



PRAYERPOINTS

A PRAYING PEOPLE IMPACTING A LOST WORLD



Diversity in Missions

NOWHERE IS THE PICTURE OF BIBLICAL DIVERSITY MORE POWERFULLY OR BEAUTIFULLY PAINTED THAN IN REVELATION 7:9. WE NEED A DIVERSE GROUP OF PEOPLE TO ENGAGE WITH THE DIVERSE GROUP THAT WILL BE REPRESENTED BEFORE THE THRONE. WE NEED MEN AND WOMEN OF EVERY AGE, ETHNICITY, AND BACKGROUND. EVERY PERSON HAS A PART TO PLAY IN FULFILLING THE GREAT COMMISSION. WILL YOU JOIN US?

Diversity is a strength and a struggle for multi-ethnic, multi-generational team working together in ministry

The Pregnancy Center Project Team in Chiang Mai, Thailand consists of women from different ethnicities and generations.

“Working on a diverse team allows us to learn more about how each of us is our heavenly Father’s precious child,” said a member of the team. “As we work together for a common goal, we learn to listen and humble ourselves. Our diverse group helps each other be better equipped to serve other women from different nations and cultures.”

The team’s diversity has proved to be both a great strength and a struggle. They can reach more people with the gospel by understanding more languages and cultures, but that variety also removes the ease of common assumptions from a common cultural background.

“One of the most difficult things is the language barrier,” a member of the team said. “Wanting to communicate but



Pregnancy Center Project Team members, representing four nationalities (American, Chinese, Thai, and Shan) as well as multiple generations.

sometimes having a hard time expressing ideas can make it easy for us to hold back from each other.” But when they encounter conflict, they said, “there is always an answer to the question, but it may not be the one you had in mind. Working together, we learn how great God’s grace is. No matter where we come from or what our experiences are, we are sisters, adopted into the Father’s family, which gives us common ground to work from. As we cross our cultures and develop deeper relationships within our team, we see breakthroughs to go even deeper together in ministry. “Pray for our team, that we will each seek a closer relationship with God. Pray 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27 for us. Ask God to provide a physical location and more workers to join our team as we empower and equip women in northern Thailand to choose life.”

1 DIVERSITY IN MISSIONS. Since the future of Revelation 7:9 includes every nation, tribe, people, and language worshipping God, pray that the same diversity will be included in reaching the world for Christ today. The world that God created is a mosaic. May mission teams be also.

2 ASIA PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES. Ask God to protect the physical and spiritual health of the Korean Hands-On missionaries on IMB teams. Pray that they will be filled with the Holy Spirit's power, put on the whole armor of God, and boldly proclaim the gospel as they serve for one year.

3 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES. Rose* is Filipino; her husband is American. They live in a city where many Filipino women live and work. Rose has developed relationships with many of these women and shared her faith with them at every opportunity. Ask for these friends to become sisters in faith.

4 EUROPEAN PEOPLES. Under a Hungarian Baptist mother church, IMB and other partners have planted an English-speaking church in a Hungarian city where many internationals live. Pray for guidance and unity for the ministry. May the Lord use it to make His name known among the nations.



A volunteer doctor from Mandarin Baptist Church of Los Angeles, California, talks with a refugee family.

5 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES. Pray for Karen and Richard Lee, African American IMB missionary team leaders. Their diverse team in Tanzania represents three cultures. “Diversity has its challenges,” Karen said. “But we have Christ in common. He makes us united in our purpose to reach the lost in Tanzania.”

6 DIVERSITY IN MISSIONS. Praise the Lord for 60 Hispanic Southern Baptists from the Florida Baptist Convention who plan to go on mission trips in the summer of 2022. Ask Him to provide all the logistical needs as well as lasting spiritual fruit.

7 ASIA PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES. “Pray that I can use the gifts God gave me in cartooning, music, and communication to share the gospel in different ways,” asked IMB missionary Steven Kunkel. “Pray that Japanese Christians will be encouraged to share the gospel through their gifts.”

8 DIVERSITY IN MISSIONS. Pray for African Americans to gain awareness of being missional beyond their local context. The idea of salaried positions on the mission field is not well known in these churches. Ask God to call more African American missionaries to fulfill the Great Commission.

9 CENTRAL ASIAN PEOPLES. Many places in Central Asia are closed to a traditional gospel witness by Americans, yet the people are in desperate need of the gospel. Pray that God will make a way for them to encounter the gospel through diverse ways like online or from believers of a similar culture.

10 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES. Pray for a couple on the IMB team in Tanzania as they reach out to the local Chinese community. Pray that new Chinese believers will grow in their faith in Jesus, and that as they return home, they will stand strong in their new faith and be a witness to their family and friends.

11 EUROPEAN PEOPLES. Mission workers from four continents work with local believers to share the gospel in Malta. This diversity is both challenging and rewarding. The different viewpoints enrich understanding, while varying cultures and languages sometimes make communication difficult.

12 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES. Maria* is a Latin American in the Middle East who works with a diverse group of believers to reach displaced peoples. Pray that Latin Americans in the Middle East will have gospel-sharing opportunities with displaced peoples, and that many will respond to it in faith.

13 ASIA PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES. Pray for the global COVID-19 pandemic to end in 2022 and for many countries to open their borders so that prepared Korean Hands-On missionaries can join and work with IMB teams around the world.

14 PEOPLES OF RAJASTHAN, INDIA. New believers in this region are reaching out boldly to share the gospel with people of different backgrounds! Pray with Rajasthan's diverse body of believers, asking that the gospel will continue spreading across every cultural, linguistic, and geographic barrier.

