



THE
BLUEPRINT SERIES
Volume 1

Building...

MISSIONS LEADERSHIP

in the Local Church



Created by Paul Brannan
for the

WORLD ASSEMBLIES OF GOD FELLOWSHIP



THE
BLUEPRINT SERIES
Volume 1

Building...

MISSIONS LEADERSHIP

in the Local Church



This manual has been produced by the **Missions Awareness Team** to assist church leaders in establishing a comprehensive missions outreach in the local assembly.

Created by Paul Brannan



CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	4
INTRODUCTION	5
SECTION 1: THE CHURCH: THE CORNERSTONE OF WORLD MISSIONS	6
Part 1: Evaluate Your Missions Preparedness.....	7
How Missions Minded Is Your Church?.....	7
Pastor, You Are the Key.....	9
A Missions Committee, A Missions Board – Is There a Better Name?	11
Part 2: Forming a Team.....	12
Why Have a Missions Awareness Team?	12
How to Form a Missions Awareness Team.....	13
Part 3: Preparing a Missions Strategy.....	15
Creating Missions Policy	15
Responsibilities and Goals of the Missions Awareness Team.....	16
Part 4: Putting Your Plan Into Action	19
Setting the Agenda	19
Keeping a Record of the Missionaries the Church Supports	20
Getting to Know the Missionaries.....	20
Evaluating Current Missions Potential	21
Creating an Annual Missions Budget	21
Determining Which Missionaries to Support.....	22
Missionary Budget Review.....	23
Information About Our Missionary Partners	25
Missionary Giving: Evaluation and Goals	28
Annual Missions Budget Worksheet.....	29
How to Get the Most from the Missionary Visit	31

SECTION 2: ASSEMBLIES OF GOD WORLD MISSIONS	33
Part 1: World Missions Within the Assemblies of God World Fellowship	34
Part 2: The World Missions Department and Your National Assemblies of God.....	35
SECTION 3: MISSIONARIES	36
Part 1: How Are Assemblies of God Missionaries Supported?	37
Part 2: Advantages of Giving to Missions through the Local Church.....	39
Part 3: How Does the System Work?	41
Part 4: Where Does the Money Go?.....	43
Part 5: Additional Facts About Monthly Commitments.....	44
Part 6: Steps to Becoming a Missionary.....	46
APPENDICES	48
Policy Statement for the Missions Awareness Team in the Local Church	48
Available Resources	51

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sixty years of ministry have, to a great extent, determined the person I am now. Forty-eight of those years have been spent in world missions' involvement. I thank God for the opportunities I have had to serve as a pastor, missionary, missionary administrator, district missions director, creator and coordinator of the Missions Awareness Team, and, currently, as resource editor for the team.

I am indebted to hundreds of churches where I have ministered about missions and to the missions committees and lay leadership that allowed me the privilege to share the —how toll and —why of missions. This manual is the product of all of those experiences. I have drawn, not only from my own background, but also from the experiences of others who have graciously shared with me. Special gratitude is due to some very committed people who generously shared with me the structure and function of missions within their congregations.

The sole purpose of this manual is to share workable ideas that can assist church leaders in building strong missions outreaches within their churches. Always aware that cultures differ and so will methods, but I remain prayerful that you may glean from these pages something of the —how toll that may be applied to your own church and community. The —want toll must come from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and a desire to follow Christ's commands.

May you and your congregation be blessed as you endeavor to reach your community, your nation and the world beyond!

Your partner in the harvest,

Paul Brannan

INTRODUCTION

Harvesttime requires doing whatever is necessary to accomplish the work. For the first time in the history of missions outreach, the Church has the capability to tell every person in the world about Jesus Christ. The technology of our day combined with a Spirit-filled church makes evangelizing the world possible.

These opportunities demand our obedience!

Jesus gave the Great Commission — —Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:19) — to all the Church, not just a few of His followers. That day as He stood on the mountain in Galilee and gave the command, He made every believer and every church responsible for evangelizing the world. The Church must use every available means to fulfill the command of Jesus to —Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15).

A local church that does not bear the burden of missions with vision, faith and power is separating itself from its intended purpose. The apostle Peter revealed the heart of Jesus when he said, “*The Lord is ... not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*” (2 Peter 3:9). From the Day of Pentecost until Jesus comes again, the Church’s divine imperative is to tell the whole world about Him.

Every Assemblies of God church, regardless of size, must make the fulfillment of the Great Commission a priority. A church that is not enthusiastically involved in reaching the whole world with the gospel is missing its true purpose. Churches that constantly look inward become spiritually stagnant. They cease to be vital, living organisms. Instead, local churches must look beyond their walls and enlarge their worldview, making every attempt to bring a spiritual difference to their communities, cities and world.

With the founders of the Assemblies of God throughout the world, may we commit ourselves individually and collectively to the greatest evangelism that the world has ever seen!

The following pages have been prepared to assist in leading churches to the goal of reaching their full potential in world evangelism.

SECTION 1

The Church

The Cornerstone of World Missions

The local congregation is the cornerstone in building missions. Christ commanded the Church to reach the world with the gospel. The church at Antioch set the example during the first century by sending out Barnabas and Paul. The Holy Spirit is still calling men and women for missionary service, and the obedient church continues to send them to the ends of the earth.

One day as they were worshipping God — they were also fasting as they waited for guidance — the Holy Spirit spoke: “Take Barnabas and Saul and commission them for the work I have called them to do.” So they commissioned them... they laid hands on their heads and sent them off.

Acts 13:2, 3 The Message

PART 1

Evaluate Your Missions Preparedness

How Missions Minded Is Your Church?

A close look at how your church measures up in its missions vision and outreach.

Commitment is difficult to measure, but it is possible to measure ministry, teaching and activities made available by the leadership and the participation and response of the congregation. A thorough evaluation is a valid exercise that will assist a pastor and church leadership in measuring the quantity and quality of missions activities within the local congregation.

The following 20 questions will assist you in evaluating where you are in building a strong, missions-minded church. Each question has a value of up to five points, depending upon the degree of success the program is experiencing. Each question should be answered candidly and graded in this manner:

- 0 – No activity
- 1 – Nonfunctioning program
- 2 – Poor
- 3 – Fair
- 4 – Works well
- 5 – Excellent program

- ___ 1. Has our congregation been taught the eternal lostness of all who reject Jesus Christ or who die without hearing the message of salvation?
- ___ 2. Is regular, frequent teaching given concerning the biblical basis of missions and individual responsibility to reach a dying world?
- ___ 3. Does our church have a functioning missions team that meets at least six times a year and has a clear statement of purpose?
- ___ 4. Has our church conducted an annual missions convention and received faith promises for at least three years?
- ___ 5. Does every family unit in the congregation participate in faith promise giving?
- ___ 6. Does our church have at least six missionary speakers each year?
- ___ 7. Are the monthly missions Sunday presentations well planned?
- ___ 8. Are people well informed of the needs and victories of missionaries the church supports?
- ___ 9. Does the congregation pray regularly and publicly for missionaries and their specific needs?

