

Bethany Church of Sierra Madre  
MISSIONARY PRAISE & PRAYER CONCERNS

**November 2, 2021**

	<p><b>USA</b>  <b>PRAISE:</b> For the opportunity for Jesus and His church to be a light in the darkness.  <b>PRAYER:</b> For spiritual revival in Jesus in the midst of the pandemic and the effects it has in the country and in the world. May all Christians have the boldness to speak and lift up the name of Jesus and all of His attributes.</p>
	<p><b>BRAD &amp; ADRIENNE BARTZ:</b> Athletes in Action, Cru, USA brad.bartz@athletesinaction.org  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b></p>
	<p><b>BETHANY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL</b>  <b>PRAISE:</b> For educating young minds with Christian values.  <b>PRAYER:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pray for additional enrollment so we might reach more children and families.</li> <li>• Pray for additional funding as there are extra expenses with all of these unusual things happening.</li> <li>• Pray for total protection of staff children and families from the virus.</li> <li>• That the academic education and spiritual development will continue to be superior in every way.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>DICK &amp; MILLIE BRANSFORD:</b> African Inland Mission, Retired, Kenya  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER repeat from October:</b></p> <p>In December Millie and I will go with a pediatric surgeon from another hospital in Kenya. He will be able to do things that I cannot do as well. However he has never been to that country. He may be a part of “turning over”, or he may be there just to train the two young doctors who are already working in that country. Pray!</p> <p>Direction? I still feel my focus is on UPGs, i.e. unreached people groups. I suspect that I will remain with my current focus until I lay down my tools. However, from time to time I hear of certain countries with desperate needs, and the needs there plus my passions continue to stir me.</p> <p><b>PRAYER:</b>  I long to see fruit born from the people with whom I have worked for the past 14 years. The cost could be enormous for them, but the eternal benefits are invaluable.</p> <p>Please do pray that we will see more fruit. There are things I can’t share with you, but I am encouraged. Thanks.  That more doctors would commit to practicing medicine in Africa.</p>
	<p><b>JOSEPH &amp; MICHELE BUTLIG:</b> Cru, LA Metro Area michelle.butlig@cru.org  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b> [Dated 10/26]</p> <p><b>RIGHT NOW...THERE ARE 30,000 CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY</b>  This <b>November [11/6 9am-12pm]</b> we will be hosting a Foster Care Info Fair in the Los Angeles area. We are excited to be able to hold these once again in person – as they had been on hold due to Covid the past year. We are a part of the Foster Care Coalition here in Los Angeles and Joseph has been meeting and planning with the other leaders for this Info Fair and Ambassador training! The Mission of the Coalition is: to connect the family of Christ in Los Angeles with the children in foster care who desperately need them. We work to awaken churches and individual Christians to the needs of these kids, and to educate them about the many opportunities to make a difference. Our “Info Fairs” provide an overview of the foster care system, and bring together ministries and agencies that offer a variety of ways to get involved. We also provide a list of local opportunities on our website. In addition, we train interested individuals to be “Foster Care Ambassadors” for their church — designated point people equipped to be a resource for their church, able to provide information and guidance to anyone with a heart for kids living in foster care.  <a href="https://www.fostercarecoalition.com">https://www.fostercarecoalition.com</a></p> <p>Please pray for this Info Fair and Ambassador Training the beginning of November. That many people would come and gain a heart for these children in Foster Care and desire to be a part of their lives, even in some small way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The average age of entrance to prostitution is 12-14 years old</li> <li>• Human trafficking is the world’s 3rd largest international crime industry (behind illegal drugs and arms trafficking)</li> <li>• It reportedly generates a profit of 32 BILLION EVERY YEAR.</li> <li>• Over 85% are victims of childhood sexual molestation</li> </ul>

- Over 50% of domestically trafficked women and girls are/were runaway or throwaway youth
- California harbors 3 of the FBI's 13 highest child sex trafficking areas of the nation: LA, San Francisco, and San Diego

Michelle was recently asked to become the Case Manager for sex trafficking survivors for EveryOne Free here in Pomona. We have partnered with EveryOne Free over the years in helping to fight against sex trafficking in LA through the public school trafficking awareness classes Joseph would lead, as well as helping to open up a Justice Center here in Pomona for trafficked women to seek help at. Michelle will now be part of their Diversion Program as their case manager—meeting with survivors to provide resources and help.

