

Bethany Church of Sierra Madre, California
MISSIONARY PRAISE & PRAYER CONCERNS

“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
Ephesians 1:2

February 2, 2023

Date Sensitive

	<p>USA <i>PRAISE:</i> For the opportunity for Jesus and His church to be a light in the darkness. <i>PRAYER:</i> For spiritual revival in Jesus.</p>
	<p>BRAD & ADRIENNE BARTZ: Athletes in Action, Cru, USA brad.bartz@athletesinaction.org <i>PRAISE & PRAYER:</i> [Dated ~1/24]</p> <p>We made it(!), but there’s no need to sugar coat it, it’s been rough but we’re hanging in there. It’s been tempting to just head back to the airport and go home. But, with the warm welcome and help we have been given from our local staff, we’ve been able to persevere.</p> <p>Just as we all know, the Lord sees us and our needs. This has been an unexpected faith journey when things haven’t fallen into place.</p> <p>Housing – From the beginning we have been taken care of. For example, our colleague with Cru is letting us use her apartment for the first month. This was huge as we had a place to land. However, finding our own place has been quite the ordeal. Ivin, our AIA colleague connected us to an ex-athlete now realtor, Calvin. We met Calvin back in 2013 when he was competing for Singapore at the SE Asian Games in Myanmar! He’s been helping us through the laborious process. But we were coming upon closed doors. We’d seen 10+ units and they were either too dirty, too isolated or another hang up. It didn’t help that all of the locals belabored the point of the skyrocketing real estate market. (Housing has almost doubled since Brad was here in May.) Housing is in high demand with realtors getting fifty calls in minutes of a listing being posted and even they are feeling overworked by the process. The rumor is that newly opened Chinese borders have allowed for Chinese professionals looking for a change of scenery who are willing to pay top dollar. Insert the Bartz family! Haha</p> <p>School - Adrienne and the kids have assimilated to the homeschool community. She’s teaching the weekly co-op already and the kids are signed up for soccer, basketball, ballet and handball - all at \$10 a lesson (\$8 USD). Along with school, the kids are in Awana, the children’s bible study program. This is something they did in Colorado, so it’s another thing of continuity for them.</p> <p>Kids – The kids have been struggling, as should be expected with their whole lives turned upside down. However, Herschel can now lead our whole family on the city trains and bus routes. He definitely has a thing for maps! Another highlight is that he saw four monitor lizards at the botanic gardens during our first week here! Something he only saw in our zoo in Denver. Bridgit is our somewhat laidback one. Although even she has hit her wall many times. She’s more of a homebody, so dragging her all over town to look at housing hasn’t helped. She has a birthday coming this month and that has helped keep her focused on something positive.</p> <p>AIA/Cru Colleagues – They’ve welcomed us with open arms and even surprised the kids with a trip to Toys R Us (the brand is doing well over here). They could choose ‘almost’ anything they wanted. It was hard for us to swallow the 100% toy inflation. But they are real Legos! Our coworkers have been so helpful, without them, we would be in real trouble.</p> <p>Hope this gives you a glimpse into our first few weeks here in Singapore. There are still many loose ends and red tape to deal with and the kids are still struggling. We hope to move into our own place soon and this will help settle all of us and give us what we need to carry on. In His Grip, Brad, Adrienne, Herschel & Bridgit</p>
12	<p>BETHANY CHURCH – Pastoral Search [Dated 12/15]</p> <p>We are still in the process of transition. There is a team of 14 members working on this. From that team they will form a pastor search team. Hopefully in the next few months we will have a new pastor.</p> <p>[Dated 1/11 by David McMartin, Interim Pastor] I want to give you a little update on the Transition Team, the Team commissioned to help Bethany Church through this transition season. After a three-week break for the Holidays, they are back at it. They are examining all aspects of the ministry of Bethany Church with the goal of positioning and re-positioning, as may be needed, the entire church for fruitful ministry in the future. This is taking some time, as Bethany Church is over 100 years old; lots of history. Thanks for your ongoing prayers and for your patience. There will be a more complete report at the Annual Meeting on February 12.</p>

4 **BETHANY CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**
PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 1/28]
We are **thankful for** our wonderful vision night. Each year, this night allows for parents to hear about what’s going on at the school and plans for the future.
The annual fundraiser is almost at its goal. **We pray** that funds will continue to be sent in.
Also, as reenrollment takes place, **we can pray for** all the seats to be filled at the school. It’s so important for kids, especially in this present time, to have a solid education, both academically and spiritually. We want as many families as possible to be able to take part in that journey.