- ___ 10. Is missions highlighted with an attractive, well-placed bulletin board that is frequently updated?
- ___ 11. Does our church communicate regularly with the missionaries we support?
- ___ 12. Is active participation encouraged by all departments in their missions programs? (Children, Youth, Women and Men)
- ___ 13. Is a planned program in place for teaching missions in Sunday school, including new believers and membership classes?
- ___ 14. Does our church support Assemblies of God missions and missionaries on a monthly basis?
- ___ 15. Does our church sponsor or participate in missions outreaches, either nationally or internationally?
- ___ 16. Do the church's missions leaders attend missions functions sponsored by our Assemblies of God World and Domestic Missions Departments?
- ___ 17. Do missionaries feel welcome when they visit our church?
- ___ 18. Is attendance stable at missions services?
- ___ 19. Does the church have a well-stocked section on missions in the church library?
- ___ 20. Do church leaders see the missions mandate of winning the lost as the church's central purpose, around which all other activities revolve?

Total the points from your responses to see how healthy your church's missions outreach is.

100 – 81 = Excellent

80 – 68 = Very good

67 – 55 = Good, but needs help

54 – 0 = Is not ministering to the needs of the congregation and requires immediate attention

How did your church measure up? If the results weren't good, take heart. This manual will assist you in leading your congregation to a healthy attitude about missions and a high level of involvement in reaching the lost world in our generation!

Pastor, You Are The Key

The path chosen by the pastor will determine where the congregation goes. It has been said, —No stream will rise higher than its source. So it is with a church. The congregation is unlikely to love the lost and develop a world vision unless the pastor models that attitude.

Enlist and Delegate

As pastor, you cannot do all the work alone. Too many have tried and have become exhausted and discouraged at the lack of results. That is why you need a team to follow your leadership in inspiring the congregation with a vision and passion for missions.

Preach Missions

A missionary is not a surrogate for the pastor to teach missions to the congregation. True, the pastor should take advantage of the missionary's presence to inform and inspire the people. But if the pastor is truly committed to missions, he will preach missions!

Look back over the record of your sermons preached during the past year. How many of them presented the missions message? If the pastor doesn't show a passion for missions, the congregation is not likely to get excited either. Inspect your priorities. People are best led by example.

Not only should a pastor preach missions to his congregation, but he also should show his love and concern for missions by using missionary illustrations in his regular sermons. To do this, he must stay informed about missions.

Schedule Missionary Speakers

Preaching missions is not the only way a pastor can show enthusiasm for missions. Scheduling missionary speakers during the year speaks volumes to your congregation about the place of missions in your priorities. When possible, missionaries should speak to the church a minimum of once each quarter. It is difficult to maintain a vision for missions with fewer missionary visits.

A good way to demonstrate your commitment to missions is by setting an example of generous missions giving. Be the first to give, and lead your congregation into a new path of spiritual obedience. The committed Christian is a generous Christian.

Attend and Support Missions Activities

Pastors set an example by their attitude, preparation, giving and by their presence at all missionary activities conducted by the local congregation. Sometimes pastors unintentionally send a wrong message to their congregations by missing missions banquets and services for various reasons.

Gratefully, most pastors would never do this, but they must always be aware that their every action sends signals that reveal their attitude to the people they lead.

Pray for Missionaries

Keep missionaries before the congregation. Pray publicly for missionaries. Designate a special bulletin each month that includes prayer requests from the missionaries the church supports.

Pastor, You Are the Example

May the Holy Spirit challenge you to the highest example in showing your congregation love and compassion for a lost and dying world. Say along with the apostle Paul, *“Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ”* (1 Corinthians 11:1, NIV).

You are the only one who can lead your congregation into obedience to Christ’s command that every Christian be involved in evangelizing the world!

A Missions Committee, A Missions Board— Is There a Better Name?

Most churches do not have a missions committee. This is not surprising, since many have never had a missionary speaker.

Thankfully, thousands of Assemblies of God congregations are active in missions and have functioning missions committees or missions boards. But have you ever noticed that the words committee and board don't cause much excitement? We form committees and boards for just about anything that takes place in the local church.

The purpose of a committee or board is to entrust a few people with the responsibility of conducting certain business or making certain plans. The congregation usually doesn't participate in or have knowledge of the plans made by the average committee or board.

Missions should never be relegated to a few people. Instead, missions should be the passion of the whole congregation. For that reason, a better term than a missions committee or missions board is a —Missions Awareness Team. This name will clearly identify those people entrusted with enlisting the participation of every believer in the quest for world evangelization.

Other work may be done by committees, but let missions be guided by a team. A team suggests movement and excitement. It suggests active participation rather than passivity. A team is led by top leadership and shows the way for others to follow. A team enlists the most qualified members and demands attention from everyone. A team builds loyalty to a cause. A team suggests winning, and we all win when we get involved in missions.

A Missions Awareness Team is an extension of the pastor and church board and assists them in setting world vision and enlisting the personal participation of every believer in obeying Christ's command to —Go into all the world.

Don't you think your church needs a Missions Awareness Team?

PART 2

Forming a Team

Why Have a Missions Awareness Team?

A missions Awareness Team is not needed unless church leaders are serious about obeying the commands of Christ. But once this commitment is made, a Missions Awareness Team is essential in building missions vision and passion.

These are just a few of the benefits of creating a Missions Awareness Team for the local church:

1. The Missions Awareness Team will help establish missions as a primary purpose of the local church. Some will question whether missions should be a priority, but an honest study of Scripture will leave no doubt about it. Christ died to save the world, and He entrusted the Church with the responsibility of taking the good news to every corner of the globe. But we have yet to finish our task.
2. An active Missions Awareness Team will lighten the pastor's workload. This doesn't mean the pastor will relegate all responsibility to others, but he will have help in fulfilling the missions vision of the local congregation. The pastor will attend and participate in Missions Awareness Team meetings when possible. He will lead by example and share his vision with team members so that they have a clear picture of their destination.
3. An active Missions Awareness Team will enlist greater participation from department leaders as well as the entire congregation. It comes as no surprise that with proper leadership, the more people who are involved, the more work will be accomplished.
4. Seldom can leaders escape criticism. But people don't criticize what they do personally. Therefore, if you want to minimize criticism, get more people involved. Obviously, when more people are involved in promoting a missions vision, the congregation will give more attention to missions.
5. One of the Missions Awareness Team's greatest responsibilities is to bring a clearer understanding of every member's personal responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission. That responsibility is expressed through personal faith promises made during the missions convention.
6. Few church boards have the time to give to missions the attention it demands and deserves. When a Missions Awareness Team is formed, the entire church will benefit. The board will have more time to devote

to the administrative affairs of the church. Missions will benefit because the Missions Awareness Team will commit more time and attention to the missions outreach of the local congregation.

How to Form a Missions Awareness Team

Why Can't The Church Board Also Be The Missions Awareness Team?

- The church board serves as the missions committee in many churches, but since the board serves multiple roles, its members seldom have the time needed to give proper attention to the critical area of missions.
- Consequently, many churches have discovered that a separate group is more desirable.
- The pastor and a member of the church board can represent the board as members of the Missions Awareness Team.

How Large Should The Missions Awareness Team Be?

- This depends upon the size of the church and its missions involvement.
- The Missions Awareness Team may have as few as three members.
- Two couples with a strong interest in missions can form the core of your team.
- Usually, the larger the church, the larger the Missions Awareness Team needs to be. However, you will find that the larger the group, the more difficult it is to find a time when everyone can meet.
- A Missions Awareness Team with four to six members is quite manageable. If you choose to have a larger group, consider naming a Missions Awareness Executive Team to conduct the monthly business and meet with the full Missions Awareness Team as needed for planning the missions convention and other activities.
- Consider asking representatives of various departments in the church (Music, Christian Education, Senior Adults, Adults, Singles, Women's Ministries, Men's Ministries, Youth and Children) to serve as members of the full Missions Awareness Team.

