ground was hard, and the work was exhausting.

Then when most of our ministry stopped because of the rainy season, new opportunities seemed to fall into our laps with locals who are hungry and eager to grow. We have two young Gambians living with us as they go to school; they also participate in regular discipleship classes, Bible study, and check-ins with me. They come with questions about God, Scripture, and how to live out the things they are learning. Nate also has weekly faith conversations with Muslim men who seem very open and hungry for truth. He also meets regularly with a young pastor who is actively taking steps to foster a missional community.

The soil is rich and fertile as we move into this new season. Praise God for the rain that brought us to this place. Pray that the seeds that are being planted will be properly tended and protected so that they yield a bountiful harvest.



Krystle Thorne and her family serve with EMM in the Gambia.

ABOUT 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."



CELEBRATING A LEGACY



Paul S. Hess, 84, of Willow Street, Pennsylvania, went to be with the Lord on January 24. Paul served in Honduras and Belize with EMM Voluntary Service from 1962-1964.



Bertha Marie Beachy, 94, of Goshen, Indiana, went to be with the Lord on January 27. Bertha served 20+ years on the mission field serving with EMM in Somalia from 1958-1976 and Kenya in 1976-78 and 1995-2001 with a focus on Muslim ministry.



Carl Eugene Ginder, 80, of Mount Joy, Pennsylvania, went to be with the Lord on Feb 1. Carl participated in VS from 1966-1968.

MARCH DAILY PRAYER

LANCASTER, PA.

- 1 | Join us in prayer for the Business Leaders' Breakfast on March 10. Pray that it would be a meaningful time of connection and learning for local business leaders.
- 2 | Pray that those celebrating Ramadan would experience a revelation of the gospel during times of prayer, fasting, and community gathering.
- 3 | Pray for the Afghan community in Lancaster. Pray that, for those celebrating Ramadan, they would experience a revelation of the gospel during times of prayer, fasting, and community gathering.
- 4 | Pray for the Nepali community in Lancaster. Ask God to provide for their needs and for the flourishing of their businesses and endeavors. Pray that they would have opportunities to learn about Christ in ways that are meaningful to them.
- 5 | Join J.C. Ebersole in prayer for All-nations Association of Bible Schools (AABS) as they begin to offer a new course on small business development. Pray for wisdom and much fruitfulness as it is developed and implemented among the schools.
- 6 | Pray for God to call volunteers for the programs at Neighbors Community Center, at Hub450, our building in Lancaster, PA.

WEST AFRICA

- 7 | Pray for effective and humble partnerships between Western Christians and the vibrant sending churches in West Africa.
- 8 | Ask God for a deepening of relationships and gospel effectiveness for workers in West Africa, that they may share Jesus' love in culturally relevant ways, leading to genuine encounters with Christ.
- 9 | Pray for the Holy Spirit's "missional impulse" to drive forward new church multiplication movements in West Africa.
- 10 | Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead workers to the "one lost sheep" among the least-reached in West Africa until they are found.
- 11 | Pray for individuals and families to be called to join the work of leadership development and church planting in West Africa.

CENTRAL EUROPE

- 12 | Pray for the Holy Spirit to break down barriers to faith (like pride, apathy, distrust of organizations, etc.) that would enable the people in Central Europe to hear the words of Truth.
- 13 | Pray for God to call workers to join and strengthen the team in Germany.
- 14 | 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.
- 15 | Pray for a movement of Central European people to come to know Jesus, for disciples who make disciples into the 3rd and 4th generation.
- 16 | Pray for EMM workers as they minister with and among the Czech people.

CENTRAL ASIA

- 17 | Pray for believers who face persecution for their faith in Central Asia.
- 18 | Pray for groups of believers to form and develop among the minority groups of Central Asia, like the Uyghur and Dungan.
- 19 | Pray for innovative and unique church planting and discipleship models to reach the rural communities in Central Asia.
- 20 | Pray for unity among the believers and for workers to be sent into the harvest of Central Asia.
- 21 | Pray for God to send workers to the field to work in business for transformation and teaching English.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- 22 | Join Steve Horst and Bethany Tobin in prayer for the EMM team as they coach new workers in the Isaan Doorways Program. Pray for participants to thrive as they persevere in learning language and culture.
- 23 | Pray for workers to be called to Thailand, to work with displaced people from Myanmar.
- 24 | Join Brody and Abigail* in prayer for their support-raising journey as they prepare to serve in Thailand. Pray that they would be infused with energy for a busy year of work, meetings, and travel. Pray that they would continue to trust in the Lord and be aware of

where He wants them to grow.

- 25 | Pray for traveling mercies and divine appointments for Donna and Gerry Keener during two weeks in Vietnam in March for Leadership training with Mennonite Church pastors and workers.
- 26 | Join Mark and Sarah Schoenhals in prayer for Life Enrichment Church as they seek to be intentional in identifying and developing house church leaders. Pray for Mark and Sarah as they support this endeavor.

OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD

- 27 | Pray for God to call Advance program participants for the fall of 2026.
- 28 | Pray for Alan and Carol Wert's small group as they read whole Bible books together during this term in Cardiff, Wales. Pray that they grow in unity and insight.
- 29 | Join Jonathan Bornman in praising God that the documentary, "Unexpected Peace," is screening on WITF in March! Pray for the viewers to be touched by God through the message of the film. Pray for the dubbing and distribution of Unexpected Peace across Tanzania.
- 30 | Please pray for Phil and Linda Gottschalk as they begin a new semester teaching at the Baptist Theological Institute in Bucharest, Romania. Linda teaches Church History, and Phil teaches History of Christian Thought. Please pray for Ukrainian refugees who are a part of the R10 Ukrainian Church in Bucharest, Romania that Phil and Linda are involved in. Pray for them as they encounter many barriers.
- 31 | Pray for Peter and Christy's* ongoing ministry with refugees in France. Pray that their immigrant friends could find the support they need, learn the language, and find healing from the pain of displacement. Join them in praising God for the practical ways that the French Mennonite church is reaching out to immigrants.

Some prayer requests adapted from joshuaproject.net.

**Names changed or omitted for sensitivity reasons.*



Eastern Mennonite Missions

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

CHURCH AS A MOVEMENT

You're invited to this training, which introduces a clear vision of how the Church can move from traditional models toward a Church as a Movement, aligned with the Great Commission, focused on spiritual harvest, disciple multiplication, and reaching places and people where the gospel is not yet present.



\$30 per person
\$25 PER PERSON FOR GROUPS
March 26-28 | Spanish
April 23-24 | English
Hub450, Lancaster, PA

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EMM.ORG/MOVEMENT



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

\$241,388 RECEIVED
AS OF FEBRUARY 11

\$1,645,000
2026 IMPACT FUND GOAL



EMM.ORG/GIVE

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