Michelle has also recently been part of a six week Case Manager Certification program through the state of California that provides in depth training, analysis, and discussion of the needs of victims and survivors of sex trafficking. It was an intense 6 weeks covering topics such as: public policy/legislation, pimp culture, law enforcement collaboration, history of human trafficking, community referrals, rape trauma and healing, trauma informed care, working with families of victims of child abuse, a survival panel and so much more. We are excited for this new partnership with Michelle as their case manager as it allows her to walk in her passions of ministering to women in pain and helping them to find freedom from sex trafficking and healing through Jesus.

Thank you for your prayers, support & encouragement to us! We appreciate you so very much. Please let us know if we can be praying for you in anyway as well. We hope you have a wonderful Thanksgiving!

*Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. Psalm 107:1*

**DEAN & KATHIE CARLSON:** OC International, Colorado Springs deancarlson@oci.org

**PRAISE & PRAYER:** [Dated 10/24]

**Prayer items for Todd and Bethany:**

- Two days ago, Todd & the builders broke ground on the new emergency dept building for the mission hospital [Africa]. Pray for the structure to be sufficiently built (with roof) prior to the rainy season in late December.
- Todd is providing EMT training, writing protocols for the mission hospital, serving as assistant soccer coach for the Bible school team, speaking in chapels, mentoring teenagers and networking with Malawian pastors and bible school students.
- Bethany is in it right alongside Todd. While teaching HS anatomy class, she is doing a 6 week internship at the government hospital in Lilongwe. The conditions there are quite dire, procedures quite different and most conversations are in the local language. Last week she saw young infants die who would have been easily saved in a US hospital. She needs to complete the 6 weeks in order to be authorized to serve at the mission hospital. She came home sick with something she picked up at the hospital, but plans to reengage quickly. She's a brave gal.

**Prayer for Kathie and Dean:**

- To be sensitive to the Spirit's guidance, courageous in vision and innovative in approach as I serve as OC president. The times in which we live require perceptive and adaptive leadership with the pandemic, China's crackdown on the church, mandates and travel challenges.
- At the same time, we are very aware of how God is on the move behind the scenes, drawing many to saving faith – particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America.
- Pray for increased anointing for connecting leaders, organizations, and networks in collaboration for the Great Commission. This includes working with global and continental networks (MANI). The past six months have brought numerous opportunities to speak at virtual events in Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South Africa and a couple global events.
- Pray for special grace as I serve as the co-facilitator of the Colorado Springs ministry CEO network. Last week we hosted a gathering of leaders from 20 mission organizations (e.g. Compassion, Navs, Bibles for the World, BEE, etc) along with leaders of our city transformation network. Great time together. We're now exploring how to apply some of the missions research done overseas to the mission field in Colorado Springs. These are exciting days of discovering how God is at work in our own backyards.
- Pray for ongoing health, restful sleep, and healing from chronic sinus condition.

**BOB & SUSAN COMBS:** Navigators, Los Angeles susancombsmetro@gmail.com

**PRAISE:** The Combs work with Navigators in Compton. They have lived and worked in Compton for 25 years. They show young men and women the way to live for Jesus by example and by teaching.

Bob, as a Contractor, provides work experience. He encourages the young men to stay out of gangs.

They have 3 school-aged children.

**PRAYER:** Please pray for those who attend the Friday evening Bible Studies.

**JERRY & ELIZABETH DIRKS:** TEAM – Evangelical Christian Academy (ECA), Spain jerylzdirks@yahoo.com

**PRAISE & PRAYER:** [Dated 10/4]

Continue to pray for Marijose as she continues to battle deep depression; Marijose's husband Jose and daughter Allysa. To see how loved they are and accepted by Jesus and want to have that special personal relationship with Him.

