



**THE
BLUEPRINT SERIES**
Volume 5

Building MISSIONS PARTNERSHIP Through the Missionary Visit



*Written by Paul Brannan
for the*

WORLD ASSEMBLIES OF GOD FELLOWSHIP



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BLUEPRINT SERIES**
Volume 5

Building...

MISSIONS PARTNERSHIP

Through the Missionary Visit



Photo illustration: Jim Whitmer Photography

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

Written by Paul Brannan



MISSIONS COMMISSION
WORLD ASSEMBLIES OF GOD FELLOWSHIP
THE ACTS ONE:EIGHT PROJECT

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INTRODUCTION

Just before He went away Jesus told His followers to “Go into the whole world and preach the Good News to all creation”. Some might ask, “What does that have to do with me?” There are several reasons why His command should have everything to do with you. First, it was Jesus who said it! Second, these were among His last words and last words are usually very important. Third, it was not a request, but a command!

Jesus knew that we couldn’t get the job done by ourselves so He introduced the idea of **partnership**. First and foremost, it would be necessary to depend on the Holy Spirit as our senior **partner** because Jesus said in Acts 1:8, “*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.*” (NLT) The power for witnessing would come through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said. He underscored the fact that we wouldn’t be properly equipped to fulfill His command until we have been filled with the Holy Spirit.

Jesus added another dimension to **partnership** when He said, “*Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward.*” Matt 10:41 (NIV) There is no injustice done to the scripture when we replace the word prophet with the word missionary. Jesus was saying that there would be a **partnership** formed between those who go and those who send. If the senders are as committed in sending as the missionaries are in going, the senders will receive the same reward as the missionaries. What a privilege!

Paul added another dimension to **partnership** when he wrote, “*Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.*” Ro. 10:13 (NLT) He was thrilled with this revelation, but then he began explore what this would mean to a lost world. Four questions haunted him. They were: “*But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent?..*” Rom 10:14-15 (NLT) The answer to all four questions is the same: They cannot! **There must be a partnership between God who provides salvation, the goer who preaches salvation and the sender who provides for the goer.**

John ties it all together when he writes in 3 John 5-8, “*Dear friend, you are doing a good work for God in taking care of the traveling teachers and missionaries who are passing through. They have told the church here of your friendship and your loving deeds. I am glad when you send them on their way with a generous gift. 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.*” (TLB)

There it is! John identified those who remain at home in the local church as **partners** with the missionaries who go to the ends of the earth to proclaim the Good News. The frequent missionary visit in the local congregation is critical if the members are to **partner** with the missionaries.

There are in most churches three kinds of Christians as it relates to missions: The Goers, the Senders, and the Disobedient!

This manual has been prepared to help build that **partnership** between the missionaries and the local congregation and to move every believer into obedience to Christ's command!

Your partner in the harvest,

Paul Brannan

SECTION 1

The Importance of the Missionary Visit

***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 heard this, they praised God...
Acts 21:17-20 (NCV)***

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MISSIONARY VISIT

Giving to missionaries is not charity! We give to missions not because we feel sorry for them, but because we want to become partners with them in reaching the lost world for Christ. Missionary itineration becomes the key to partnership.

While there are detractors who point out that missionary itineration is expensive, time-consuming and tiring, we have only to examine its success within our own missions outreach to know that it produces results that are unparalleled by other methods.

There are at least seven obvious benefits that would not be realized if our missionaries did not visit our churches, sharing their burden for the lost in faraway places.

1. The individual church member is blessed. Jesus commanded every believer to go into all the world and preach the gospel. This seems impractical, if not impossible, for most of the people in our churches. When the missionaries visit the local church, they share opportunities for reaching the lost in distant lands. As we respond to his or her vision, the missionary affords us the opportunity for partnership. We are enabled to fulfill the Great Commission. We become partners in soul winning around the world – without ever leaving home. The better we know the missionaries personally, the more effective is that partnership.

Friendships are built that last a lifetime. An occasional letter, card or small gift for Christmas and birthdays, sent by your church or an individual is the added touch that is needed by your partnering missionary who is so far from home.

2. The local congregation as a group is blessed. It was startling to discover, in a recent study done by the author, that during a recent twelve month period, those churches reporting missionary participation in an annual missions convention also reported 67 percent more converts than churches not having conventions with missionary speakers.

This should come as no surprise. When we become burdened for the lost who live halfway around the world, we cannot long ignore our neighbors, friends and colleagues who are lost. The visit by the missionary keeps fresh before us the reality that without Christ, all men are eternally lost!