JOSEPH & MICHELE BUTLIG: Cru, LA Metro Area michelle.butlig@cru.org
PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 1/27]
Cru City Los Angeles
Make Jesus known - Multiply the Church - Serve the City
Christmas in Covina
This past December we partnered with Christ First Espanol in Covina to host a “Christmas in Covina Espanol” outreach. Joseph meets regularly with Pastor Marco to plan and design evangelism outreaches.
The outreach had a drama/comedy skit “What if Jesus was never born?” that comprised of comedy and a gospel presentation. Pastor Marco also shared the gospel and we saw 10 people come to Christ! One of the ladies that came to Christ was the mother of the stage manager (Julie) who serves on the outreach team. Julie was so excited to see her mama come to know Jesus!
Please pray for our next outreach near Valentines in February focused on Friendships.
This Christmas we also had a great time celebrating with the Church Planting network that Joseph helped form. There are now 3 churches in the network! Solid Rock Church, Salvo Por Gracia (a bilingual Spanish speaking church) and First Love Church (a church that meets on the Claremont Colleges reaching college students with the gospel).
We also rejoiced in the new members of the network who desire to plant churches in the future! Stiven is a pastoral resident who will plant another church in the near future. He is also a seminary student at Gateway Seminary. Hugo is from Salvo Por Gracia and he desires to plant another bilingual Spanish speaking church.
We are so grateful for God’s blessing us to multiply churches that will reach different people groups with the Gospel!
Family Update!
Another huge milestone for our family this December was the graduation of our oldest boy, Luke! He graduated in Business Finance from Cal Poly Pomona! We are so proud of him and all his hard work the past 4 years and are excited for the plans the Lord has in store for him and his future. It feels like just yesterday we were sending our firstborn to college—it is such a reminder to treasure the moments.
Thank you for your prayers for Joseph’s health—he is doing amazing, and his latest test showed the cancer as undetectable—Praise God! Thank you also so much for your continual prayers for us and the ministry here in Los Angeles. We are truly grateful for your prayers.

DEAN & KATHIE CARLSON: OC International, Colorado Springs deancarlson@oci.org
PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 1/17]
8 BILLION ... and each one matters! As we begin the new year, it’s important to be reminded of what God is up to in our world. In 10 short years, we’ll arrive at the 2000th anniversary since Jesus commissioned his followers to make disciples of all nations. You might wonder, how’s it going?
First the good news. The Christian faith is the most geographically expansive, culturally diverse, and contextually relevant movement the world has ever seen. Currently, 32 percent of the world’s population identify as “Christian.” Among these, 8% are evangelical. By far, the greatest number of people becoming followers of Jesus are in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (referred to as the majority world). For every one person coming to faith in Jesus in North America and Europe, 29 are becoming new disciples in the majority world.
We are seeing disciple-making movements penetrate previously unreached areas in extraordinary ways. Currently 1% of the world’s population have come to faith in disciple-making communities (or simple churches) that meet in homes, under trees, in schools, and in businesses. OC is involved in one movement that has multiplied to 600,000 new believers and rippled out to scores of unreached people groups in 15 countries. The possibilities are promising!
One of the great strides we’re seeing is the surge of missionaries from the majority world. My OC Brazilian counterpart recently told me that Brazil is currently sending out 19,000 global workers. Latinos, Africans, Indians, Koreans, and yes, Mongolians, are carrying the message of Jesus to restricted-access countries and remote people groups in ways we never could.