What Should Be The Qualifications For Missions Awareness Team Members?

(The executive team or core group)

- They must be active members in the local assembly.
- They must demonstrate a cooperative spirit, willing to follow as well as lead.
- At least one member should demonstrate organizational ability.
- They must be faithful in church attendance and tithing.
- They must be willing to devote a minimum of six to eight hours of their time each month to Missions Awareness Team duties.
- Age should not be a factor if all other requirements are met.

- Singles may be represented.
- Married members are more effective when they serve with their spouses, making them a team within a team.
- It is best if they are recommended by both the pastor and the church board.
- The pastor should be a member.
- Missions Awareness Team members must manifest a love for the lost, driving them in their passion for reaching the whole world. The depth of this love is demonstrated by their faithfulness to pray for missionaries and their generous monthly faith promise giving. No one should have the privilege of making decisions concerning the disbursement of mission's funds if he or she is not a generous giver to that fund.

How Should The Missions Awareness Team Be Chosen?

- Some churches elect team members.
- Others accept volunteer members.
- In some churches, the church board appoints Missions Awareness Team members.
- The more preferable method of selection, however, seems to be the nomination of new members by the pastor and the current Missions Awareness Team, with ratification by the church board.

How Long Should Each Member Serve?

- One year may be too brief.
- A term of two to three years is more effective, with the possibility of successive terms if re-nominated by the Missions Awareness Team and the church board,
- Terms should be staggered so that experienced members are always involved.
- Many churches have a standing Missions Awareness Team, which means that members serve without a term limit. This has the advantage of always having experienced people on the team. There is a downside, however, to no term limit. There is the possibility that new and younger members will be excluded from participation in the Missions Awareness Team. Even more serious is the possibility that a member of the team, chosen with no term limit, will become counter-productive and there is no solution short of dismissal since there is no end of term.

Part 3

Preparing a Missions Strategy

Creating Missions Policy

Why Create A Missions Policy?

- To ensure that the mission's outreach of the local congregation is given top priority in prayer, financial support and education in every department of the church as the congregation seeks to obey the Great Commission.
- To assist in providing a coordinated missions effort that will be mutually beneficial to both the local congregation as well as to missions ministries.
- To develop and maintain a clear vision of purpose and harmony of effort in all activities that relate to missions in the local congregation.
- To guide in making wise decisions that affect missions in a manner that is consistent and systematic in nature.
- To avoid making important decisions solely on the basis of emotion.
- To ensure that missions funds are administered effectively and faithfully.
- To inform and equip members of the congregation, helping them understand the importance of missions and their participation in its outreach within the local congregation.
- To maintain the highest level of accountability in every aspect of missions.
- To provide a means of communication with missionaries regarding missions projects.

What is a Basic Missions Philosophy?

Definition of Missions

Missions is any endeavor outside the local congregation to any cultural or sub-cultural group, both in our country and abroad, to fulfill the Great Commission of Christ wherever and whenever possible. The goal of missions outreach is to make disciples, train ministers and missionaries, plant churches and relate to the whole need of mankind, both spiritually and physically, as expressed in the fourfold purpose of world missions: Reaching, Planting, Training and Touching.

Scriptural Purpose of Missions Involvement

- To obey the five-dimensional command of Christ to every believer (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47-48; John 20:21 and Acts 1:8).
- To offer to people the saving knowledge of God in the context of life in His Spirit and truth with the intent of persuading them to become disciples of Christ (John 3:16; 6:63; Romans 10:13-15).
- To become partners with missionaries and share the same reward (Matthew 10:41; John 8).

Responsibilities and Goals of the Missions Awareness Team

Many Missions Awareness Teams will be charged with the responsibility of coordinating activities for local outreach, domestic and world missions. Although this manual is written with world missions in focus, most of the suggestions are valid for local and domestic missions. If some suggestions are not applicable, create a policy that fits the situation. Contact your national office for assistance in those matters.

Missions Awareness Team Members Will Be Responsible To...

1. Study Assemblies of God missions philosophy and procedures to gain knowledge about domestic and world missions ministries.
2. Secure as much information as possible about missions from brochures, booklets, manuals, videos, DVDs, etc., to help team members understand the philosophy of missions and the operation of Assemblies of God Missions.
3. Meet monthly (or as often as needed) to fulfill the team's responsibilities and goals.
4. Prepare an annual missions budget and administer all mission's funds while being accountable to the pastor and church board.
5. Make commitments for the support of missionaries and missions projects and maintain accurate records.
6. Review annually the support given to missionaries and make changes as necessary.
7. Appoint a correspondence secretary to communicate with missionaries on the support list and share correspondence from the mission field with the congregation when appropriate.
8. Maintain a missions bulletin board.
9. Bless missionaries with cards and gifts on their birthdays, anniversaries, and Christmas.
Offerings sent for this purpose should be marked —special-personal.
10. Be available to assist the pastor with scheduling or entertaining missionary speakers if needed.
11. Understand the faith promise concept and be able to explain it.
12. Be responsible for planning and conducting an annual missions convention and receiving faith promises.
13. Plan other missions emphases as needed.
14. Be responsible for presenting a -Window on the World segment each month to pro- mote missions in a morning worship service (or the service with the largest attendance) on Missions Sunday.
15. Create innovative methods to keep missions before the congregation.
16. Encourage missions-related activities in all departments of the church.

17. Provide adequate opportunity for every believer to obey the Great Commission. This is a top priority!
18. (For a more detailed list, see Duties of the Missions Awareness Team in Appendix #1 on page 48.)

Establishing Goals for Your Missions Awareness Team

You may not be able to do everything at one time, but you can set goals for the future. Don't be limited by what you see, and don't give up. This is God's business, and you are His child. He wants you to succeed even more than you do!

1. **Create World Vision** – The Missions Awareness Team's goals for world evangelization are:
 - a. To keep missions before the congregation on a continuing basis.
 - b. To create an awareness of the lostness of man and the value of each soul.
 - c. To help every believer understand his or her personal obligation to obey the command of Christ expressed in the Great Commission (Mark 16:15).
 - d. To create the possibility for every member of the congregation to obey Christ's command by praying, giving and going.
2. **Promote Intercessory Prayer For World Needs** – The Missions Awareness Team will:
 - a. Encourage people to pray for missionaries and mission's needs daily.
 - b. Conduct prayer for missions in regular services, special meetings and prayer groups.
 - c. Publicize and/or announce special mission's prayer needs in the weekly bulletin.
 - d. Post mission's prayer needs on the mission's bulletin board.
 - e. Initiate an adoption program to encourage small groups and families to focus on one or more missionary families, concerning themselves with their spiritual, physical and emotional needs.
3. **Organize Missions Conventions** – The Missions Awareness Team will:
 - a. Conduct a minimum of one missions convention each year. (Order *The Blueprint, Volume 2, "Building Missions Support With An Annual Missions Convention"* for a detailed guide for planning a successful convention.)
 - b. Invite a speaker experienced in receiving faith promises.
 - c. Give opportunity during the convention for every individual to make a personal faith promise for missions.

