

MESSENGER

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER & PRAYER GUIDE



"In Prey Veng, Cambodia we had the opportunity to take part in the soccer ministry of a local believer. It was good for the soul and body to run around and play, even if it was hot."

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MATTHEW BAUGHER

NEVER THE SAME by Advance Staff Interns

For the 2025–2026 Advance year, Matthew Baugher and Genie* are both serving as staff interns. They shared the following reflections on their experiences coming back to serve as staff interns after serving as Advance participants in earlier years.

STEPPING OUT IN LEADERSHIP

After doing my outreach with Advance in eastern Germany two years ago, I had stirrings in my heart of coming back to staff at some point.

This past June, I made that decision. It was a step of faith in the direction I sensed God leading me.

I have experienced many joys since training started in September, but difficult times too. Leading others has invited me to look straight into my shortcomings that hinder me – and the team – from following Jesus. I've learned how important it is for me to receive God's love, and allow His love to lead me in love to those around me.

My team has spent most of outreach in western Thailand. Some highlights include the things of daily life, like riding motos around, and eating delicious Myanmar food. Fellowshiping with local believers has also been an incredible blessing to the team, and has provided opportunities to learn Myanmar songs (sometimes with choreography) and share encouragements from God's word during group gatherings.

*Last name omitted for sensitivity reasons.

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All in all, being in a cross-cultural context again – and being a leader this time – has given me opportunities to step out of my comfort zone and invite others to do the same. Through the highs and lows of the journey, we trust God's love to make us more into the image of his Son, Jesus.

– *Matthew Baugher, 2025-2026 Advance Staff Intern*

KEEP YOUR EYES FOCUSED ON JESUS THROUGH IT ALL

The slogan for Advance is that “Your life will never be the same.” I can say that was my experience with the program. I had such a transformative year and grew so much in my relationship with God and my love of another culture. When the idea came up about coming back to be an intern, I was really interested. However, I wasn't too sure if that was where God was leading me. While I was interested, I was still waiting to see where God was calling me to spend the next year. I finally made my decision to come back. The piece that finalized my decision was the people. I had so many amazing people from EMM help and encourage me as I learned and grew over my year in Advance. I was far from home, and facing challenges I never thought I would be experiencing. However, the whole time, I had so many people walking with me and supporting me through it all.

I knew that I wanted to be that person for someone else and help them navigate their own new experiences.

Coming back as an intern has been so different. I have been able to work on an amazing staff that have led some amazing young adults. I have gained so much from coming back this year. I have gotten to reconnect with people from all the different communities I was a part of last year. I have also led classes or two and participated in a lot of the decision-making process. I have also participated in specific classes for the Advance staff interns that have allowed me to grow. Many of them focused on practical leadership skills. This past year, I have learned so much about being a leader and have been encouraged and supported by the people around me.

The best advice I have to give, and something I have reminded myself over and over again during this last year, is to “keep your eyes focused on Jesus through it all.” I would also share, “In the good and the bad, remain focused on Him and He will guide you through it all.” I constantly look to Him in the challenges and the hardships, for strength and to be reminded of His faithfulness. In the good and



"Public taxi service in Thailand often looks like riding on the back of a moto—which I find quite fun."

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MATTHEW BAUGHER

joyful moments, I am reminded to be thankful for all He has given me. Even after this past year, my life has changed so much. I have seen growth in myself and the people around me. This wasn't my plan for my year, but it was God's. I would not want it any other way.

For young adults who join Advance, I have truly seen, “God will use you in the most unexpected ways and show you amazing things.” During the last two years, I have seen that more than ever. Coming back has been one of my best decisions and I can truly say, “My life will never be the same.”

– *Genie*, 2025-2026 Advance Staff Intern*

CELEBRATING A LEGACY



Mary W Gehman, 102, of Lititz, PA, went to be with the Lord on March 1,

2026. Mary served as a missionary with EMM for over 30 years in Somalia in 1958–1988, 1990 and served on the EMM board 1988–1991.



Ruth Ann Horning, 83, of Brecknock Township, PA, went to be with the

Lord on March 3, 2026. Ruth Ann served with EMM from 1963–1965 in Voluntary Service.



Sherrie Ober, 67, of Manheim, PA, went to be with the Lord on March 6, 2026.

Sherrie served in the EMM HR department for 23 years, helping hundreds of young people discern their call into missions.



Mabel Horst Eshleman, 96, of Bareville, PA, went to be with the Lord

on March 13, 2026. Mabel served in Ethiopia from 1953–1969 and China in 1986 with EMM. Mabel also served as an EMM Board Member from 1979–1991.