Now, the remaining challenge. Our global population recently raced past the 8 billion milestone. Every single person matters to God. Currently, 42 percent of all people live in unreached people groups. That's 3.4 billion people! That means there are few, if any, believers living among them and certainly not enough believers to reach their own people. They need people willing to cross cultural and linguistic barriers to help them. The shocking news is that – due to high population growth in unreached areas – the number of people beyond the reach of the gospel is actually growing.

We're not OK with that, and you probably aren't either. Add to that, today 360 million Christians face persecution around the world. **Each day**, 16 are murdered, and **each month**, 425 churches are attacked. Like in the days of the early church, many bear witness to Jesus by their faithfulness in suffering.

We serve a God motivated by a tenacious love for all peoples. He's on a mission to bring hope to every person and invites us to join in what he's doing. That's why your teamwork is so important. Thank you for praying, for embracing God's heart for the world, for partnering, and for going (whether across the street or around the world).

We know the end of the story. One day people from every tribe, language, people, and nation will stand beside us at the throne, worshipping God for what he's done in their lives. As you follow Jesus into 2023, may he surprise you by how he works, both in your community and among those who have never heard.

Your teammates, Dean & Kathie

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

PRAISE: [Dated 2/1]

- Our ministry has been given a \$50,000 donation. We are thankful for God's provision.
- Our Bible study and small group discipleship groups are going well.

PRAYER:

- Please pray for our new tutoring time. We have 6 youth coming consistently. Pray for new students and for a new career counseling we want to start
- Please pray for our summer internships that we are beginning to plan. We are short on staff and are trusting God to provide who we need.

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

PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 11/29/22]

We are preparing to be in Alberta and Southern California late June through early September to do our home assignment. If you think of praying for us, we can't tell you how much we would appreciate it.

Please pray for:

1. Salvation for our friends: Marijose and Jose, Bosi, Lidia, Allysa, Elisa
2. The many details of travel, housing, vehicles and visitation while we are in North America this coming summer. We hope to see as many of you as we can! Please let us know if you will be in these areas and would like to meet up. We would also very much like to be involved in VBS while we are visiting our home churches.
3. Our oldest daughter, Alicia, as she graduates from highschool this year and is preparing to go to college.
4. Our monthly support. We pray and trust that if God wants us to continue here, He will provide.

DAVE & TRACY E.

PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 12/10/22]

Dave

Planning a ministry trip to New Zealand in February. Pray about the details.

Journey Global is in the midst of strengthening its legal structures. Please pray for my colleague Toni as he works on this.

Helping with board / ministry formation for Journey USA. At this step we are developing strategic objectives and a job description for an executive director. Very slow but steady progress. Need wisdom from above.

I meet by Zoom and in person with quite a number of people. A few of the situations are challenging. Pray for wisdom and that I could be a channel of love and encouragement.

FOCUS Pancaran Anugerah: Taskforce 2027

I'm helping to setup a taskforce and develop procedures for a ministry wide evaluation leading to a 5-year strategic plan.

Pray that I will be patient and not take control of this process. I get tired of the slow, slow pace. I need to be a good coach on the side rather than the Great Problem Solver and Answer Person.

After leading the first two meetings, I will be turn leadership over to the two moderators: Sunaryo and Nussy. Pray for them and for the other members of the taskforce (Vilia, Adi, Jessica, Ivan, Renta, Ramses, Shelfie, Widya)

We're collecting data right now (surveys, interviews, and evaluations). Pray for honesty and insight. Pray that they might see issues which need to be addressed and improvements which can be made.

The Indonesian team needs creativity, courage, and faith in planning for the future. It's not clear who could step up and take a stronger key leadership role. Pray for direction from God. There are some large gaps in leadership. It's always a bit of a mystery who is ready for more responsibility.

DAVE & MARILYN GRAFFENBERGER: OMS, ECC dgraffenberger@cs.com

PRAISE: [Dated 2/1]

Dave continues to seek God's direction to schedule a trip to Haiti, possibly in March. **PRAY for Dave** to know the right time in order to accomplish several things related to One Mission Society and related entities. **CONTINUE THANKING GOD** for our good health and daily strength.