3. The lost of the world have a greater opportunity to hear the liberating gospel of Christ. A survey of our own missionaries revealed that two factors played an almost equal part in their call to missions: their daily prayer time and the ministry of a visiting missionary.

Assemblies of God World Missions has never actively recruited missionaries, preferring that the Lord of the Harvest choose those whom He would. This has provided a growing resource of candidates. Add to this number those who have responded through short-term missions assignments, and you will see that there

is a great army of volunteers tearing down Satan's strongholds. Would these laborers be on the front line today had they not heard a missionary message? It is safe to say that many would not!

If you are interested in full-time missionary service or desire to spend a year or two working alongside the missionaries, contact your Assemblies of God World Missions office for information on what might be available.

4. Field ministries are strengthened as a result of intercessory prayer here at home. Many missionary victories can be traced to faithful intercessors here in America. Missionaries share prayer needs for ministries and projects on the field. These can include Bible schools, church planting, crusade ministry, as well as a number of international ministries. Thousands of believers become silent partners with that visiting missionary. Their faithfulness in prayer makes the difference.

A personal experience will illustrate this. In a visit to one of our supporting churches, I shared several prayer requests concerning field needs in Argentina where we were ministering at the time. I included the names of several national workers. Five years later, I returned to that church. The pastor's wife showed me a Bible belonging to her daughter who had been about seven years old at the time of my first visit. Written on the flyleaf in a childish scrawl were the requests that I had shared with the congregation. The mother told me that her daughter had prayed faithfully each night for those needs. That young lady is now the wife of a district superintendent and is still praying for our missionary family!

Intercessory prayer is absolutely essential for the success and well-being of the missionary family. The strength that the missionary finds by knowing that others are supporting him or her in prayer is immeasurable. There are many challenges facing the missionary on the field. Prayer becomes truly effective when we are guided by the Holy Spirit in intercession for the particular needs of a missionary. Following is a partial list of needs for which you might intercede as guided by the Spirit.

- Pray for a special anointing and wisdom.
 - Pray that they will find favor with the people among whom they are ministering.
 - Pray for their health and well being.
 - Pray for their protection from danger and difficulties.
 - Pray for the children's well-being, both physical and emotional.
 - If new on the field, pray that they will learn the language and adapt to the new culture without difficulty.
 - Pray that their financial needs will be met.
 - Pray that many will accept Christ and be disciplined into a committed life-style.
 - Pray that more workers will be sent into the harvest-field.
5. Candidate missionaries find spiritual development through itineration. Raising a missionary budget is a spiritual exercise which allows new missionaries to experience God's divine provision, a lesson they will need to remember daily as

they go into the enemy's territory. Without God's supernatural empowerment, the missionary would soon fail.

The months of sharing during itineration gives the new missionaries opportunity to clarify their own plan of action. As they verbalize their vision to the congregations across America, their own resolve is strengthened and their understanding of God's will for their lives becomes more focused. I am personally convinced that if new missionaries were sent to the field upon approval by the sending agency without itineration, many would fail during their first term of service. Itineration prepares them for the next challenge.

6. Veteran missionaries find fulfillment in itineration. A veteran missionary visit could be called a stockholders' meeting. The veteran missionary is there to report the accomplishments that have resulted from their spiritual partner's investments during their previous term of service.

Itineration, for me, was the completion of a cycle. I had challenged the churches, and they had responded. For four years we had labored on the field. That would not have been possible without their faithfulness in prayer and giving. It was time to return to share with them what had been accomplished as a result of their sacrifice. It is difficult to explain, but a missionary's identity is somehow tied to that visit with his supporting churches.

7. Itineration provides more adequate financing for the missionary. We have examined six benefits of itineration, and only now do I mention money. There is ample evidence to provide a comparison between missionary sending organizations with centralized budgets and others, such as the Assemblies of God that raise their funding through the itineration ministry of their missionary. Those with itinerating missionaries win hands down. Better information, more lay involvement, and higher motivation are just a few of the advantages of our system of itineration. There is no doubt that we all benefit from the missionary visit to the local church.

Of course, there is room for improvement. Announcing missionary services with excitement, fewer preliminaries, singing songs with a missionary theme to create atmosphere, and giving people the opportunity to respond with a generous free-will offering after the missionary has shared the challenge are just a few of the ways that we could make missionary services more effective.

