



Month of Missions Prayer and Discernment

Sunday, Oct 29 Preparation
Welcome to a month of listening!

We are dedicating ourselves to a month of listening to the Father as The River family. We're asking God to make clear to us where in His world He wants us to be involved in missions. We'll spend this week preparing our hearts and minds to hear from the Father. You'll have a short prayer prompt for each day to guide you in considering who we are as a church in God's world. Listen deeply to what you hear from God, and make a note of it. Your River leadership wants to hear from you. Over the following three weeks, we'll then dedicate ourselves to praying over the world's major unreached people groups: Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims, asking God to make clear to us which area of the world He has prepared for us.

Pay attention to who we are as a church. When you think about The River, who are we? What are we about? When we say that our mission is to make disciples, what does that mean to you? How are we living out our vision that people would find both family and purpose at The River? Ask God to speak to your heart with a clear vision for who we already are as a church.

Monday, Oct 30

Yesterday we asked you to spend time noticing your church family. As you think on what you learned about The River family, consider this: *Missions works best when it is an outgrowth of the sending church.*

What did you notice about us that is in line with what Jesus said in Matthew 28:19-20? Jesus said go into all the world; how are we best going into the world around us? What are our strengths? What do we care about? *Whom* do we care about?

Tuesday, Oct 31

Pray today that God would reveal to church leadership the ways in which the Father intends for The River to be involved in God's world. James 1:5 tells us that we should ask God for wisdom. Today, pray for the leadership team, that we would be wise. Pray that God would give us His vision for the world and where He wants us involved in it. As you pray, what word do you receive for the leadership team?

Wednesday, Nov 1

Start your day by reading Genesis 12, particular the first three verses. God reveals to us here that His heart has *always* been for the nations. He also shows us that He has always been in the habit of sending His people out from their homes into the world for the good of the world. Pray today for the missionaries that we will be blessed to get to send into His world. We don't yet know their names or where they'll go, but God does! Pray that today they would be filled with peace and with an assurance of their calling. Pray also that God would bring them to us soon!

Thursday, Nov 2

Antioch was the place where we as believers were first called 'Christians'. It was also the first sending church. Read Acts 13:1-4. Ask God for this kind of clarity for The River. Pray that when our leaders worship the Lord and fast and pray, they would hear directly from the Holy Spirit! Pray for clear calling and courage to follow through on what we hear. Pray that we'll soon be able to say that both we *and the Holy Spirit* sent workers out from The River!

Friday, Nov 3

Yesterday we prayed through Acts 13, the beginning of the first missionary journey. Skim through the rest of Acts 13 and 14. Allow yourself to be amazed at what God did through Paul and Barnabas. What are the miracles, conversions, persecutions, or messages that stand out to you? Ask God to do it again in our days, and to give us the privilege of being a part!

Saturday, Nov 4

Thank you for praying and listening this week. Take today's prayer time to be still. Sit before the Lord. Ask Him to speak into the silence with a word for you or for your church. Look back over what you've heard from Him this week, and write it down so you can share it later with your leadership.

Sunday, Nov 5 Hindus

Today we get to begin praying for the Hindu world. It's a great time to do so, as Hindus are preparing throughout this week for Diwali, the biggest annual celebration for Hindus. It lasts five days and starts on Friday.

The more we know about people we're praying for, the more we are drawn to intercede for them. Named for the rows of lamps that are traditionally lit during this festival of light, Diwali is both a major religious and cultural event. It is a season when Hindus are more spiritually attuned than usual; as followers of Jesus, let's take this week to beg the Father to call His children in Hinduism to see His light breaking

through their darkness - and to ask Him if He's preparing The River to be a part of that!

As we gather today on this Sunday with our church family, celebrate Jesus, the Light of the World (John 8:12) who came as the True Light to people walking in darkness. Ask God to make us that city on a hill and lamp on a stand (Matthew 5.14-16) that shines brightly enough for our Hindu friends to see who believers are and what they're about - and so glorify our Father in Heaven!

Monday, Nov 6

More than 90% of the world's 1.2 billion Hindus live in the country of India. There's a Map Day (when we pray over regions) coming - let's pray over Indian cities today.

Open up a map of India, and pray over these five cities. Pay attention to whether or not God makes one of them stand out to you. Write down what you hear and why.