THANK GOD for the blessed annual board meeting of Moscow Evangelical Christian Seminary and God's direction for the future of the seminary. Exciting reports of God's working in and through the students bring praise to God for His continued provision to provide Christian leaders in Russia and surrounding countries.

THANK GOD for the time away at the end of January for both Dave and Marilyn as they attended the annual board meeting of Mercy, Inc. at Depoe Bay, OR. Dave has been a leader/member since April 2004. Mercy Inc. is focused on sharing Christ through meeting family needs.

PRAYER:

CONTINUE PRAYING for Haiti.

THANK GOD that schools, including Emmaus University, have been able to open for the school year in January. **PRAY** for God's provision and protection for students and staff as they travel to school and ministry in the days ahead.

THANK GOD for His provision of some needed fuel for all ministries. **ASK** God to increase the provision of fuel during the coming month so Radio 4VEH will be able to broadcast on full power. **PRAY** the staff will be able to find transportation to come to work. Listeners depend upon the Radio for instruction, encouragement and spiritual growth.

THANK GOD that the Cap Haitian Christian School has been able to begin functioning daily with all teachers and students present. **PRAY** for the hiring of a qualified staff counselor for the students dealing with the unsettledness and trauma experienced during these past months. **PRAY** for fuel for electricity and transportation, staffing needs, as well as for parents to be able to pay tuition for their students in light of the greatly increased cost of living.

PRAY for the annual board meeting of the Healthcare In Haiti, Inc. (international board of Bethesda Medical Center) in **Austin TX Feb. 24 to 26** that Dave will attend before visiting several friends in the Dallas/Fort Worth area for a few days.

CONTINUE PRAYING for the installation of the solar power project at Bethesda Medical Center and for provision of funds for services and medicine to those who are unable to pay.

CONTINUE PRAYING for the Every Community for Christ trainers to be protected when they travel by motorcycle to train and encourage those leading small groups in their communities.

CONTINUE PRAYING against the forces of evil that are attempting to destroy Haiti at all levels.

BOB & MARIA HILL: Greek Bible Institute (GBI) Athens, Greece hillsingreece@cs.com

PRAISE: The Hills work with the Greek Bible Institute and their local church in Athens, Greece.

PRAYER: For their students of GBI, their local churches, and their neighbors.

JERRY & MARILYN, SA [changes made for security reasons]

PRAISE: [Dated 1/30]

- For Becca's rapid recovery from pneumonia that required two nights of hospitalization the second week of January due to her already immunocompromised lungs
- For Becca and her roommates completing the move-in process in their Pasadena rental and Becca's good start back at work
- For the release on bail of the men arrested in the raid on one of our house churches
- For Jerry's getting off to a good start at his Servant Partner's strategic coordination roles in I and with movements in several other countries
- For having signed a contract with a reputable company to have our roof replaced and structural repairs done in our attic
- For an invitation from my previous partner in Bangladesh to join the board and get involved with a new work the family is starting with Rohingya refugees and at-risk children on the Bangladesh-Myanmar boarder

PRAYER:

- Pray for both health and God's grace for Ravi and Fatima as they have had health concerns & oversee so many ministries
 - Pray our new roofing job would go well
 - Pray all of Becca's bloodwork and CAT scan would come back negative allowing her to go off a medication prescribed for what was likely a false positive for valley fever
 - Pray for a full recovery from the trauma and loss of resources for the house church leaders that were falsely imprisoned
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for God’s guidance as Jerry makes a decision on the board position and reengages with his strategy coordination roles with Servant Partners • Pray for continued progress on projects that would get our home ready for selling in God’s time
	<p>ABE & MELISSA L. PRAISE & PRAYER: For their ministry to reach far and wide.</p>
	<p>TIM & REBECCA L. PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 11/30] We are thrilled to see increasing momentum for the engagement the Frontier People Groups (FPGs) defined as those with no sign of progress of the Gospel, no known Christward movements and <0.1% Christian). Praise the Lord, we are seeing a real growth and action as many are becoming burdened by the plight of these neglected peoples whom God loves. Continue to pray for their ministry to reach far and wide.</p>
	<p>DAVE & CHERIE McD: PRAISE & PRAYER: Continue to pray for their ministry to reach far and wide.</p>
	<p>MARVIN & LINDA MINGS: Pioneers serving Shoshones, Duckwater, Nevada lindasmings@gmail.com, bigsage1@gmail.com PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 2/1] Our hope and prayer is that you are staying safe and warm. The major focus of the past month has been winter weather. Like the majority of the country we have been hit hard and long with snow and extremely low temperatures, single digits at night and teens in the day. It consumes a lot of time and energy just to survive. We praise God that in the midst of hazardous road conditions, none locally have been harmed. We are very aware of Gods’ watchcare during this season. There have been a couple more deaths of tribal members off the Rez that impacts family members here. Please pray for Rena, the daughter of our dear friend, Louie, who died quite awhile ago. Her mother died this past month. She went to Bishop to be with her at the end and arranged the funeral. It has been intense and heart-breaking for this young mom. The other death was of the tribal manager of the Goshute Rez. The various Shoshone bands were blessed to have long-term tribal managers who took them through immense changes for decades. The loss of these revered ones is huge. Many of his friends and family live in DW. Grief can be a very long and hard process for our Native friends. Especially when they don’t have HOPE. On the DW Rez, the tribal offices are busy planning and prepping for the coming year with numerous meeting regarding budgeting and programs. Unfortunately, with that comes disparity. The grumbling and unrest has grown. We request prayer for those making decisions and the recipients; that there can be consensus and cooperation for the betterment of the tribe as a whole. We pray for you; our supporters, prayer partners, and interested ones; that you are able to start this new year with HOPE and enthusiasm for what it brings. This was shared with me yesterday and it says it all. https://youtu.be/R84PqRdZ7_Y</p>
	<p>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 has just finished serving as our director for nine years. She is now serving as our acting translation and linguistic coordinators besides doing some literacy work, and Wes as a translation consultant. PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 1/30] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Praise that the final checks with Laarim translators of their New Testament + Genesis, Exodus 1-24, Ruth, Psalms and Jonah were completed in December and typesetting has begun in January. Pray that the typesetting will be finished by the end of February, so that they can record their New Testament with Faith Comes by Hearing in March. Pray for the hearts of the Laarim people to hunger to receive God’s Word. Their Laarim Bible should be ready to be dedicated by Sept. 2023. • Praise that the work of checking with the Gbaya translators of their Old Testament readings in January has gone well. They have now completed the translation of all of their Old Testament passage for Year A, B and C. Wes has checked with them their readings from Exodus 21 to Psalms 103. Praise that the Gbaya people are now hearing all of the Scriptures being read to them each Sunday in Gbaya. • Pray for Wes as he does a consultant check with the Toposa of their Hebrews in February and also helps them prepare </p>