There is one area in our system, however, that is backward. Luke tells us that the Antioch church, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, sought out Barnabas and Paul and sent them forth as missionaries. Currently, it is usually the missionaries who seek churches willing to support them. What would happen if our churches began to seek out missionaries to send as their representatives to the four corners of the earth? That would be true partnership.

THANK GOD FOR THE MISSIONARIES!

Think about it for a moment. We have all been commanded by Christ to “*go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone.*” This means, that in order for us to fulfill the Great Commission, we would have to sell everything we own, tell family and friends goodbye, go to a foreign country, and learn a new culture and language!

But God has called certain people to go as missionaries. That means that we don’t all have to go physically. We can fulfill Christ’s command by sending others. As it relates to missions, there are three types of Christians: those who go, those who send, and the disobedient!

So the next time a missionary visits your church, instead of complaining or criticizing, thank God that you can stay at home and still be obedient to Christ by sending the missionary. The missionary visit is never an interruption, but an opportunity!

SECTION 2

Missions and the Guest Speaker

Dear friend, you are doing a good work for God in taking care of the traveling teachers and missionaries who are passing through. They have told the church here of your friendship and your loving deeds. I am glad when you send them on their way with a generous gift. 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 5-8 (TLB)

MISSIONS AND THE GUEST SPEAKER

The success of your missions outreach will depend largely upon the time that you spend planning your missions activities and securing the best possible missionary speakers for each occasion to assist you in inspiring, informing, and motivating your congregation. It will also require adequate planning for the provision and comfort of those who come to assist you in building missions vision.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD YOUR CHURCH HAVE A MISSIONARY SERVICE?

It is true that every church is different, and consequently, their needs are different, but great churches are missionary churches and a church cannot be truly missions minded without scheduling frequent missionary speakers to come and inspire their people. Less than one missionary service each quarter is not sufficient for creating and maintaining vision for the lost of the world. It would be far more effective to plan on having a missionary speaker, when possible, at least every other month. Many churches have at least one missionary speaker each month.

This can be a problem if missionary traffic is so heavy that the pastor does not have time to minister to his own congregation, but it is not always necessary to give every missionary a full service. Most missionaries are happy to have a 10 minute window followed by a generous offering, when the pastor feels it necessary to minister to the congregation. Having missionary windows will also make it possible to include more missionary speakers throughout the year.

Once the pastor has determined, in consultation with the missions team, how frequently and on what dates to have missionary speakers, a foundation has been laid for future plans. Flexibility is the key. Sometimes a missionary may not be available in your area for the date that you had planned, but flexibility will allow a slight shift in the missionary service from one date to another, depending on the activities that are scheduled on the church calendar.

SELECTING MISSIONARY SPEAKERS

Normally, when we think of a missionary service, we think of veteran missionaries just returned from the field who are now in the process of sharing their past successes with their supporting churches and seeking renewed and increased monthly support for their next term. In addition to this missionary force, there are new missionaries who, for the most part, as yet have had limited or no missionary experience. They also are traveling among the churches sharing with the people their burden and vision with the hope that the churches will join them as partners with prayer and monthly support.

There are also approved missionaries working within your own nation who can share needs of which your congregation may not be aware.

In addition to these missionaries, there is a wealth of experience that can be drawn upon when we invite personnel from the leadership from our national world mission's office. Because of their frequent travel to the countries within their purview they have

the latest information on what is occurring in the different areas of the world. They are in a position to share the very latest word on urgent needs.

A third group of speakers for missionary activities can sometimes be found in district personnel. Not infrequently the district superintendent or the district missions director has at one time served as a missionary. They have a burden for missions, both at home and abroad, and should not be overlooked in your annual schedule of missionary speakers.

It is true that some districts are not overly blessed with an abundance of missionary speakers. If you find this to be true and do not know where to turn, please don't despair. Call your national mission's office for assistance.

WHAT ABOUT FOREIGN NATIONALS?

Traffic by foreign nations from one country to another is greater than ever before. This is due to the availability of transportation and the upward mobility of society.

Whether or not to schedule a foreign national to speak in your church may be the \$64,000 question. Quite often a pastor will schedule one or more foreign nationals only to learn later that they were not who they said they were and did not represent who they said they did. Sometimes foreign nationals who have been received and assisted by our churches are the same people who have created problems for the Assemblies of God within their own country. Of course, no pastor wants to be in a position of contributing to someone who is, at best, nonproductive and, at worst, counterproductive within his own nation and fellowship.