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Continue to pray for ECA: they have managed to cover their classes even with a shortage of staff. Many teachers are doubling up with course loads.

Continue to pray for Elizabeth: teaching afternoon English classes. Between the two groups, I already have 20 kids enrolled and most of them are new to me. I even have a few on a waiting list as the number is at the max that I want to take. Please pray that I would be all that God wants me to be and that teaching with Covid requirements will go well, as I am teaching out of our home.

Continue to pray for Virginia and that God would show her HIS ways and bring comfort. May she come to find the Truth found in Him and the peace that only He can give her.

Thank you for praying for our many precious friends here.

Continue to pray for Marisol, the mother of 9 y/o twin girls Alicia has been teaching English to; and her husband that God will touch their hearts!

Please keep praying for ECA and Jerry. At the end of this school year the current director is leaving, and the search continues for a new director. The finance manager has left to start up a coffee house and is working one day a week at ECA until a replacement is found. From past experience, transitions in either of these positions have a very direct impact on Jerry, but both at the same time... Plus the search for a Facility Manager continues, and the adaptation that will require of Jerry when that person is found. Jerry was just told that conversations have begun with two potential candidates for the Facilities Manager position... One of Jerry's prayers for all of these positions is that God will keep away people that are not the right fit for the jobs, especially those who wouldn't thrive long-term in the unique challenges of overseas missionary kid education in Spain. God has promised to give sufficient strength for each day and told us not to worry about tomorrow, so please pray for Jerry to not look at too many problems at once and to live one day at a time especially when there seems no light at the end of the tunnel. Thank you so much!

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**DAVE & TRACY E.**

**PRAISE:** [Dated 10/4]

**The Next Six Months**

**November 17**

We depart and begin a required 8-day hotel quarantine. Once home we'll repair water damage and set up the house.

**December**

Lots of weeping because we won't be with our kids for Thanksgiving or Christmas for the first time ever!

Pray that they'll have a nice place to stay in the USA during their Christmas break. Originally we thought they would go to Bali before we close up the house, but there are no tourist visas!

On **Dec. 11**, a key leader in PanAn, Shelfie, gets married in Java. We plan to attend, even if social distancing is 333 feet.

**January** -- Staff and Executive meeting in Java + Packing

**February**

Pack.+ Surrender our home to the landlord.

We might not be able to bring many of our possessions from Bali to Los Angeles since ocean cargo rates are 5x what is normal.

**PRAYER:**

**Abby & Axel:** Studies & Friendships

**Tracy:** Her dad has weakened a lot and has limited mobility.

**Dave:** Vision and creativity in new international role.

**Finances:** This will be a high expense season. Our support is currently at 80% of target.

**PanAn:** Online ministry has been going well. Pray for an online ReCharge retreat in November.

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**DAVE & MARILYN GRAFFENBERGER:** OMS, ECC [dgraffenberger@cs.com](mailto:dgraffenberger@cs.com)

**PRAISE & PRAYER:** [Dated 11/1]

- Thank you for praying for Haiti. The kidnapped missionaries are from the Port-au-Prince area, not from the Cap Haitien area where OMS works. But this has affected the whole country with strikes and demonstrations to draw attention to the gangs preventing the transport of fuel and products across the country, crippling the economy of the country by shutting down electricity, internet, schools, offices, markets, and making people live in fear.

- Thank God that Dave Graffenberger was able to complete some of the work he needed to do while in the Cap Haitien area, and then was able to change his ticket to leave Haiti on Sunday, Oct. 24, returning home to Oregon Friday, Oct. 29 from Florida.

- Pray for the leaders of the OMS related entities to sense the Holy Spirit's direction and protection.