	<p>their Matthew, Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Hebrews and James for printing. The Toposa are a large people group and the last Scriptures that were printed for them was Luke and Acts in 2006.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for Jackie as she works with the Bongo on their literacy and teacher training, and serves as our translation and linguistic coordinator. Pray for wisdom and energy for her in preparing the way for new people to take over the translation and linguistic coordinator roles. • Pray for Jackie and others who are helping boys living on the streets of Juba who have severe wounds to clean their wounds week by week at a Saturday morning outreach. These boys have many needs, material, physical and spiritual. May God get other Christians involved and may these boys find life in the Lord and all the help they need.
3	<p>GREG & JEANETTE SUMMERVILLE: Guatemala Deaf Ministries Inc. gandjguate@gmail.com</p> <p>PRAISE & PRAYER: [Dated 1/16] Hello Prayer Partners,</p> <p>After leaving the mountains yesterday at noon, we safely made it to Guatemala and as near as I can tell, all of our stuff made it safely too. It is now just after 9:00pm Monday. Whew!! We had an 11 hour layover in Mexico City which went pretty well although we were cold. Here in our house in El Progreso it is a bit hot but comfortable. Elvis and I spent most of the drive from the airport debriefing each other. I will be heading to the property tomorrow to talk to the contractor and see what has been going on.</p> <p>Thank you all for praying for us. We couldn't do what we do without you lifting us up in prayer. To God be the glory. Jeanette will be doing an evaluation on Febe and then we'll let you know what is going on with her health.</p> <p>In His service, Greg -----</p> <p>[Dated 1/23] Hello Prayer Partners,</p> <p>Febe is making steady progress. Jeanette met with her last week and gave her some supplements that should help her with the Bells Palsy and her ears. She reported today that she already feels better. Praise the Lord!</p> <p>Margory's ankle is back to normal. Elvis still needs healing for his right wrist. Yolima's eyes need pray too. She has glaucoma and is using drops to control the pressure.</p> <p>Shane called me today from Casa de Mi Padre to tell me that he will be in Guatemala City on Friday, the 3rd of February and that we can pick Mario up at that time. He also said that little Jorge is coming back to the orphanage in a few days. He will be giving us little Jorge too. This is wonderful news as Jeanette and I have been praying for a long time that Jorge would be able to get back to Casa de Mi Padre so that he can come and learn a language and learn about the Savior of the world who came to give him eternal life. I don't know the details of how he got back to Casa de Mi Padre. I'm sure I will find out when we pick up the boys.</p> <p>I also want you to pray specifically for Maria Fernanda, 13 years old. She needs a change in her living situation. There is a chance that we could get her as well.</p> <p>God is answering prayers. He gave us a beautiful piece of property and He is going to use it for His glory. Amen!</p>
	<p>ROBIN THURMAN: Wycliffe Bible Translators (Retired), California robruthurman@gmail.com</p> <p>PRAISE: [Dated 1/30]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That I was able to see my optometrist on January 25th, and she made some adjustments to my prescription. That prescription is now being made into new glasses. • As I write this, I'm thinking back to two years ago, January 30, 2021, the day my beloved Ruth went home to be with the Lord. I still miss her, and would ask you to pray for me when you can. <p>PRAYER:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Here I go again! I have to get my Driver's License renewed now, even though it was just eight months ago that I was given a new License. I went into the DMV earlier this month, and I'm required to take another Vision Drive Test. The lady who helped me looked through the list of Driving Tests to see if she could find a Vision Driver Test. She couldn't find one, so she gave me a temporary Driver License and said she'd keep looking for a test time for me. But this temporary license is good just until March 10. Please pray for this whole process.
	<p>4 WORKERS IN VIETNAM: Partners International, Vietnam</p> <p>PRAISE: [Dated 11/15/20]</p> <p>We are blessed by your support and enthusiasm to witness and expand the kingdom of God to all ethnic groups in the Mekong.</p> <p>PRAYER: For the new believers to be grounded in God's Word and grow in their faith. For boldness and wisdom for Vietnam C's pastors and leaders. For the continued growth of the churches in North Vietnam.</p>

	For more university students to accept Christ and become servants for Him.
	SUE WILSON: At large; China PRAISE & PRAYER: For her ministry to reach far and wide.
	WATSON, R. PAULRAJ CHURCH GROWTH ASSOC. OF INDIA: Parents-in-law are Vasanth & Mano Albert PRAISE & PRAYER: For our trainees to establish successful ministries that transform communities physically and spiritually. For women seekers to take the next step of putting their faith in Christ. For the growth of the Indian Church throughout the country.
	ERIC & ANNE ZANDER: Belgium Evangelical Missions; Belgium PRAISE: Eric and Anne have committed their lives to communicating the Gospel and planting churches in their own culture. Eric leads several alternative expressions of church in a local social network such as among bikers. PRAYER: - For good health for Eric, and for finances to come in to help Ukraine refugees, and energy to meet all their ministry needs and goals.
	PRAYER: That the shipment of any supplies for any missionary or mission's organization will get to their destination/s safely and quickly.
	PRAYER: That all the missionaries will be blessed with the Hope of Jesus and the Power of the Holy Spirit to reach the lost with the gospel message.

Any comments or suggestions regarding this list may be sent to Anne Penney at amp316@ymail.com