1. New Delhi : The capital, where most of the legislative, administrative and judicial decisions come from. Pray for just and righteous leadership.
2. Varanasi (Kasi) : A very vibrant city, Kasi is the unofficial religious capital of India, where Diwali is celebrated in particularly grand way. Pray for the light of Jesus to be brighter than the millions of points of light from Diwali candles.
3. Mumbai : The business capital of India, very densely populated with almost 13,000,000 souls, and the capital of Indian cinema. Pray for movement to Jesus and freedom from greed and the oppression that comes in its pursuit.
4. Sivakasi : In a country known for harsh working conditions, Sivakasi is known to be particularly brutal. Pray for God's children in Sivakasi to find freedom - from idolatry and from economic oppression.
5. Hyderabad : The most religiously diverse city (Hindu-Muslim-Christianity), pray for harmony and peace. Pray that Christians would be forces for unity and healing rather than division.

Thank you for praying and for listening!

Tuesday, Nov 7

1.2 billion people is an incomprehensibly large number. If you started calling out to God the name of every Hindu right now and spoke at a normal pace every minute of every day of every week, you would still be working through the list in the spring of 2040!

Faceless crowds are sometimes stifling to our prayer lives. Let's zoom in today.

Palash (*name changed to protect his identity*) is the leader of an India-based ministry. His organization provides training and mobilization for Indian disciple makers to take the light of Jesus to unreached Hindu people groups. Disciple-making practices, personal and communal spiritual growth, and wholistic service are hallmarks of this work.

- Pray for Palash and his wife, Aanshi. Pray for health, strength, and the Father's vision as they raise their sons, Jahan and Jaipal.
- Pray for the 200 leaders they are training.
- Ask God to start 5 distinct disciple making movements among (currently!) unreached Hindu people groups through their service.

As you pray for this brother of ours on the other side of the world, listen to what the Spirit says to you. See if He has a word for you or The River's leadership.

Wednesday, Nov 8

As you pray today, let's honor the request of one of our brothers in India. He has asked that, as we move toward Diwali, the Hindu festival of light, we would pray Genesis 1:3-4 over Hindu people groups.

These things are true:

- We serve the Father of Light.
- Jesus is the Light of the World.
- The people of God are a lamp on a stand.
- *And our enemy masquerades as an angel of light.*



God has been dividing darkness from light from before time began. Pray that during this season of Diwali, He would do it again, that He would make clear the difference between the Light of Life from Jesus and the lesser, deceptive lights that come from the enemy. Pray that the true Light of Jesus would shine brightly. Pray that God would make clear to us whether or not He wants The River to be involved in reaching His lost Hindu children.

Thursday, Nov 9 Today is Map Day!

When we pray for the Hindu world, even though we are praying for 1.2 billion people (almost one in six people alive today!), we get to zoom in on one specific part of the world. Less than 1% of Hindus live outside the Asia-Pacific region of the world.

Only three countries actually have a Hindu majority: India, Nepal, and Mauritius. That said, 97% of all Hindus live in one of those three countries, which means that Hindus are the most likely of all the world's major religions to experience life as the majority culture. You can imagine how this contributes to a mixing of religion, politics, and culture which can make coming to Christ even more complicated for our Hindu friends.

Allow your mind to roam over the globe - this earth that your Father in Heaven created. Focus in on these countries:

India
Nepal
Bangladesh
Indonesia
Pakistan
Sri Lanka
United States
Malaysia

Each of these countries is home to more than one million Hindus. Pray for peace. Pray for the Prince of Peace to be recognized as the Lord He is. Pray for movement, for thousands and eventually millions of Hindus to come to recognize Jesus as the Light. Ask God whether or not The River has a role to play in this now.

Friday, Nov 10

Today is the first day of Diwali. More than a billion Hindus begin celebrating their Festival of Light on this Friday. They will decorate their homes with clay lamps. They also create patterns called *rangoli* on their floors using powders or sand as invitations to the goddess Lakshmi and the good luck she brings.

As Hindus look to bring light into their homes through clay lamps, pray the words of Jesus from John 8.12 over them: *I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.* Pray that the light of Jesus will burst into Hindu homes throughout India and the whole Bengal region. Pray that the light of life - worth so much more than any clay lamp - would shine brightly in ways that draw Hindus to Jesus. Ask God whether or not He's preparing for The River to have a hand in sharing that light in the immediate future.

Saturday, Nov 11

Thank you for praying and listening this week on behalf of the Hindu world. Take today's prayer time to be still. Sit before the Lord. Ask Him to speak into the silence

with a word for you or for our church. Look back over what you've heard from Him this week about Hindus, and write it down so you can share it later with church leadership. Particularly pay attention to the people or places that seemed to stand out more brightly to you.