MAY DAILY PRAYER

SOUTHEAST ASIA

- 1 | Pray for the "unengaged" groups that have no active church-planting efforts or missionary presence. Ask God to stir the hearts of believers to specifically seek out and serve these communities.
- 2 | Pray for the 38% of people groups in this region still classified as unreached, specifically asking that the "Frontier" groups with virtually no Christian presence would be reached by bold and culturally sensitive disciples.
- 3 | Ask the Lord to call young adults to join the 2026-2027 Advance cohort, to serve on an outreach team in Southeast Asia.
- 4 | Ask God to call short and long-term workers to serve in Southeast Asia.
- 5 | Pray for spiritual breakthroughs among the Buddhist, Muslim, and Hindu communities that make up the majority of the unreached population in Southeast Asia.

LANCASTER, PA.

- 6 | Ask the Lord to raise up Kingdom Teams staff to serve this summer.
- 7 | Join J.C. Ebersole in prayer for All-nations Association of Bible Schools (AABS) as they work to provide a pathway for their associated schools to obtain accreditation. Pray for the Accreditation Commission as they finalize documents and look for pilot schools.
- 8 | Join Jonathan Bornman in praising God that the documentary film, Unexpected Peace, showed on the local PBS TV station WITF. Praise him for opening so many doors and touching so many people!
- 9 | Ask the Lord to call volunteers to serve at Neighbors Community Center at Hub450, our building in Lancaster, Pa.

CENTRAL EUROPE

- 10 | Join Jan Heindel in prayer for relationships that are developing in the town of Dobříš, where the church plant she is connected to is located. Pray for Jesus to be reflected through the church as they connect with the community.
- 11 | Pray for the 0.7% Evangelical population in the Czech Republic, that these few believers

would be strengthened and empowered to effectively reach out to the two remaining unreached people groups in the country.

- 12 | Ask the Lord to call short and long-term workers to serve in Central Europe.
- 13 | Pray for the "Non-Religious" majority in the Czech Republic, asking that those among the millions who identify as secular or atheist would encounter the living God and find spiritual fulfillment in Christ.

WEST AFRICA

- 14 | Pray for the 14 unreached people groups in The Gambia, who represent nearly 85% of the population, asking that the light of Christ would reach those who currently have very little access to the gospel.
- 15 | Pray for spiritual growth and boldness among the small Evangelical community in The Gambia, which currently comprises only 0.9% of the population, that they may effectively share their faith.
- 16 | Ask the Lord to call short and long-term workers to serve in West Africa.
- 17 | Pray for the 12 unreached people groups in Sierra Leone, asking that the 1.6 million individuals within these groups would encounter the gospel and for the removal of barriers.
- 18 | Lift up the local churches, aid organizations, and community leaders in West Africa. May they be fueled by hope and provided with the resources they need to serve those in their care.

CENTRAL ASIA

- 19 | Pray for the small, often persecuted evangelical remnants in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, where believers make up only 0.1% of the population, that they would be strengthened in their faith.
- 20 | Ask the Lord to call short and long-term workers to serve in Central Asia.
- 21 | Ask that the 96.7% of the regional population who currently have little to no access to the gospel would finally hear the message of Christ.
- 22 | Ask the Lord to call young adults to join the 2026-2027 Advance cohort, to serve in an outreach team in Central Asia.

23 | Pray that the Christians in Kazakhstan, who make up 0.5% of the population, would be mobilized to share the message both within their countries borders, and in nearby nations.

OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD

- 24 | Join A and A* in prayer for the revelation of, and awakening true hunger for, Redeemer Immanuel to their different Muslim friends and many others around them.
- 25 | Join Peter and Christy* as they pray for discernment and direction for their family. Join them in praying for peace and stability; for the conflict in the Middle East to end.
- 26 | Join Phil and Linda Gottschalk in prayer as they face various health challenges, as they continue to teach courses at the Baptist Theological Institute in Bucharest, Romania. Pray for them to finish out the semester well.
- 27 | Join Daryl and Jen Hoover in praising God that the Vida220 students are doing well on their outreach teams.
- 28 | Join Michael and Nancy Hosttetter in prayer for those in Chile participating in house church and the teens hearing the Gospel for the first time.
- 29 | Thank the Lord for the life and beauty of each child with special needs in the children's home in Guatemala that Carissa Sherer works in, and ask God to give each child a full understanding of how He loves them.
- 30 | Join Sonya Harnish in praying for the 49 young adults who wrapped up their 3 to 6 months of Bible School at Crossroads Albania at the end of March. Pray that they would shine for Jesus in their jobs, universities, or future missional service around the world.
- 31 | Pray for Steve and Beth Gibbs as they travel to Cusco, Peru, from early June through early July. Pray for them as they give support and encouragement to pastors and leaders. Pray also for their children and grandchildren, who will join them for 2 weeks.

Some prayer requests adapted from joshuaproject.net.

**Names changed or omitted for sensitivity reasons.*



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

▶ ADVANCE

Your life will never be the SAME



EMM.ORG/ADVANCE



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

\$517,738 RECEIVED
AS OF APRIL 8, 2026

\$1,645,000
2026 IMPACT FUND GOAL



EMM.ORG/GIVE

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