4. **Participate in the Monthly Missions Sunday** – The Missions Awareness Team will:
 - a. Plan short but effective missions presentations for the congregation during the morning worship service. (Order ***The Blueprint, Volume 3, “Building Missions Vision... Month by Month”*** for assistance in planning missions Sunday presentations for the whole year.)
 - b. Use testimonies, missionary letters and video materials provided by world missions.
 - c. Encourage consistency in faith promise giving by informing and inspiring the congregation with all available tools.
5. **Plan Short-Term Missions Trips** – Numerous opportunities are available for members of the congregation to be involved in hands-on experience in missions, both within your own country and abroad. Check with your national missions office to see if plans are being made for ministry trips in which members of your team or congregation may participate.

Part 4

Putting Your Plan In Action

Setting the Agenda

Those in leadership know how important it is to wisely use volunteers' time and energy. That is why it is critical to plan the Missions Awareness Team agenda carefully. The motive is twofold: (1) To invest the time of team members carefully, and (2) To maximize efforts to help evangelize the world.

The Missions Awareness Team is not just another committee. This team will lead the congregation into obedience to Christ's command to reach the whole world with the gospel.

A survey of missions leadership in several churches with outstanding missions outreaches revealed several suggestions for setting a Missions Awareness Team's monthly agenda. A sampling of suggestions include these topics:

Sample Monthly Agenda

1. **Opening prayer**
2. **List missionary correspondence** received during the month.
3. **Review the newsletters**, focusing on items of special interest such as:
 - a. A change of status
 - b. A change of field
 - c. A change of ministry
 - d. Reports of ministry
4. **Pray for missionary needs** as expressed in the correspondence received. A list of these prayer needs should be given to each board member and to volunteer prayer partners.
5. **Review the financial report** and measure actual receipts against faith promises made during the annual missions convention.
6. **Financial appeals**
 - a. Missionaries to consider for support
 - b. Missionaries to receive an increase in support
 - c. Appeals for cash assistance
 - d. Determine the amount of your church's commitment for the missions service at district or national council
8. **Review plans for missions trips**
9. **Review plans for next convention**
 - a. Set the dates and determine who to invite as speaker(s)
 - b. Decide on theme and materials needed
 - c. Activities – Sunday School classes, children's church, etc.
10. **Review list of upcoming missionary speakers**
11. **Set date and place for next month's meeting and dismiss in prayer**

Keeping a Record of Missionaries the Church Supports

Many times, a change of pastors or church treasurers results in lost or misplaced information about missions commitments. Although unintentional, this situation results in confusion concerning local church finances and can result in hardship for missionaries whose support may suffer as a result.

Scripture teaches good stewardship for every believer. If this principle is true for the individual, it is even more applicable for the church! Such occurrences can be prevented simply by maintaining an active list of the missionaries receiving monthly support from the church.

If you do not have a permanent record of these obligations, the Missionary Budget Review starting on page 23 will serve you well. Enter the names of missionaries supported by the church, when the commitment was made, the amount of the commitment, any plans to increase the support, and the amount of the new commitment, including the increase.

Getting to Know the Missionaries

Are the missionaries your church supports your partners? Do you consider them as an extension of the local church's ministry? If the answer is —yes, make the effort to get to know them. The church may send them monthly offerings, but believers can't effectively pray for them or remember them with kind gestures on special occasions if they know nothing about them.

One of the first items on the Missions Awareness Team's priority list is to become familiar with the missionaries the church currently supports. Beginning on page 25 you can record the needed information about each missionary family. Contact your world missions office to request the needed information for all the missionaries on your support list.

Once you have completed the information sheets, make certain that each team member has a copy. Encourage groups within the congregation to adopt a missionary family or an MK (missionary kid) to remember on birthdays and at Christmastime.

With this information, the church will be prepared to support its missionary partners in three important ways: prayer, finances and special occasions.

Evaluating Current Missions Potential

A team can't know where it is headed until it knows its current position. Jesus said, *"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"* (Luke 14:28, NIV). The Missions Awareness

Team needs to evaluate not only what the church is currently doing, but also its potential for the future. Most congregations are capable of far more than they currently are doing for missions. If leaders don't create a vision, the congregation will never catch a vision!

Page 28 is a guide to evaluate where a church currently is — both in its missions obligations and its missions income. Once this is established, the Missions Awareness Team can begin creating goals for the next year. Consider the potential missions income from each department in the church. If the church is not currently conducting an annual missions convention, set a date for a convention this year. Experience has shown that most churches more than double their missions giving during the year following their first convention! A convention will revolutionize a church's giving, create vision in the hearts of people and bring them into obedience to Christ's command to take the gospel to the whole world. For a step-by-step guide to conducting a successful missions convention, order *The Blueprint, Volume 2, — Building Missions Support with an Annual Missions Convention*.

Creating an Annual Missions Budget

Now that the team has a clearer picture of the church's potential, establish an annual missions budget. To make sure nothing is overlooked, consider these categories: World Missions, Domestic Missions, benevolences, district and national support and other outreaches. The Annual Missions Budget Work Sheets on pages 29 and 30 will guide you through the process.

On the lines indicated, enter the names of the world and domestic missionaries the church currently supports. Check the other ministries to which funds are given and enter the amount of each commitment. In the projected giving column, enter the amount projected for each missionary and ministry during the coming year. Total both columns to find the church's current and projected giving — otherwise known as an annual missions budget.

Determining Which Missionaries to Support

Finding missionaries to come to your church to minister and seek financial partnership may, or may not, be difficult, depending on the number of missionaries sponsored by the Assemblies of God within your nation.

If your church can't support every Assemblies of God missionary who requests a monthly commitment, how should you determine who will receive financial help? Consider these questions in setting policy for missionary support from the congregation.

- Will we give priority to missionaries from our own region or district? This is important!
- How many missionaries can we support monthly?
- What will be the amount of the monthly commitment to the missionaries we choose to support? (If you don't know, ask a neighboring church that is strong in missions.)
- Will we consider supporting missionaries from other regions or districts?
- If so, will we give them the same amount, or will we give more to missionaries from our district?
- Will we try to balance representation from each region of the world?
- Do we want to balance our support for various types of ministries?
- Will we put priority on urgent needs rather than balance?

After priorities are set for missionary support, make prayer the deciding factor. Always ask the question, —What is the Holy Spirit saying that we should do about supporting this missionary?||

Information About Our Missionary Partners

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary's Name	Birthday	An niversary	Amount of Monthly Support
Spouse	Birthday	Field	E-mail Address
Children	Birthday(s)	Age	Mailing Address

Missionary Giving — Evaluation And Goals

What is our average monthly income for missions? _____

What is our total monthly commitment to missions? _____

How many family units attend our church? _____

How many units regularly support missions? _____

How much did the church give to missions last year? \$ _____

What was the average missions giving per family unit last year? \$ _____

(Divide the total annual missions giving by the number of family units attending your church to find the average annual giving per unit.)

What is our goal for missions for next year?

From...

Faith promise giving _____

General fund transfer to the missions fund..... _____

Boys and Girls _____

Youth _____

Women's Ministries missions projects _____

Men's Ministries _____

Anticipated missions income for next year \$ _____

Can we make a cost-of-living increase to the missionaries we currently support? _____

If so, how much? _____

Which missionaries can be added for monthly support?

