

PARTNERPLAN

Joel Hafvenstein - Nepal March 2018

United Mission to Nepal
PO Box 126
KATHMANDU
Nepal

Dear friends in Scotland,

Thank you for continuing to support us in prayer, and special thanks to everyone who has been in touch by letter and email. Our top prayer requests this time:

- 1. For Nepal's new government to be stable, effective, and locally accountable.**
- 2. For UMN and the new government to maintain a good relationship.**
- 3. For the changes at UMN which Joel is leading.**
- 4. For our physical health (especially continued headache reduction for Fi).**
- 5. For Isaac to adjust well to nursery school.**

Last time, we asked your prayer for Nepal's provincial and national elections—which were the last stages in rolling out a new constitution, ten years after the end of Nepal's terrible civil war. We're happy to report that the elections were peaceful, with a clear and unchallenged outcome.

The new Prime Minister, K.P. Oli, held that role when we arrived in 2015. We've since had two other Prime Ministers, which gives you a good sense of how unstable the government here has been! But Oli's party now enjoys a strong majority and is building a broad coalition, which has raised hopes for a more stable politics in future.



Nepal now has elected local governments for the first time in twenty years, as well as a brand new provincial level of government. This new “federal system” with its three layers is going to take a lot of working out. We're definitely excited at the possibility for greater local accountability—e.g. of budgets for local services being set and monitored by people living locally, rather than in far-off Kathmandu. So please join us in praying that Nepal finds its way to the right combination of strong, accountable local government and strong, stable central government.

Meanwhile, Joel and the UMN Leadership Team are leading some major changes in the mission's structure and ways of working. A lot of the key decision-making jobs in our Kathmandu office will be moving out to the districts (echoing the government shift toward local authority). Over the next two years, we'll be leaving some districts altogether and focusing in fewer areas, to try to increase our impact on poverty.

As we navigate these changes, we're trusting in the God who “stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. The people were glad when it grew calm, and He guided them to their desired haven.” (Psalm 107:29-30) So far, the UMN team's response to the change plan has been very constructive, even when people's jobs are set to change dramatically. Please pray for

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continued peace in the storm, and wisdom for the leadership.

UMN continues to serve in communities hit by major floods last year. We distributed some blankets and warm clothes to the worst affected families before the cold weather struck. We're also working on rebuilding people's houses and livelihoods. We'd ask for prayer for everyone affected by this disaster, and for us as we prepare for the risk of floods in the coming year's monsoon season.

So many thanks to everyone who has been praying for Fiona's migraines. After many months of severe headaches and trying all kinds of things to treat them, Fi finally had some respite in December. Regular physiotherapy and preventive medication seemed to really help. However, the last couple of months have been worse again, if not as bad as before. Meanwhile, an unpleasant bacterial infection went through our family and took months to fully clear. So we're grateful for your continued prayer for health for us all.



Our youngest son Isaac has started nursery school in the mornings. We're really happy with the place, and it's made Fiona's physiotherapy visits possible but even after a couple of months Isaac still finds it hard to be away from Fiona. We'd appreciate prayer for Isaac to adjust well and find joy there.

We look forward to welcoming a group of visitors from Church of Scotland out here in April, and to visiting our partner churches in Stirling in early June. Meanwhile, thank you all so much for praying with us!

Joel and Fiona
Caleb and Isaac