

Pioneers, Inc

David & Daphne Smith

North India

Dave and Daphne Smith bring the good news of Jesus to the Garhwali People of North India. They live in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand and work in rural mountain villages in the Himalayas in a small valley called Deolsari.

David's home is West Michigan and Daphne is from Kalimpong, India. They met at Kuyper College in Grand Rapids and have been married for 38 years. The Smiths have five grown children who all reside in America.



Dave and Daphne joined Pioneers in 1988 and initially served in Nepal planting the first church among the Sherpa people group in Kathmandu. Since 1997, the Smiths have lived in Mussoorie and have helped establish five house fellowships in the villages of Deolsari.

These are rural villages and the people are poor Hindu subsistence farmers. Though these families are very conservative and resistive to change, they are also hospitable and eager for outside contact. For about ten years, Dave, Daphne, and various team and family members spent time with the people monthly or more often, demonstrating the love of Christ through word and deed. About five years ago, three young men gave their lives to Christ and out of that small beginning, five house fellowships now exist with many Christians and almost all are young people.

Currently, the Smiths' role is one of encouragement, friendship, and mentoring of the many new Christians in and around Deolsari and their new teammates. They have a team of four single women who live part-time in the village and part-time in Mussoorie who do health work and disciple other young village women. Our team consists of Daphne and Dave, a Nepali family (Chandra and Tina), and four single women: Melody, Alissa, Manu, and Julie. Pratim and Vinita now work independently teaching a one year Bible course to young leaders.

The Smith's home, located on a forested mountainside, is also a place of frequent mission visitors, summer teams, supporters, and neighbors.

Due to the undeveloped nature of rural India and the lack of resources or opportunities for these young Christians, Dave and Daphne are now initiating income-generating opportunities by developing a business that not only may help meet the needs of these young Christians, but provide a service to the community by manufacturing and selling hand-operated washing machines.

After 25 years of ministry, three areas of prayer and need stand out: The first is family. The Smith's five children and one grandson, as well as other family

members, are far away. For several years, Dave and Daphne have been able to make yearly visits home to see family members, take care of health issues, and visit supporters. The needs of the family and the needs of the ministry both seem to grow exponentially each year while the resources and strength of Dave and Daphne either remain the same or lessen. Pray that the Smiths will be able to balance their time and resources between these two needs.

Secondly, 'the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few'. In spite of so many young people coming to Christ, the needs of these young people have not diminished, but increased because 'in Christ they are a new creation'. With this newness of life come many new hopes and ideas on the one hand, and the relinquishing of the old ways and traditions. Habits and behaviors many generations old now need to be replaced with a Christian culture of God's kingdom. Idol worship and a general hopelessness are being replaced by a relationship with the living God and new hope. Mentoring all this energy towards positive change is no easy task in a world that does not welcome Christ or his followers or offer much assistance. Pray for these new believers and their needs, and the multiplying church in our area.

And thirdly, God has laid on the hearts of Dave and Daphne something completely new that is outside their realm of experience so far, the development of a clothes-washing system for the poor. Most people in the world still wash clothes on the ground by hand. The very act of providing an affordable washer to one of these people results in instant friendship and gratitude, opening doors for more communication across so many cultural and religious barriers. This is a huge project that includes engineering, manufacturing and distribution of products, all requiring new education and experience at a time when most people are anticipating retirement! Yet contacts in Africa and South East Asia (Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, etc.) have all voiced an interest. This small 'business as mission' is just getting started. Pray that God will bless the Smith's efforts and open doors for many as this project develops.

Dave and Daphne Smith intend to make their next twenty years their best!

Ways to Keep in Touch:

Email: davendaphnesmith@me.com - ask to receive their regular newsletters.

Daphne's Facebook (Daphne Smith in Mussoorie, India)

Telephone: 231-981-0364 (a Michigan number that rings in India!)