But how can you know? It is true that an experienced and proven foreign national can add a new dimension to your mission's activities and an increased understanding of how the nationals feel about missions and missionaries. In order to prevent a lot of heartache and misunderstanding, it would be well to know with whom you are dealing and whether they are trustworthy. If you are approached either by another pastor or a foreign national asking you to schedule him for a service, it would be wise to contact your national leadership to see if they have any information about the individual in question. Without adequate information it is better to err on the side of caution. You must know if they are in good standing within their own organization and whether or not they represent an approved project before you entrust your pulpit and congregation to them.

It should be stated emphatically that we should not close our doors to all foreign nationals, but we should know those who work among us. There are many godly and trustworthy men and women who may come to your country representing valid ministries. They can be a real blessing to your congregation even as you bless the work within their own country. We, as good stewards, are responsible to ascertain that the monies that we give will be invested where designated.

SECTION 3

How to Increase Exposure of the Missionaries to Your Congregation

... I planned to stop and see you on my way to Macedonia, as well as afterwards when I returned, so that I could be a double blessing to you and so that you could send me on my way to Judea. 2 Cor 1:15 (TLB)

HOW TO INCREASE THE EXPOSURE OF THE MISSIONARIES TO YOUR CONGREGATION

Finding a time to schedule a missionary for a service will depend almost entirely on where you live. If you live in a rural setting, you can probably open your pulpit to a visiting missionary on almost any night of the week. If, however, you live in a metropolitan area, the matter becomes more of a challenge. Life is lived at a faster pace and there are more demands made on the pastor.

So what are we to do? Should we minimize the number of missionary speakers because scheduling has become more problematic? A lost world still remains in darkness and deserves to hear the liberating message. The Great Commission is still in effect for every believer and spiritual leadership has the responsibility of giving every member of their congregation the opportunity to obey through giving, praying and going.

This means that missions must be a priority in our churches and we must find ways to expose our congregation, not only to their responsibilities, but also the opportunities to respond. It is not difficult to find space in the church calendar for missionary speakers if we believe that reaching the world is a priority!

Although scheduling a missionary for Sunday morning is always the ideal because that is usually the largest attendance, it is not always possible. Let's examine some possibilities that will still build missions vision within the hearts of your congregation.

SUNDAY MORNING OPTIONS

Morning Worship Service

If reaching the largest number possible with the challenge of missions is our goal, Sunday morning is still the ideal time for scheduling a missionary service in most countries. Giving the missionary 25 to 30 minutes to minister is the ideal arrangement for most missionaries. However, we have already established that this is not always possible.

Window on the World

When it is not possible to give the missionary the full time for ministry, a 10 minute slot (Window on the World) should always be a possibility. Many missionaries are quite comfortable with this arrangement. It can be discussed when scheduling is done so that the missionary will know what is expected of him or her.

Sunday School Classes

If you are planning for a missionary guest on Sunday morning it is very beneficial to schedule the missionary for ministry during the Sunday school hour. They can go from class to class sharing the missions challenge for just a few minutes in each group. Or they can dedicate the hour to one class, not for the purpose of teaching the current lesson as planned, but sharing missions and getting acquainted with the membership.

When the missionary is accompanied by their spouse and/or teen-age children, each could be assigned to a different class to share their experiences on a foreign field. This will give the participants a new look into missionary life and ministry.

OTHER OPTIONS

Sunday Evening

The Sunday evening service, though smaller in attendance in some countries, is a great setting for the missionary service. It is more casual and allows for spending time in the altar. Without the pressures of the morning service it gives opportunity to become better acquainted.

Many churches have substituted cell group ministry on Sunday evening in the place of the traditional service. This gives great opportunity for the missionary to build relationships with the attendees, as well as share the challenge of missions in a more personal setting.

If the church has neither a Sunday evening service nor cell group ministry, a cake and coffee meeting can be held in the fellowship hall during that time. Both churches and missionaries have found these to be very enjoyable and spiritually rewarding.

Saturday Activities

If scheduled for Sunday morning, most guest speakers will arrive on Saturday afternoon. With a little forethought the missionary's exposure to the congregation can be increased substantially. If the Women's Ministries are planning a Saturday meeting, invite the missionary to participate.

In many churches the Men's Fellowship meets monthly for a Saturday breakfast. Why not include the missionary in the program and fellowship?

Many churches have a youth activity on Saturday afternoon or evening. Why not include the missionary? The missionary message will make clear the demands of Jesus Christ on their lives: present and future. It will also encourage the youth in their mission's project.