<i>Name</i>	<i>Amount</i>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What missions projects can be added next year?

**National or Domestic
Missions**

<i>Missionaries</i>	<i>Now Giving</i>	<i>Projected Giving</i>
.....	_____	_____
.....	_____	_____
.....	_____	_____
.....	_____	_____
.....	_____	_____
AG Home Missions Administration	_____	_____
Servicemen's Ministry	_____	_____
Assemblies of God Colleges and Bible Schools	_____	_____
National Teen Challenge	_____	_____
Inner-City Ministries	_____	_____
New Church Evangelism	_____	_____
Intercultural Ministries (<i>Disabled, Ethnic, etc.</i>)	_____	_____

Benevolences

Aged Ministers Assistance	_____	_____
Children's Home	_____	_____
Child Placement Service (<i>Adoptions</i>)	_____	_____
Disaster Relief (<i>Domestic</i>)	_____	_____

District Ministers

Administration	_____	_____
District Home Missions	_____	_____
Departmental (<i>Christian Education, Youth, etc.</i>).....	_____	_____

Other

.....	_____	_____
.....	_____	_____

Total

_____	_____
-------	-------

How to Get the Most From the Missionary Visit

Getting the most from the missionary visit begins with attitude. Remember, your church needs missionaries as much as they need you. A missionary can't go without financial and prayer support provided by the local church, but a congregation cannot fulfill the Great Commission without missionaries who are willing to take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

In other words, missions is a partnership. Partners respect one another and work closely with each other to reach their common goals. Knowing the importance of this mutual need for each other, consider some ways that a church can make a missionary visit pleasant, as well as effective.

Pre-service Planning

- When a candidate missionary is approved in your district, call immediately to schedule a service. This will be helpful as he or she sets up an itinerary.
- Return the missionary's phone calls. This will save time, money and stress for the missionary.
- Schedule the missionary for any regular service or even a home group.
- If you can't schedule the missionary for a service, say so. The missionary would prefer a no to being put off.
- Tell missionaries what participation they will have. How many times will they speak? Do you want them also to speak in a Sunday School class or to a youth or children's group?
- Communicate the type of dress appropriate for the service.
- Tell the missionary the service times and the time when you can meet prior to the service for planning.
- Provide the missionary with information concerning accommodations (hotel or private home) while he or she is with you.
- Be sure service times and clear directions to the church.
- Give the missionary a telephone number other than the church office. The missionary may need to call at a time when the office is not open.

The Missionary Visit

- Make time available to meet with the missionary prior to the service to get better acquainted, ask questions about specific needs and discuss the parameters for the service.
- Will the missionary be preaching or have a brief window in a service?

- Is the missionary a skilled public speaker or would it be better to conduct an interview?
- What is the time frame for his or her participation?
- Do you want a sermon, experiences from the field or both?
- Tell the missionary what he or she can do to assist you in building a strong missions vision within your congregation.
- Give the congregation the opportunity to respond with a generous offering **after** the missionary has shared his or her vision and ministry.
- Missionaries should receive an offering rather than a predetermined honorarium. You are not paying them for services rendered; rather, people are giving toward the needs of a dying world.
- Set a minimum cash offering. This means they could receive more if the offering is larger, but they would never receive less than the minimum.

After The Service

- Make time to host the missionary for a meal or dessert. This will give more time to get acquainted.
- Make provision to give the missionary a check for the offering while he or she is there. These funds may be needed for travel to the next destination.
- Give missionaries a signed monthly commitment form before they leave. This will hasten their departure to the field and will relieve a great deal of stress.
- If it isn't possible to give them a signed commitment while they are there, tell them what you hope to do and when you plan to do it.

SECTION 2

Assemblies of God World Missions

An Extension of the Local Church

The Assemblies of God is still committed to “the greatest evangelism the world has ever seen.” Working in cooperation with the local church, world missions has been the key to coordinating and administering resources given by thousands of congregations internationally. World missions is an extension of the local church, making its influence possible in more than 200 countries and territories around the world.

In Jerusalem the believers were glad to see us. The next day Paul went with us to visit James, and all the elders were there. Paul greeted them and told them everything God had done among the other nations through him. When they (the elders) heard this, they praised God. Acts 21:17-20 NCV

PART 1

All About Assemblies of God World Missions

All true missionary endeavors begin and end with God the Creator, Sustainer, Savior and Lord. The Assemblies of God World Missions program seeks to identify with His purposes, so that in all things He is glorified and His plan for the world fulfilled.

World Missions Presence and Purpose

The World Fellowship of the Assemblies of God is one of the major missionary outreaches in the world. In many countries, the Assemblies of God is the largest Protestant body. Its members and adherents number well over 65 million in over 210 countries world-wide.

Assemblies of God World Missions was built upon the following principles:

. . .the priority reason-for-being of the Assemblies of God is to be an agency of God for evangelizing the world, to be a corporate body in which man may worship God, and to be a channel of God's purpose to build a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son.¶

The sole purpose of world missions is to inspire and enable the Assemblies of God to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8). The strategy of world missions is to:

- (1) Evangelize the spiritually lost through all available means.
- (2) Establish indigenous self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating churches after the New Testament pattern.
- (3) Train national believers to proclaim the gospel to their own people and in an expanding mission to other people groups.
- (4) Show compassion for suffering people in a manner representing the love of Jesus Christ.

The World Missions Board for each country regulates the activities of the missionaries approved by the board and supported by the Assemblies of God fellowship. Its composition will vary from country to country according to need and local customs.

The World Missions Board is responsible for establishing policy, appointing missionaries and carrying out other duties and frequency of meetings as assigned by the Executive Presbytery.

PART 2

The World Missions Department and Your National Assemblies of God

As the national Assemblies of God fellowship grows in each country, both in size and in spiritual maturity, its churches and leadership begin to feel the urgency to reach beyond their national borders with the liberating gospel of Christ. This usually begins with a single church sending a missionary to a neighboring country for a short period of time.

These experiences lead to the realization that a much more effective means of supporting the missionaries and enlisting broad participation from the believers could be accomplished through a cooperative effort among the churches of the fellowship. And though it be small, a national world missions department is born.

Getting to Know Your National World Missions Department

There are several possible stages in the development in the development of a world missions department. A few of the more obvious stages would be: (1) A growing awareness of the need to develop a missions department, (2) Discussions between national leadership and leading pastors, (3) A working committee to bring recommendations to the executive committee, (4) Discussion and approval at a national council with the formation of a missions committee, (5) Development of requirements for missionaries and suggested basic budget, (6) Approval of first missionaries, (7) Promotion of missionaries, (8) Learning from experience.

Make Your Team Available

If your church has already had the experience of sending a missionary or missionaries to a neighboring country, you have already gained valuable experience. It doesn't mean that you know everything about sending missionaries around the world, but you know some things that may prevent errors and heartache for others if shared with the right spirit.

If your fellowship is just beginning to organize a missions department and you have been sending missionaries from your church, why not go to your national leadership and offer your help as needed? If offered humbly, it will be of great help and you will be blessed.

SECTION 3

Missionaries

Missionaries make it possible for a believer to partner in the redemption of lost souls around the world without leaving his or her own city.

