

LIFT

Ministry Group July Resource

Six Things Every Pastor Wished Missionaries Understood.

1. Missions isn't the only thing we ask our congregations to give sacrificially towards. We often feel the burden of overtasking our people to give beyond the tithe to fund building programs, community outreaches, missions and more.
2. We are contacted by multiple missionaries every month seeking a meeting with the pastor. It is especially hard for bi-vocational pastors to meet outside of scheduled church services. We love missionaries, but cannot invite everyone who contacts us to join us for a service or meet for coffee.
3. The decision to financially take on missionaries, at some churches, is determined by a missions board or deacon board, not the pastor.
4. Be conscientious of the time you've been given in a service. Taking more time without permission can come across as disrespectful.
5. If we are supporting you, please communicate with us from time to time so that we know what you are up to and know how to pray for you.
6. Missionaries who can connect their mission to the church's vision have a greater impact on the congregation.



Shop Talk:

Developing a Missions Culture in your church (Pt.2)

Establishing Vision & Long-Term Goals

Not only should missions be a part of your administrative culture, but it should also be a part of your long range vision and planning.

Four key components to consider when building out a long range missions vision for your church include: support, projects, raising up missionaries from within your church, and planning missions trips.

Support: Missions vision must be birthed in a church. That includes casting vision for supporting missionaries. A missions culture does not emerge spontaneously, it is reached through intentionality.

Discuss: How are missionaries added to your support rolls? Is there a strategy or do you simply add a missionary when the finances permit?

Here are some long range goals (focused on support) that guided our missions vision for the church:

1. We had long range goal of supporting every Indiana AGWM missionary.
2. We wanted to support a Chi-Alpha missionary at every school with a Chi-Alpha Ministry in Indiana.
3. We want to bring our monthly support for each missionary up to \$100.

Honoring Missionaries

"Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other."-Romans 12:10

One of the most influential books that I have read, outside of the Bible, is Honor's Reward by John Bevere. The book teaches the biblical significance of honoring others. Honor is a virtue that aligns us with God's value system and should permeate the missions culture in our churches. Let's discuss a couple ways we can honor our missionaries: personal connection & care and spiritual support.

- **Personal Connection:** Building a missions culture in a church is difficult, in part, because it means investing the time to build personal connection with each of the missionaries you support. How do we build solid personal connections?

Take their phone calls. Respond to their emails. Stop by their missions tables and talk. Check in on them. Take them to lunch. Ask about their families. Introduce them to your friends. Bless their kids and honor their spouses when they visit.

- **Care & Spiritual Support:** Missionaries face a number of challenges that you and I may never have to contend with: learning new languages, learning a new culture, itinerating, raising a budget, leaving friends and family to pursue God's calling, raising and educating their kids on the field, and the stress of living in a dangerous environment. Those are in addition to the stresses we all face: marriage stress, parenting issues, feelings of doubt, fear and insecurity.

Care and spiritual support is a real need among missionary families. Here are some ways a church can provide rest, relaxation and spiritual encouragement to the missionaries they support.

Pay for missionary family to get counseling while on the field.

Send a missionary couple to a marriage retreat, or if you host a marriage weekend invite them to be your guest at no cost.

Cover their expenses to a prayer summit, training, or ministry event.

Provide them with a place to stay when they are traveling in your area of the state.

Provide a vehicle for them to use on iteration.

Discuss: What are some other ways you/your church can provide care for a missionary family?

Establishing Vision & Long Range Goal (Cont.)

Projects: Adopt an annual missions project that engages your congregation to serve and give. Even if people are regularly giving to missions, they will often dig deeper to fund a project. Here are some ideas to consider:

1. Take up a miracle offering annually to fund a specific project: Convoy of Hope, Compact Family Services, BGMC or STL, water wells or building church structures.
2. Don't forget local missions. Support a local homeless shelter, food pantry, foster care ministry or a Christian crisis pregnancy center.
3. Don't overlook partnering with other organizations and churches doing charitable work in your region including Chemo Buddies, Salvation Army, CASA or an addiction center.

Discuss: What are some unique projects that your church has done to generate missions interest at your church?

Raise up Missionaries: Missions takes on even greater significance to a congregation when some the missionaries they support are members of their church who've been called to take the gospel around the globe. How do you foster the call to missions in your people?

1. Introduce them to missionaries to hear about the call of God.
2. Invite them to join you for lunch with the missionary.
3. Ask them to correspond with missionary families the church supports.
4. Call on them to serve as host to the missionary and their family while they are at the church.
5. Encourage those who feel the call to attend a school of ministry and help equip them to pursue credentials.

Mission Trips: One of the most effective ways to support missionaries and stir a heart for mission in your church is through well-planned, purposeful mission trips. When planning a trip there are a few things to consider:

1. **Establish your purpose before you go.** Will you be focusing on construction, working in a school, ministering in a feeding program, running activities for kids or evangelizing communities? The biggest thing to remember is that you are there to assist/encourage/support the missionary's work.
2. **Choose your team.** Everybody should go on a missions trip, but not everybody should go on "every" missions trip. Once you establish your purpose for going, you should encourage people to go that can help you accomplish your plan and purpose for being there. Be up front about the physical demands and trip conditions. The goal is not provide the team with an "experience", but to assist the missionary in accomplishing their mission.
3. **Fundraising.** Missions trips are not cheap. Flights, often, must be booked six months in advance which requires a financial commitment early. Churches take missions trips, but rarely do they fully fund them. Churches can assist with fundraising, but typically the individual is responsible for garnering the support necessary to make the trip.
4. **Administrating the trip.** Things you may be responsible for when planning a trip: Informing the AG you are taking a trip, booking flights, arranging lodging, providing food, fees to get into the country, validating passports are current, check on immunizations, researching currency exchange rates, arranging transportation, arranging an interpreter, and doing background checks.