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	<p>• Thank God for His protection and our healthy bodies.</p> <hr/> <p><b>BOB &amp; MARIA HILL:</b> Greek Bible Institute (GBI) Athens, Greece hillsingreece@cs.com  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b> [Dated 10/23]</p> <p>The semester is going along well with classes at the Greek Bible College. I have a double load, since I will be gone next semester, but it's good to be back with live classes, after having nearly a year of interruptions and quarantines. We have a good group of students, and it is inspiring to see them learn.</p> <p>Church is meeting “normally” with certain restrictions, but it's good to be able to see each other. We have improved the electronic facilities, and continue to work at making the best use of our new “home.” It takes some time to get used to a new location, but we are grateful that now offerings can be used for ministry and not only for paying rent and utilities! How grateful we are that we own the current church property, and it is entirely debt-free.</p> <p>Maria and I are in the process of making plans for visiting as many churches and supporters as possible from January through June. We plan on beginning our time in the US with our children in the East (Philadelphia, Ohio, New York state) and then plan on visiting churches in the East and Midwest. Then we plan to head for California (probably in February) in order to visit our West Coast contacts. We are hoping to be able to schedule meetings with YOU. Our calendar is not yet “filling up,” but we are making strategic decisions as to where and when to go.</p> <p>We had asked you to pray for a vehicle and housing during this ministry trip. God has provided very positive answers to both of these prayer requests, and we are so grateful.</p> <p>Yesterday I was present at a meeting of the pastors of the Southern Synod of the Greek Evangelical Church. Traditionally they had only six churches in the Athens area, but now there are thirteen, with a number of new church plants. As I looked around at the 13 people at the meeting, I was gratified to see that 9 of them had been students of mine over the years. There were actually three generations of pastors in the meeting – I was the oldest, and then there were several in their early 50s, and the rest were in their late 20s and early 30s. These fellows are involved in planting new churches, each with its own unique characteristics and personality. Some see lots of refugees, others are working with anarchists; some include clothing distribution and neighborhood restoration, and all are preaching Christ as the hope of the world.</p> <p>We are always grateful for your prayers and gifts that make our ministry possible. Your notes are a great encouragement too. May God bless you richly.</p> <hr/> <p><b>JERRY &amp; MARILYN H.:</b>  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b> [Dated 11/1]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Praise</b> for the completion of the post-pandemic (or her so) audit of our South Asia ministries and the glad result that we grew in every area. <b>Pray as each of the ministries</b> reboots for the coming year.</li> <li>• <b>Praise</b> for the second successful training of our community healthy education and evangelism ministry (CHE) and the beginning of the launch of seven area committees and choosing and training of CHE volunteers. <b>Pray for the successful</b> organizing of the CHE committees and God's guidance and training of volunteer CHE workers (each CHE will eventually be a volunteer health educator for 10-20 families in their area).</li> <li>• Jerry's shoulder replacement on Sept. 20 went well, and he's making slow but steady progress in recovery, apart from an entrapped ulnar nerve that has resulted in lingering numbness in a couple of fingers and some pain in his forearm. <b>Pray that therapy</b> will resolve this soon and for continued progress with shoulder rehab.</li> <li>• Marilyn is making up for lost time in the medical realm and is in the process of undergoing treatments for varicose veins that were causing her increasing discomfort. <b>Pray for patience</b> in the process which involves being off her feet quite a bit for a couple of weeks and for good results.</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>ABE &amp; MELISSA L.</b>  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b> [Dated 10/8] An influential local religious leader within our focus community recently passed away unexpectedly, apparently due to heart disease. His only son is a good friend of ours. He is following Jesus, but, as you can imagine, this has been a huge blow to him. He will likely inherit much of his father's influence and responsibilities. Please pray for him and his family. Things are likely to be very difficult for our friend in the coming months.</p> <p><b>Please pray that the grace and peace of God would be with him and that God would work powerfully in him and his relationships in this critical time.</b> We expect that his faith in Jesus will be tested in this time, so please <b>pray with us that God will strengthen him and protect him against the schemes of Satan.</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>TIM &amp; REBECCA L.</b>  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b> For their ministry to reach far and wide.</p>
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**DAVE & CHERIE McD:**

**PRAISE:**

- for our friend who is managing our language center and home outside US
- for the privilege of having Alan, Mason, and Maggie as our kids!