Dear friend, you are doing a good work for God in taking care of the traveling teachers and missionaries who are passing through... For they are traveling for the Lord, and take neither food, clothing, shelter, nor money from those who are not Christians, even though they have preached to them. So we, ourselves, should take care of them in order that we may become partners with them in the Lord's work.

3 John 5, 7-8, TLB

PART 1

How Are Assemblies of God Missionaries Supported?

What System of Support is Best?

—It seems such a shame for missionaries to spend four years overseas and then be forced, upon their return home, to spend a full year visiting scores of churches to raise support for their next term. There must be a better way.

This objection is voiced frequently by pastors and laity. It is a reasonable observation and deserves a reasonable answer. Three methods are commonly employed for missionary support.

- The independent faith system leaves every missionary to raise whatever he or she can with no guarantees. Donors send their support directly to the missionary, leaving the missionary with no assurance of a stable income.
- The budgeted system involves churches sending their undesignated offerings to their denomination's national office. These funds are then divided among the missionaries and projects according to the budget established by the missions organization. This system is impersonal and relieves the average church member from any sense of individual responsibility.
- The itineration method of raising missionary support is a modified system, a combination of faith and budget. It is used by Assemblies of God World Missions in many countries and requires missionaries to travel among Assemblies of God churches to raise their financial and prayer support. Monthly offerings are sent to the national office, designated by the donor for specific missionaries and their projects.

Assemblies of God World Missions requires that all missionaries raise their own support. No one is supported through subsidies, since such funds are nonexistent.

Why Use The Itineration System?

In recent years, other missions-sending organizations have changed from the faith system to the budgeted system. Without exception, they have seen erosion in missions giving. At the same time, missions giving continues to increase for Assemblies of God World Missions.

Missionary Itineration

Effective missionaries do not work independently in foreign lands. They are sent by churches that share in the burden, the work and the rewards. The sent and the senders must answer the call of the same Master, even though their direction of ministry may be different.

Itinerating missionaries travel from church to church on a regular schedule to promote missions and raise their prayer and financial support. Itineration is

vital for a successful three or four-year term of world missionary ministry and requires about one out of every five years of service.

All Assemblies of God missionaries and their ministries are financially dependent on commitments of monthly support from churches and individual donors. Each itinerating missionary is given a supply of commitment forms by the Missions Department. Each donor or church is asked to complete a form and send it to the national Assemblies of God World Missions office.

In addition, the missionary is required to raise a cash budget for initial expenses of fare, freight, duty, equipment and language study. The cash budget is raised through missionary offerings from churches, contributions from individual donors and accumulated support from incoming commitments. Missionaries are not cleared for the field until they have raised their required budget.

World evangelization requires teamwork between the sending church, Assemblies of God World Missions and the missionaries it sends. We must make certain that our missionaries are not limited in their ministries because of insufficient prayer and financial support at home.

Benefits To The Local Church

- First, this process gives the average church member the opportunity to obey the Great Commission through financial giving. Those involved become partners in reaching the lost around the world – without ever leaving home.
- Second, missionary itineration broadens the believer's horizons for service. This may eventually lead to their personal call to missionary service.
- Third, the missionary visit to the local church creates an awareness of the lostness of man, further creating urgency for intercessory prayer by the congregation.

Benefits To The Missionary

- First, financial support is stronger because of the personal contact.
- Second, friendships are built that last a lifetime. An occasional letter, card or small gift at Christmas and birthdays is the added touch needed for the missionary who is far from home.
- Third, intercessory prayer is absolutely essential for the success and well-being of the missionary. The strength in knowing that others are supporting him or her in prayer is immeasurable.
- Fourth, missionaries want to report what God has done during their last term on the field. They enjoy giving a —shareholders report. ll

PART 2

Advantages of Giving To Missions Through The Local Church

It Sets A Good Example

- New believers need to know the importance of regular missions giving.
- Church leaders who give through the local church set the example for others to follow.

It Encourages Others To Participate

- Giving to missions through the local church motivates and encourages others to participate.

It Helps Us Measure Response To World Need

- It gives a tangible way of charting what a congregation is doing to reach a lost world.
- It reveals whether a church is doing its part for world evangelization.

It Increases Effectiveness In Stewardship

- Pooling missions resources makes it possible for the congregation to reach goals that are unattainable to individuals.
- There is strength in unity.

It Shows Confidence In The Leadership And Missions Outreach Of The Church

- Missions leaders prayerfully consider appeals for monthly support and project needs.
- They are better informed and therefore able to make better decisions.

It Enables The Church To Increase Its Pledges To Missionaries And Add New Missionaries Each Year

Giving To Assemblies Of God World Missions Offers The Best Accountability

- A lower percentage is deducted for administrative costs than in most other missions agencies.
- The remainder of offerings is spent as designated.
- Every missionary must submit detailed reports of all spending.
- There is no higher level of financial accountability.

Believers Who Give To Assemblies Of God Missions Can Be Confident Of The Ministry's Integrity

- Operational expenses are kept at a minimum.
- Each project is a long-term investment.

Believers Can Be Sure Of The Missionaries' Integrity

- To be good stewards, believers must know who they support.
- Every missionary is given close scrutiny by Assemblies of God World Missions.
"But we beseech you, brethren, to know them who labor among you" (1 Thessalonians 5: 12, ASV)

It Is The Simplest, Most Effective Way To Give To Missions

- It is convenient to give missions offerings at a Sunday service.
- It encourages consistency and regularity.
- It eliminates the possibility of forgetting to mail an offering.

It Has Biblical Precedence

"On every Lord's Day each of you should put aside something from what you have earned during the week, and use it for this offering... Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once. When I come I will send your loving gift with a letter to Jerusalem" (1Corinthians 16:2, 3, TLB).

PART 3

How Does The System Work?

It is understood that each country has or will determine its own policies concerning missionary budgets, the receipting of offerings, etc. The following is given, however, as a pattern used by a number of Assemblies of God sending agencies in various countries. You may consider these policies and practices as you formulate or study your own missions department.

- Once a missionary's country of assignment is determined, a budget is prepared by Assemblies of God World Missions. Each missionary must have sufficient cash and signed commitment forms from local churches and individuals to cover the full budget before clearance will be given to proceed to the field.
- Missionaries visit churches to challenge people for missions, raise necessary cash offerings and seek monthly support. The pastor may share this need with the official board or the missions committee (team) for a decision whether a monthly commitment can be made and for what amount.
- Churches and individual donors send monthly commitments to Assemblies of God World Missions. When sufficient commitments are recorded, the missionary is granted clearance to leave for the field. *Designated offerings sent to Assemblies of God World Missions will be placed in the missionary's account but will not be recorded as a monthly commitment or counted for clearance unless a commitment form, signed by the local church, has been received by Assemblies of God World Missions.*
- The number of months that candidates will need to raise their budget will depend on the economy of the sending country and the cost of living in the country of assignment.

Missionary Commitment Forms

Every missionary is given a budget, adjusted to the country of assignment. Clearance to leave for the field cannot be given until the budget is raised.

Verbal commitments to the missionary are not sufficient. All monthly commitments to missionaries should be communicated to Assemblies of God World Missions on the appropriate commitment form. Be sure to complete all of the information on the form. Keep a copy for your files and mail the original commitment form to world missions or give it to the missionary.