Wednesday Evening (or other mid-week service)

Wednesday evening family night is very similar to Sunday School since it is departmentalized in most churches with the different age groups meeting for their own activities. If you have a missionary speaker who is going to minister to the adults, plan a schedule that will allow the missionary to spend a few minutes with the youth group during the sanctuary preliminaries.

Off-night Activities

Although it may not be feasible to schedule a missionary for a service on off-nights, it is very possible to schedule a meeting with a smaller group. Desserts could be served and it could be called "Get Acquainted with the Missionary Night". This is being done with great success by many churches. Yes, the attendance is much less, but the motivation is high and those who attend are inspired and encouraged having spent this quality time with "their missionaries".

Missions Team Meeting

Regardless of when the missionary is scheduled for a service, it is good to set aside some time for the missions team to meet with the missionary. They will be better informed about missions in general and about this missionary's ministry in particular.

They will be better prepared to make decisions concerning this missionary's financial needs and better informed and more effective in their prayers for missions.

Breakfast or Lunch Meetings

If there is just no place on the church calendar to schedule another missionary, invite the missionary to meet with you for a breakfast or lunch. This does not give opportunity for the missionary to meet the congregation, but it does communicate that the pastor is committed to missions and will do all within his or her power to get to know and assist every missionary possible. While visiting with the missionary, the pastor becomes more knowledgeable concerning that missionary's ministry. The pastor may decide that this is a ministry the church would like to support on a monthly basis or at least with a one-time offering.

Missions Conventions

As it becomes more problematic to schedule missionaries for regular services, the missions convention takes on greater importance. The most important part about a missions convention is not the number of missionaries that are invited to participate, but rather the amount of faith promises raised to support the missionary family, including those who have not been able to minister to the congregation.

If the church will effectively plan and conduct an annual convention with a successful faith promise service, missions income will continue to grow and the congregation will be able to touch the world with their giving. The church will never reach its potential in missions without an annual missions convention with a faith promise challenge for every believer!

SECTION 4

How to Make the Missionary Visit More Effective

Do everything you can to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way and see that they have everything they need. Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives.

Titus 3:13-14 (TNIV)

HOW TO MAKE THE MISSIONARY VISIT MORE EFFECTIVE

Planning is said to be everything and that is certainly true when it comes to the missionary visit in your church. Considering how little time the missionary will have with your congregation, it is essential that you as pastor do everything possible to maximize the effectiveness of your missionaries while ministering to your congregation.

Part 1

SCHEDULING MISSIONARY SERVICES

Frequency and timing of missionary speakers are critical to the overall success of your missions" outreach. Frequent missionary speakers, as often as one each month, is far more effective in building missions" vision than having an occasional missionary. We should become proactive and seek out missionary speakers rather than passively wait for a missionary to contact us for a service. This gives intentionality to your plan to create a passion for missions in the hearts of your congregation.

If you live in a district that does not have a lot of missionary traffic, it will be necessary for you to contact missionaries from neighboring districts to maintain a healthy schedule of missionary speakers. Your missions" director should be able to advise you on missionaries who are available.

Many churches schedule all of their missionary speakers for the same time slot; for example, the Sunday evening service. There are at least two problems with this plan. First, in many churches, at least half of your congregation is missing in that evening service. If missionaries only come during one particular time-slot, much of the congregation will never hear a missionary challenge. Others may be present, but working in ministry elsewhere in the building. They, too, will miss hearing the missionaries. By rotating the service slots for the missionary speakers, everyone should get to hear a missionary message, at least three or four times each year.

Part 2

PRE-SERVICE PLANNING

For years I gave orientation about itineration to our missionaries, both new and veteran. I stressed repeatedly the importance of scheduling time with the pastor prior to the service so that a clearly defined plan can be established and mutually understood before going to the platform.

Personal experience has shown that it is sometimes very difficult to meet with the pastor just prior to the service. I am certain that this is not intentional and that with the responsibilities that rest on a pastor"s shoulders in preparing for the service, he just finds it difficult to devote time to his missionary speaker. If you as pastor feel that it would be best to meet with the missionary at an earlier hour, perhaps for dinner, then, by all means, do it. But it must be done.

Before the pastor can fully understand the burden of the missions, it is necessary to know something of that missionary's ministry, responsibilities and financial need. A pre-service meeting with the missionary brings all of this into focus.