Sunday, Nov 12 Buddhists

Welcome to a week of praying for the Buddhist world! We're going to be praying for Buddhists around the globe as well as listening to the Spirit about whether or not He has prepared a role for The River in bringing them to Jesus.

Buddhists ultimately seek enlightenment; as believers, we know the truth, that there is no enlightenment apart from Jesus. Moving among our church family today, you'll worship, pray, and listen to the word. Pray that the world's 500 million Buddhists would somehow find the only really light, that is, Jesus the Messiah, the one who is the Living Word. Ask the Father for a vision of whether or not He is preparing The River to serve the Buddhist world by sending out disciple makers to bring them to Jesus.

Monday, Nov 13

Buddhists represent about 7% of the earth's population. Currently seven countries have Buddhist majorities: Cambodia, Thailand, Burma (also known as Myanmar), Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Laos, and Mongolia.

Owing to its size, we also need to remember to pray for the Buddhists living in China. While fewer than one in five Chinese citizens are Buddhists, they make up half of the Buddhists alive today!

As you let your mind roll over the countries in which almost half a billion people practice Buddhism, pray these things:

- Pray that they would find fulfillment in Jesus rather than in wealth, comfort, or honor.
- Pray that they would meet a believer - it's estimated that 86% of Buddhists have never even spoken with a Christian!
- Pray for courage and for peace for those who do choose to follow Jesus.
- Pray for wisdom for The River's leadership about whether or not to dive deeply into ministry in the Buddhist world.

Tuesday, Nov 14

Yesterday we prayed for the masses, for the half-billion Buddhists scattered over east Asia. Because our Father cares about whole



people groups as well as every person made in His image, today let's pray for one.

Here is a direct prayer request from a missionary on the ground in southeast Asia:

Pray for Chailai (name changed to protect her identity), a young woman with a difficult family background who struggles with depression and feelings of worthlessness. Pray she can fully accept the love and healing of Jesus.

Hold our sister Chailai before the Father today. Pray that she would discover her worth in who Jesus says she is, that she would know she is created in the image of the One True God. Pray that she would believe she is loved and that Jesus would heal and redeem her wounds. Pray that God would move your heart to pray more deeply for Buddhists, and that He would make clear to you if the Buddhist world is where we need to be serving as a church family.

Wednesday, Nov 15

The River leadership is asking you to pray Jesus' words in John 14 over Buddhists around the world today. Pray that they would discover that Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, that He alone is the path to the Father. Pray that in our days God would begin movements of whole Buddhist people groups to Jesus through the action of the Spirit of Truth. Ask God to show us whether or not this is the kind of work He wants us to be involved in.

Thursday, Nov 16 Today is Map Day for the Buddhist world!

On Monday, we prayed over the seven Buddhist-majority countries as well as China: Cambodia, Thailand, Burma/Myanmar, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Laos, and Mongolia. Many of these governments openly oppress Christianity and others thought to be threats to their power.

We know that God's Kingdom is greater than any government, that although every nation will eventually fall, God's Kingdom lasts forever. We also know that our Father does not delight in seeing His children victimized and oppressed.

- Pray today that the Prince of Peace would reign over war-torn Myanmar, where well over one million people have been displaced by violence.
- Pray for the government in Thailand to bring change toward justice and equality through a supernatural gifting of wisdom for the new leaders.
- Pray for the few hundred of our Christian family thought to exist in Bhutan, that they would not only persevere but multiply!

- Pray that Jesus would be discovered throughout Cambodia as the Great Physician, the one who can heal their national wounds from decades of trauma including the Khmer Rouge genocide.
- Pray for the disciple makers in villages in Sri Lanka who face attacks from their Buddhist neighbors, that they would be both wise and bold, that they would be creative in sharing Jesus, and that they would be known by their love.
- Pray for our brothers and sisters in Laos, who have learned how to survive under threat from their communist government, that the Laotian church would multiply under local leadership.
- Praise God for what He's done in Mongolia, growing His church from an estimated four(!) Mongolian believers in 1989 to over 40,000 today. Ask Him for more!

Praise God for what He's done and is doing and will do in these Buddhist countries! Ask Him also for a word as to whether or not He intends us to join in this.