15 AMERICAN PEOPLES. Pray for Latin American believers, who are called by God, as they join the work of carrying the gospel to the nations. Many have already begun the process but lack funding, training, and support. Pray for God to provide the necessary resources.

16 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES. Max* was raised in Japan, while his wife, Molly,* was raised in Brazil. Pray for them as they connect with Japanese and Portuguese speakers in northern Africa and the Middle East. Ask God for abundant fruit from these relationships.

17 ASIA PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES. Pray as Korean churches and mission organizations mobilize, train, and send Hands-On missionaries to work with IMB teams. Ask God to provide faithful candidates who want to be sent as short- and long-term missionaries.

18 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES. Pray for a missionary couple from Mexico working on the IMB team in Tanzania. They run a weekly kids club for 60-80 kids and train locals to help teach. Pray for them as they train up teachers and share the gospel with kids who are hearing about Christ for the first time.

19 EUROPEAN PEOPLES. Belgium is a blend of French and Dutch people, refugees, university students from around



IMB missionary Steven Kunkel, leads a congregation in a praise song in Japanese.

the world, and immigrants from West Africa and the Middle East. Pray for local, diverse churches to work together for the gospel.

20 DEAF PEOPLES. Pray for a Deaf church in Central Asia to continue flourishing. During their services, they sit in a circle so they can see each other clearly. The facilitator signs a story from God's Word, then all the attendees discuss the story and take turns signing it themselves.

21 DIVERSITY IN MISSIONS. Pray for missionaries on diverse teams to listen to each other well, setting aside assumptions and seeking to understand each other. Pray that their unity and love for each other will be a witness to lost people around them and create gospel-sharing opportunities.

22 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES. Hailing from South America, Sara* now serves in the Middle East. She communicates in Spanish with churches back home and in English with her work partners. Pray for Sara and other South Americans to have emotional strength and an increased capacity to learn Arabic.

23 AMERICAN PEOPLES. Pray for Victoria,* a Chilean believer, as she prepares to rejoin an IMB team in Southeast Asia. The team's ministry focuses on 11 unreached people groups across several islands. Pray for her to gather the financial support, documentation, and visa that she needs.

24 ASIA PACIFIC RIM PEOPLES. Pray for IMB missionary Steven Kunkel, as he builds relationships with pastors and churches in Japan and connects them with the IMB team. "Pray for bridges, that our collaboration will influence local Christians to evangelize people in Japan," he said.

25 EUROPEAN PEOPLES. Churches in Eastern Europe have caught a vision to reach the world gathering in their cities! Ask God to give creativity and boldness to believers there who interact with new friends from different backgrounds and cultures.

26 SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN PEOPLES. Pray for three men from Korea who are working with the IMB team in Zambia for a time. Pray that their broad seed sowing will be plentiful, making disciples who will make more disciples and training leaders who will continue the gospel work when these three leave Zambia.

27 NORTHERN AFRICAN AND MIDDLE EASTERN PEOPLES. A believing woman from Latin America was seeking to serve but was denied a visa. Some international believers come from countries that do not have the same easy access to travel as those with a U.S. passport. Ask God to open the doors so Latinos can answer His call.

28 DIVERSITY IN MISSIONS. More Southern Baptist African American churches and networks are needed to answer the call to reach all nations. Pray for the SBC and its entities to develop systems to effectively communicate, train, and send those He calls from all SBC churches.

Missionary with autism opens ministry doors for his team in Japan

Steven Kunkel, an IMB missionary with autism, serves on a team in Osaka, Japan. He grew up on the mission field in Uruguay, where his parents served. As a young child, Steven stopped speaking, and by age 4, he was diagnosed with severe autism. A specialist said Steven would not become an independent adult.

“My parents were worried, yet they relied on the Lord and returned to Uruguay with me,” Steven said. Back on the field, Steven eventually started speaking again, came to faith in Christ, and responded to God’s call to missions in Japan. Autism once hindered Steven’s ability to speak, but he grew to learn Japanese and study many languages in college.

“The Lord slowly healed the negative impacts of autism in my life,” he said. “God used my autism to increase my love for missions in Japan.”



IMB missionary Steven Kunkel, with his well-marked Japanese Bible.

Now, Steven shares the gospel in Japan and encourages others to share the gospel with passion.

“Steven opens a lot of ministry doors for our team,” said Trey Fleming, a member of the IMB team in Osaka. “He is always finding ways to initiate conversations and infuse them with the gospel. He also challenges our whole team to engage Japanese people with a smile.”

“God used my autism to inspire the Japanese church,” Steven said. “God uses any condition for His glory.”

Intentionally diverse team launched a church to reach their diverse city and the nations

A city on the plains of Hungary draws university students from around the world as well as factories and offices of international businesses. City buses and trams buzz with a multitude of languages, and faces of every skin color fill coffee shops along city streets. The common language is English, but there was no English-speaking Baptist church until 2021 when an intentionally diverse group was launched to reach this city’s international community. The core group and worship team represent several nationalities.

“We’re excited that it’s diverse, but we aren’t doing it for diversity’s sake,” said a member of the team. “Our goal is to reach the international community as a



International Baptist Church in Hungary at their first Sunday worship service.

means to reach the nations since expats are very mobile.”

At the church’s first worship service in October, attendees from five continents showed up! Pray that God will use this new church to reach the lost with the gospel and to disciple them to take the good news wherever they go. Pray also for the team’s continued unity.

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Let’s advance
God’s kingdom
together

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*Names changed

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