**PRAYER:**

- for us as we continue to learn to be parents and as the kids continue to grow in their physical, spiritual, social, emotional, and academic journeys!
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**MARVIN & LINDA MINGS:**

Pioneers serving Shoshones, Duckwater, Nevada lindasmings@gmail.com, bigsage1@gmail.com

**PRAISE & PRAYER:** [Dated 11/1]

- We were blessed, mid-month, with the return of a functioning truck. After 7 months without, we were grateful to again have it and all of its usefulness.
  - Marv continues to work with the housing crew in a flexible schedule. He thrives with the interaction and contribution to the well being of the community.
  - I, Linda, spent 2 weeks in OH helping Cass and her family. So appreciate those opportunities with family at such a distance.
  - This next month, our older daughter, Corinne, and her family move to Indiana for a new job opportunity. We hope to help with that process. After so many years in the Portland area, we will miss them being that much farther away.
  - NV was blessed this past month with a major storm that brought much needed snow to the mountains and water to the valley floor. The Truckee river went from a trickle to maximum level within a weekend. This state is grateful for every bit of moisture.
  - We request prayer for the Rez, as again this past month there were 5 more cases of covid. This is in the midst of the tribe trying to restore its functioning to pre-covid levels. A difficult transition.
  - We also request prayer for the new tribal council which is experiencing all of the expected growing pains. The majority had never served on the council before. It is an era of difficult and uncertain decision making.
  - We are pleased when we see the Rez community work together to achieve health and stability. It is our goal to contribute to that in all ways possible: physically, mentally, emotionally, and especially spiritually. We so appreciate your prayers towards that end. Thank you.
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**SAJI & BINDU OOMMEN:**

**PRAISE & PRAYER:** For their ministry to reach far and wide.

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**WES & JACKIE RINGER:** Wycliffe Bible Translators/SIL; So. Sudan wes\_ringer@sil.org, jackie\_marshall@sil.org  
We serve with Wycliffe Bible Translators in South Sudan. Jackie as our director and Wes as a translation consultant.