Friday, Nov 17

Today we are asking you to pray in line with one of the specific things Jesus told His followers to pray about. Matthew records that one day, when Jesus saw the crowds that came in response to His proclamation of the Kingdom by teaching and healing, He was filled with compassion for them because they were like sheep with no shepherd. His compassion moved Him to tell His disciples to pray - to pray for the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers into His harvest field.

Having spent yesterday praying over maps and countries that represent crowds of unreached Buddhist people groups, be moved with compassion and pray for more missionaries. Pray that God would send out more missionaries to serve and love unreached Buddhists around the world. Pray specifically that, if He intends The River to send missionaries to Buddhists, He would make it perfectly clear.

The harvest truly is plentiful, friend. Pray that God would send out His workers into His harvest field!

Saturday, Nov 18

Thank you for praying and listening this week on behalf of the Buddhist world. Take today's prayer time to be still. Sit before the Lord. Ask Him to speak into the silence with a word for you or for our church. Look back over what you've heard from Him this week about Buddhists, and write it down so you can share it later with church leadership. Particularly pay attention to the people or places that seemed to stand out more brightly to you.

Sunday, Nov 19 Muslims

Welcome to a week of praying about the Muslim world!

As an American and Christian, you may find yourself conflicted about taking a week to pray for Muslims. 911, wars in hostile Muslim regions and recent events in Israel have made it difficult to speak openly about loving Muslims, about praying for their salvation.

Fight against that today! The truth is, just as God love you and the rest of The River family, He loves every Muslim alive today. They, too, are made in His image.

They just don't know it yet.

As you worship today with our River family, with those who acknowledge Jesus as Lord, pray for Muslims around the world to come to know Jesus. Pray that the Prince of Peace would come in their hearts and in their countries. Ask God to show you and your church leadership whether or not He has prepared a place and people for us to serve in the Muslim world.

Monday, Nov 20

As you start your work week today, allow your mind and your heart to drift toward North Africa. You may not know this, but much of how we think today about the nature of Jesus, about the relationships within the Trinity, and about grace and works was shaped by North Africans many centuries ago. Great and godly people, like Augustine have been used mightily by God to shape the early centuries of the church - and they were born in North Africa!

Today, however, most North Africans view Christianity - this global faith so indebted to people born on that soil - as a foreign religion. They have no idea that it is in fact a buried but important part of their own cultural identity. Pray today for a fresh wind to blow across northern Africa, for the Holy Spirit to stir the hearts of the sons and daughters of countries like Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia to faith in the Son. Pray that this would be the generation who calls these countries back to their ancient roots of thought leaders in the Christian world. Pray also that the Father would reveal to us at The River whether or not He is preparing us to send missionaries into a north African country.



Tuesday, Nov 21

Today we have the gift of one of our sisters who serves as a missionary in Northern Greece working with Muslim refugees shaping our prayers.

Sudzhi Djin is from Syria and has been living in Greece for almost four years. The other day she was having a conversation about food (she is apparently an amazing cook!), and she told a missionary there how much she loves hosting her friends. It is a time when she gets to share her favorite dishes around a table with people she loves. Our impression of Islam has always been that it is a duty-laden, legalistic religion. However, when the missionary asked her what she loved most about being a Muslim she said, "I love to pray to God!" They actually ended their conversation early that day because she needed to go pray.

As we reflect on this conversation, Psalm 116:1-2 comes to mind. It says, "I love the Lord because he hears my voice and my prayer for mercy. Because he bends down to listen, I will pray as long as I have breath." Scripture tells us that Jesus Christ, the One who is near to the Father's heart, is the One who reveals God to us (John 1:18). Will you pray today that Sudzhi Djin will come to know Jesus Christ?

Pray along with our missionary sister, and pay attention to how this touches your spirit.

Wednesday, Nov 22

There are 1.8 billion people trapped in Islam. That's almost one out of every four people alive! If we're honest, praying that 1.8 billion people would come to know Jesus sometimes feels as effective as tossing spoonfuls of water on a forest fire. Those are the moments when we're tempted to quit praying.

Jesus gave us some pretty specific advice about praying, though. He encourages us to pray with *shameless audacity* (Luke 11.8). Asking God to break through strongholds in the lives of 1.8 billion people is pretty shamelessly audacious. Let's do it! Ask that God would change the soil of the hearts of Muslims by the thousands and that He would call them to Himself. Pray for movement out of unreached Islamic people groups and into the light of Jesus. Pray also for wisdom to know if God is calling us into these areas of service.


Thursday, Nov 23 Happy Thanksgiving!