When World Missions receives the form, it is posted to the missionary's records. The missionary is *not* cleared to go to the field until his or her budget is completely raised according to World Missions records. Monthly commitments should begin immediately rather than waiting for the missionary to go to the field.

When the commitment form is sent to World Missions, it is recorded as firm monthly support. Once the monthly commitments reach the budget total, the missionary is given clearance to leave for the field.

It is helpful for churches to make their commitments as soon as possible in order to shorten iteration time. Some churches make a commitment to all new missionaries from their district as soon as they are approved.

Missionary Commitment Certificates

Upon receipt of the signed commitment form, world missions personnel in many countries enter the commitment amount to the missionary's support list and send a commitment certificate to the local church. These certificates are meant to be displayed in a prominent place to remind the congregation of their missionary partners and to lift them up in prayer.

Many churches prepare a special area to display the commitment certificates and missionary newsletters. Other churches display the certificates on the sanctuary walls, making it possible for members to go to the certificates and intercede for the missionaries during prayer time.

Sending Missionary Support

Once a commitment is made, an offering form will be sent to the donor. This contains the name, account number and amount of the commitment. The offering should be sent each month, since the missionary depends on that support for his or her livelihood.

Most churches send their missions offerings during the first few days of each month, reflecting the giving of the previous month. Sending the offering on the same date each month makes it easier to remember.

Church leaders should occasionally review the money being sent to ensure that no missionary has been overlooked. Every effort should be made to maintain each monthly commitment. The missionaries depend on these funds, and replacing lost support while overseas is difficult. To discontinue support for a missionary who has terminated his or her missions appointment, simply mark out the name on the offering form sent by world missions.

When finances are short, consider the options available to you. A missions convention, using the faith promise system, will nearly always generate additional income.

Falling income several months after a missions convention usually is an indication that missions enthusiasm is not being maintained. See the manual from *The Blueprint, Building Missions Vision...Month by Month*, for ideas on maintaining fervor and dedication to missions.

Sometimes missions income declines due to the departure of donors or an economic down-turn in a community. Try not to drop a missionary commitment until the missionary has returned home. In the worst case, prorate the available monies among the missionaries the church supports and write to each one, telling them of the problem. The missionaries can then pray about the financial needs of the congregation and will be relieved to know the reason for the change.

Part 4

Where Does The Money Go?

When people hear how much money a missionary must raise, their response is often, “Why do they make so much money? My salary isn’t that much!”

The answer is, they don’t require that much money for their personal support. Instead, the missionary budget is divided into two parts: a personal budget and a work budget that is equal to the annual budget of many churches.

Each missionary requires cash for transportation to the field and for expenses incurred in setting up residence on the field. The monthly commitment budget covers all of their expenses during their term on the field.

Although it is impossible to identify here the items that will be included in the budget of the missionaries sent out by your world missions department, it is possible to list the kinds of expenses that might be included. It should be added that seldom would we expect to see all of these items included in one missionary’s budget. This extensive list is placed here to give you an understanding of the many expenditures that a missionary may face in his or her ministry abroad.

The following chart shows the variety of expenses that could be included in the missionary budget.

PERSONAL BUDGET	WORK BUDGET
Base salary plus years of service Rent and renter’s insurance Medical fund Retirement fund Foreign taxes	Ministry and office expense Telephone/E-mail Bible School and Field work Auto and Travel expense Children’s schooling Inflation for four years
Deposits for rent and utilities Security deposit Household: Furniture Appliances Tableware, linens, etc.	Air fares to the field Language school Freight and duty Work equipment Work projects and buildings

Missionaries working on large projects have a third division in their budget to indicate projects for which they are approved to raise funds. Their clearance to return to the field is not dependent upon the completion of these funds.

Additional Facts About Monthly Commitments

Answers To Frequently Asked Questions About Monthly Support

Churches and individual donors should start sending their monthly commitments as soon as possible. Missionary candidates receive monthly support as soon as they begin itineration, and veteran missionaries continue to receive support from their account while in their home country.

No monthly commitment should be made for a period of less than five years. This will allow the missionary to complete his or her itineration, serve four years overseas and return home for another year of itineration. Most churches, however, make commitments with the intention of continuing support as long as the missionary is under appointment.

Donors can increase the amount of their commitments by completing a new commitment (pledge) form. They may also notify Assemblies of God World Missions by letter, fax, e-mail or phone, outlining the change in their commitments. They should reflect the increased amount on their offering form when they send their offering the next month.

If circumstances make it impossible for a church or individual to honor a commitment, they should notify the missionary and Assemblies of God World Missions as soon as possible. World missions will change the records to reflect this.

Church budgets sometimes require reevaluation, and some commitments must be decreased. The church should determine which missionary commitments can be changed with the least amount of detriment to the missionary program by contacting Assemblies of God World Missions and requesting for assistance in making decisions that will affect commitment changes. Of course, the final decision remains with the donor. If it becomes necessary to decrease a missionary's support, try to make the adjustment while the missionary is at home for itineration. This will give him or her the opportunity to replace the lost commitment elsewhere.

Sometimes a church has a surplus of funds in its missions account. Should it increase its giving to all missionaries on its support list or to specific missionaries? Or should it add missionaries to its support list? Check with your World Missions Department. Some missionaries may urgently need an increase in monthly support, while others may have adequate support. World missions personnel can provide names of missionaries currently needing additional support.

Occasionally local church records are lost. Churches may request a new list of monthly commitments from Assemblies of God World Missions. If a church is missing commitment certificates for the missionaries it supports, or if updated certificates are needed, don't despair. Provide world missions with the names of the missionaries for whom you need new certificates and the current amount sent monthly for each missionary.

What happens when a missionary dies?

When a missionary dies, a death notice appears in the national publication of the Assemblies of God.

What if a missionary terminates his or her missionary career or retires? When a missionary terminates his or her missionary career or retires, letters are sent to inform donors of the change in status.

If a church or individual donor falls behind in sending monthly commitments, is it possible to check how much has been given? World missions personnel can provide a record of all giving to Assemblies of God world missions.

If a donor cannot make up the shortfall in giving but wishes to continue supporting a missionary, he or she can begin support with the current month and continue from that time forward as the Lord provides.

Cost-of-living Mailing

In some countries, the World Missions Department sends an annual cost-of-living mailing. The purpose of the packet is threefold:

1. To give churches an opportunity to increase their giving to keep pace with global cost-of-living factors.
2. To provide world missions with an up-to-date list of each church's current giving.
3. To allow world missions to remove inactive donor commitments.

The cost-of-living packet not only provides world missions with accurate information, but it also is a convenient response tool.

An annual cost-of-living review of all missionary commitments will keep a church's support current and help missionaries battle ever-increasing budgets due to world inflation.

PART 6

Steps to Becoming a Missionary

Appointed missionaries committed to long-term service are the strength of the Assemblies of God World Missions outreach. Missionaries who live among the people to whom they minister produce the most effective results. They learn the language and culture and identify themselves with the people as —living epistles of Jesus Christ.

Missionaries must be fully committed to the Lord of the harvest, experienced in the work of ministry, sensitive to know and do His will, flexible to handle the diversities of life overseas and adequately trained to meet the challenges they will face.

Applying For Missionary Service

The first step toward becoming a world missionary is taken by God rather than the potential missionary. That first step is the witness of the Holy Spirit directing a person's life toward world missions. Candidate selection and approval by Assemblies of God World Missions is based on this premise; therefore, the Assemblies of God does not recruit missionaries or serve as a career guidance service.