**PRAISE & PRAYER:** [Dated 10/31]

- We are coming to the US for a little over two months from Thanksgiving to the end of January. Pray that the cataract surgery on both of my eyes will go well in December, and that we will have a fruitful time visiting friends and supporters in Kentucky and Tennessee in December and then spend three weeks in southern California in January.
  - Jackie and Laura our incoming SIL director both went visit the Bongo in and around Wau in October to assess their needs and to plan with their language committee what we will work with them on in the next two years. I have been working with the Bongo since 2017 to help them finish and publish their Genesis and Exodus 1-24. Pray that God will bless and multiply these plans and that the published Genesis and Exodus will touch the Bongo people and encourage more of them to learn to read their mother tongue.
  - Praise that I finished with the Laarim the consultant check of their Psalms in September. I look forward to the translators return in November after reviewing their Psalms and Glossary with their review committee. Pray for my work with them in November on final checks so that their New Testament + Genesis, Exodus 1-24, Ruth, Psalms and Jonah will be ready to begin typesetting by August 2022.
  - Praise that my work went well with the Gbaya translators during four weeks in September and October when I did a verse by verse review of all of their Old Testament passages for the lectionary from Exodus to the end of Psalms. Most Gbaya believers attend the Catholic Church and having all of the lectionary readings in Gbaya will then permit the worship to be conducted all in Gbaya. It is our prayer that beginning with the four Sundays of Advent of 2021 that lectionary readings will be complete in time for them to be used Sunday by Sunday. This will also encourage the Gbaya people to use their New Testament + Genesis, Exodus 1-20, Ruth and Jonah which was dedicated in February 2020.
  - We are thankful that two young woman Tamara and Holly have just arrived to work as translation interns with us for the next two years. Pray for their adjustment to living here and finding a good way to learn and grow in how to help in the
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	<p>translation of God's Word into the languages of South Sudan. Holly will be working with the Bel on the translation of their Mark, John and Acts, and Tamara will be working with the Lopit on the translation of their Mark and Matthew.</p>
	<p><b>GREG &amp; JEANETTE SUMMERVILLE:</b> Guatemala Deaf Ministries Inc. gandjuate@gmail.com  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b> [Dated 10/26 See below for more previous information]  Regarding the new land: Elvis' meeting with the El Pino council was a success. The ministry gifted the community with 40 bundles of groceries and they were quite appreciative. We will be connecting to the water in the next few weeks after the rain stops and we can start excavating. The cost to connect is \$540 but then the monthly fee is just a few dollars.  Please continue to pray that this land will be fruitful in many ways. We are expecting great things especially knowing how God has blessed us with this land and continues to bless.  <b>[Dated 10/21 FYI]</b> Tomorrow at 4:00pm PDT Elvis will have a meeting with the town council of El Pino, the little village next to the property. This will be an important meeting in many respects. We have already met with the mayor of El Progreso and that went well. The El Pino town council needs to approve our petition for water. There is no indication of any problem, this is just a formality. But at the same time, this will give the townspeople the chance to meet our representative Elvis. We already have been employing some of the local men for clearing the property and we pay them much more than they had asked for. The main reason is that they were charging too little for a day's work. So instead of paying them \$7.89 per day, we are paying them \$13,16 per day. Needless to say, they are very happy with us. Elvis will be talking with the council about our need for masons and helpers too. This meeting will also give him a chance to explain who we are and what we do.  Jeanette and I are doing much better after having COVID. We tested negative yesterday and are on the mend with our strength returning. Thank you for your prayers. Lydia is doing better as well. She just needs to get her energy back.</p>
	<p><b>ROBIN THURMAN:</b> Wycliffe Bible Translators (Retired), California robrthurman@gmail.com  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b></p>
	<p><b>4 WORKERS IN VIETNAM:</b> Partners International, Vietnam  <b>PRAISE:</b> [Dated 11/15/20]  We are blessed by your support and enthusiasm to witness and expand the kingdom of God to all ethnic groups in the Mekong.  <b>PRAYER:</b> For the <b>new believers</b> to be grounded in God's Word and grow in their faith.  For boldness and wisdom for Vietnam C's <b>pastors and leaders</b>.  For the continued growth of the churches in <b>North Vietnam</b>.  For more <b>university students</b> to accept Christ and become servants for Him.</p>
	<p><b>SUE WILSON:</b> At large; China  <b>PRAISE &amp; PRAYER:</b> For her ministry to reach far and wide.</p>
	<p><b>WATSON, R. PAULRAJ CHURCH GROWTH ASSOC. OF INDIA:</b> Parents-in-law are Vasanth &amp; Mano Albert  <b>PRAISE:</b> [Dated 1/29]  <b>PRAYER:</b> For our <b>trainees</b> to establish successful ministries that transform communities physically and spiritually.  For <b>women seekers</b> to take the next step of putting their faith in Christ.  For the growth of the <b>Indian Church</b> throughout the country.</p>
	<p><b>ERIC &amp; ANNE ZANDER:</b> Belgium Evangelical Missions; Belgium  <b>PRAISE:</b> [Dated 9/21]  - Axelle keeps her faith in God, she is not rebellious. She knows God is teaching patience in the midst of suffering.  - our mission is starting a new training program (coordinated by daughter Déborah) to equip disciples for ministry.  - although our support level has decreased in the past months and our regular cost have increased (partly due to Axelle's situation), God allows us to face our expenses.  <b>PRAYER:</b>  - Axelle's new therapy is not bringing any progress. We would need to see some (even minor) results.  - our daughter Déborah's pregnancy is extremely fragile and brings stress to all of us.  - our church gathering place is less available. God may be opening a brand new place.  - Eric is planning to visit the Mid-West in March and California in May.</p>
	<p><b>PRAYER: That the shipment of any supplies for any missionary or mission's organization will get to their destination/s safely and quickly.</b></p>