Before you gather with family today, take a moment to praise God for the gift of knowing Him, of knowing that all good and perfect gifts come from Him. Pray also for the almost 2 billion Muslims alive today who don't know Him as *good*. Pray that they would come to know Jesus, and that, if it is His will, The River would soon have the gift

of knowing we've been a part of leading unreached Muslims into a relationship with Jesus.

Friday, Nov 24

Within the Islamic faith, Fridays are days set apart for congregational prayers. Men are required to gather with other Muslims, hear a brief teaching, and offer their prayers to Allah in community. As followers of Jesus, we will in turn dedicate ourselves in a special way on this Friday. We'll be praying Isaiah 43:19-21:



See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.
The wild animals honor me,
the jackals and the owls,
because I provide water in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland,
to give drink to my people, my chosen,
the people I formed for myself
that they may proclaim my praise.

Father of Light, we beg you on this Friday to keep doing new things! As You work to make new life spring up in unexpected places and in unexpected people, we ask for the eyes to see it. You are already doing new things among Muslims; nurture those new movements, Father, to bear fruit in the wilderness that will last.

We believe that You alone can turn spiritual wastelands into lands flush with streams of living water. As Jesus once met a Samaritan woman at a well to offer her living water, we ask that you send the Christ to meet your Muslim daughters and sons in visions in which He would offer them once again living water - water that would quench their thirst forever.

Call Your people, Your chosen ones to Yourself, Father, and free them so that they may declare Your praise.

In the name of the Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, we beg these things of You today, Father. Amen.

Saturday, Nov 25

Thank you for praying and listening this week on behalf of the Islamic world. Take today's prayer time to be still. Sit before the Lord. Ask Him to speak into the silence with a word for you or for your church. Look back over what you've heard from Him

this week about Muslims, and write it down so you can share it later with your leadership. Particularly pay attention to the people or places that seemed to stand out more brightly to you.

Sunday, Nov 26 Discerning

Thank you for walking with us through a month of praying for the majority of the world's unreached people groups. We believe as a church family that God is calling us to prepare ourselves to send workers out to serve Hindus, Buddhists, or Muslims in their journey toward knowing Jesus. We simply don't know where...or when...or whom yet.

We started this month by asking for wisdom. Ask that again today. We took a month to soften our hearts toward the world's unreached people groups. Now ask God to reveal our next steps. As you worship Him with your family today, ask Him for His eyes to see where He wants us to move.

Monday, Nov 27

Today we are stepping away from praying for unreached people groups to pray for those serving them. We've spent this month answering passionate pleas for prayer from workers who are daily being poured out on behalf of the people they love and serve. This kind of love takes a toll.

- Pray today for workers to have endurance in the face of the daily challenges that confront people working on the edges of the expansion of the Kingdom. They won't necessarily wiggle requests for themselves into our month of prayer, so let's do it for them.
- Pray for resilience to get back up again after failure.
- Pray for creativity.
- Pray for healing from the secondary trauma they experience as they daily care for wounded people.
- Ask God to shield them from attacks on their souls.
- Pray that they would be refreshed by the prayers of the saints.
- Finally, pray for the privilege of sending out a new family from The River to serve some of the world's unreached.

Tuesday, Nov 28

God makes a habit of showing up when we least expect Him. Scripture is full of times when He or His angels showed up in surprising places to surprised people.

He also reveals Himself to those who seek Him. We've spent this month asking God to reveal His will for this church. Believe that He might be doing so to YOU! Ask Him to speak loudly enough and with enough clarity for you to hear His voice in a way that you never have before. Pay attention to what you hear; write it down; share it.

Wednesday, Nov 29

Jesus tells us in John 17 that the world will know Him by our oneness. Ask God to bring one image, one voice, one vision to our church leadership. Ask that He would give us a united calling that is so clear we cannot help but know it's from Him and praise Him for it.

Thursday, Nov 30

We've reached the end of our month of prayer! We have prayed for our church and for missionaries, both on the field and those yet to launch. We have also poured ourselves out in prayer for Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims. We've asked Him for direction; praise Him now for what He has brought to us. Praise God today for what He has done IN YOU and what He will do THROUGH US. What a global and eternal privilege and responsibility we have ahead of us. *Thank you for using us this way, Heavenly Father.*

Thank you again for participating in our month of prayer. If you have not already shared what you have heard, church leadership will reach out to ask what you've heard from the Father. We are excited to hear what He has said through all of us - and even more excited about launching workers out from The River into the world to make disciples!