The second step for the potential missions candidate is to contact the Personnel Department of Assemblies of God World Missions. The letter should introduce the applicant, explain his or her call to ministry, outline personal experience and request information concerning qualification for becoming a missionary.

Qualifications

In most countries, only ordained ministers of the Assemblies of God may be considered for regular appointment for world missions service. In most cases, candidate missionaries are expected to have an established relationship with their respective districts before applying for overseas ministry.

Some countries have a program for young people to enter missions. These missionaries-in-training (MIT) must give evidence of a clear sense of God's direction leading them to world missionary service, declare intentions to become career missionaries and have experience in evangelism. These applicants are accepted between ages 21 and 28.

Children

Although limits are not usually placed on applicants concerning the number of children, couples with more than two children may be required to demonstrate excellent qualifications for missionary service (equivalent to the specific assignment) in order to justify the added risk and expenditure of time and funds for the family. Couples with more than three children accompanying their parents overseas or with children approaching their teens are not advised to apply for missionary service.

Those eligible for Missionary in Training (MIT) status usually include singles or newly married couples. It is preferred that applicants have an undergraduate degree, preferably in Bible, theology, pastoral ministry or missions. They also may have approved equivalent education in a specific area of training.

Application Phase

The procedures will vary so greatly that it will be of no benefit to attempt to list them here. There are a few things, however, that most will have in common as they process the applications for missionary service.

In addition to completing the application forms, the applicant will submit a brief autobiography, character references, health history information and educational transcripts. Credit reports will be ordered by the Personnel office.

The completed application forms are evaluated by the director of Personnel and the appropriate regional director (depending on the applicant's area of interest). While the file is evaluated, a formal endorsement is requested from the applicant's district. If the evaluations are favorable and the district gives endorsement, the application process continues.

Once an applicant is approved for processing, questionnaires are sent to the individuals selected as references. The applicant must have a health examination by a medical professional and a personal interview with the director of Personnel or another foreign missions representative.

There are many steps in the process, but if all indications are favorable, the applicant is invited to the Assemblies of God headquarters for further orientation, tests and interviews. He or she also will have a personal interview with the World Missions Committee. At this time the committee will review such things as the application materials, health reports, references and district endorsement. In addition, the committee interviews the applicant regarding specific ministry, personal life, missionary calling and an appropriate field of service.

If the applicant's interview with the Executive Committee is satisfactory, this may be the final step, or, if there is a World Missions Board, he or she will be recommended to the Board for candidate approval.

Policy Statement for the Missions Awareness Team in the Local Church

The following section has been prepared as a separate document, designed to assist in the formation of an official Missions Awareness Team.

Purpose

The Missions Awareness Team shall have the general oversight of promoting and coordinating all missions activities within the local congregation. It shall provide missions education, inspiration and motivation. It shall lead the congregation in recognizing the biblical responsibility of every believer to be a participant in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Formation and Relationship

The Missions Awareness Team is authorized by the official church board and is amenable to the pastor and the board.

The pastor will serve as chairman of the Missions Awareness Team or he may, at his choice, assign that responsibility to another team member.

The Missions Awareness Team will be comprised of no less than five or more than seven members. At least one representative from the official board will be included.

The Missions Awareness Team, as necessary, may make committee assignments such as secretary, subcommittee chair, etc.

Selection of Missions Awareness Team Members

The members of the official board will select their representative.

All other members will be nominated by Missions Awareness Team members and ratified by the official board.

Length of Term

Team members should be willing to serve for a period of three years. They may serve additional terms when recommended by the Missions Awareness Team and ratified by the official board.

Qualifications for Missions Awareness Team Members

All team members should meet these qualifications:

- They must be active members in the local assembly.
- They must be faithful in their support of the local church with their finances, cooperation and attendance.
- Age should not be a factor for serving except as it relates to church membership.

- Each Missions Awareness Team member should be willing to devote no less than six to eight hours monthly to prescribed duties.
- They must be of a cooperative spirit, willing to follow as well as lead.
- Each member must manifest a love for the lost. The depth of that love should be confirmed by their dedication to pray for missionaries and their generous monthly faith promise giving. No one should have the privilege of making decisions for the disbursement of missions funds if he or she is not a generous giver to that fund.

Duties of the Missions Awareness Team

Missions Awareness Team members will be responsible to carry out these duties:

- They will attend monthly meetings where they will review missionary correspondence, make note of requests for both financial and prayer assistance and, when appropriate, share these needs with the congregation.
- They will administer all missions funds given to the local church, except those funds given to the departments for their missionary programs (children, youth, etc.).
 1. They will determine which missionaries and projects will be supported and the amounts that will be given.
 2. They must act responsibly in making monthly commitments to missionaries for support, knowing that the missionary must depend on this monthly pledge for his or her complete term of service (usually four years).
 3. They will ensure that missions commitments are disbursed monthly and that an accurate record is kept of all expenditures and receipts of missions funds.
- They will maintain communication with missionaries on the support list.
 1. They will keep a current file on each missionary.
 2. They will keep up to date on the assignment and type of ministry for all missionaries supported, as well as their current status (whether on the field or itinerating).
- They will be responsible for planning and conducting an annual missions convention and receiving faith promises.
- They will plan other special missions emphases as needed.
- They will cooperate with the pastor in the scheduling missionary speakers throughout the year.
- They will be responsible for promoting missions monthly in a morning worship service designated by the pastor.

- They will maintain an active missions bulletin board with current certificates and photographs representing all the missionaries and ministries supported.
- They will assist all groups within the local congregation in promoting their missions emphases. This includes the boys and girls, youth, men, and women in their distinctive missions ministries.
- They will make every effort to attend district- and world missions-sponsored events, such as district missions rallies, world missions events, etc.
- They will assist the pastor, as requested, in any activities that will enhance the spirit of missions within the local congregation.

Available Resources

Provided by the Missions Commission

FREE DOWNLOADABLE ITEMS

All materials available in both English and Spanish at worldagfellowship.org/missions/

- **THE BLUEPRINT SERIES** – Resource manuals (available in both English and Spanish)
 - Volume 1 – Building Missions Leadership in the Local Church
 - Volume 2 – Building Missions Support With a Missions Convention
 - Volume 3 – Building Missions Vision Month By Month
 - Volume 4 – Building Missions Effectiveness through Intercessory Prayer
 - Volume 5 – Building Missions Partnership through the Missionary Visit
- **THE CHECKLIST** – A digest of the Blueprint Series used for teaching in missions workshops with a corresponding PowerPoint presentation for each of the five essential elements for building missions in the local church. (available in both English and Spanish)
- **POWERPOINT PRESENTATIONS:**
 1. Collection of presentations to be shown to the congregation
 2. Collection of presentations to be used by leadership
 3. Collection of presentations to be used in pastor's sermons
- **MASTER COPIES ARE AVAILABLE FOR PRINTING THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS**
 1. Brochure – What Is A Faith Promise?
 2. Faith Promise Cards (For the members to make their monthly missions commitment to the local church)
 3. Commitment Forms (For the church to make their long-term monthly commitments to the missionary)
 4. Monthly Commitment Certificates (For the national missions department to send to supporting churches, indicating the amount of the monthly commitment and the missionary (with photo) to whom committed)