After this has been done, it will be necessary to communicate to the missionary any time constraints. Please be generous with the missionary on the time allotted. Not infrequently I have been invited to minister in a church on Sunday morning, where they had gone to great expense paying my airfare, only to find that when the pulpit was finally turned to me, it was 11:45 AM and they were accustomed to dismissing at noon. It is not a matter of the missionary's ego, but rather the lack of utilizing the missionary's knowledge and expertise. Please make every effort to give the missionary ample time. He or she will probably not be back with you for at least five years!

Not every missionary will be given the full service. It may come as a surprise to know that not all missionaries want the full service. Many are quite comfortable with a 10 or 15 minute window. You, as pastor, will determine which missionaries will minister the Word and which will be given a window.

Share with the missionary guest your desires concerning his/her ministry. Do you want them to preach or talk about their call and ministry on the field, or both?

Ask the missionary if there is anything that they need for the service. Will they need a table for a display in the lobby? Will they be using video or PowerPoint in their presentation? Will they use the church's equipment or set up their own projector?

During the pre-service planning it should be decided whether the missionary's presentation will be a complete package or whether there will be a break to receive the offering in the middle of the presentation. Some prefer to give a full presentation and receive the missionary offering at the end. Others prefer to give a brief overview of their ministry and financial needs and then turn the service back to the pastor to receive the offering. The missionary then returns to the pulpit to minister, leaving the end of the service for a challenge and time at the altar.

It is quite effective to plan the whole service around the theme of missions rather than making the missionary speaker a postscript to the service. Plan the choruses, hymns and special music to focus on missions. Everything that is done in that service will point toward reaching a lost world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

You can make every missionary service a success simply by helping the missionary plan the service and then giving him or her your full cooperation as they give you their very best in ministry.

Part 3

MISSIONARY OFFERINGS

As mentioned earlier, it will be necessary to establish when the offering will be received. Of equal importance is a clear understanding of who will receive it and for what purpose. It should be underscored that the missionary offering should never be received before the missionary has the opportunity to share the financial need. Most of our congregations are quite generous when fully informed and challenged.

Unfortunately, many churches do not receive an offering for the missionary speaker, choosing rather to give him or her an honorarium at the close of the service. Honorariums are given to speakers for services rendered. The missionary should never be paid for services rendered, but rather should be given a generous offering according to the needs of a dying world and the challenges of that missionary's ministry. Please allow the missionary an opportunity to share his burden with your congregation, and then as the people are challenged, see what God will do toward meeting that need through the enthusiastic response of the people.

The person receiving the offering, usually the pastor, should state clearly the purpose of the offering and set the example by their own giving. It should never be referred to as "a little offering" or "a little something to help the missionaries buy a pizza on their way home." The people are investing in soul-winning and should be encouraged in their giving, knowing that their offering will reap eternal benefits.

It would be good to set a minimum, but never a maximum offering for your missionary speakers. If the weather is bad or the attendance is low for whatever reason, remember that the missionaries are giving their best and deserve our best. When faith promises have been received during a missions' convention, part of the income from those promises can be designated for missionary speakers. That way, if the offering for the missionary does not meet the minimum established, the balance needed can be taken from the missions' fund. This means that you will never have to apologize for the size of the offering. You have done your best and that is all that God requires.

Always plan on giving a check to the missionary covering the offering received for their ministry. If the church treasurer or missions treasurer will not be present it will be necessary to anticipate this and get a signed check on which you can insert the amount after the service.

A missionary should never be told, "We will have to send your check." Many times a missionary will need to cash that check before leaving your community in order to have the funds to travel to their next destination.

I remember well the time that I was scheduled to speak in a certain church. I was traveling with my wife and three children. No hotel or motel had been provided. This meant that we would have to drive some distance after the service before arriving home. The main problem was that the gas tank was as empty as my wallet. The pastor told me that they would send a check for the missionary offering later. I asked the pastor if I could cash a check for a small amount. He said that I should speak to the church treasurer. I found the treasurer in a side room counting the offering. When I asked if he would cash a check for me, he refused saying, "No, we don't do business on the Lord's Day." I left there wondering how we would get home with three small children when we ran out of gas. It was only as we were leaving town that I remembered that someone had handed me a bill after the morning service in another church. I had slipped it in my side pocket and forgotten about until that moment. What a delight when I pulled it out of my pocket and discovered that it was sufficient to buy half a tank of gasoline! The Lord had seen that others might fail us, but He is always faithful!

Let's talk about special offerings. Special offerings are those given to our missionaries for personal use as opposed to ministry needs. Sometimes churches and individuals wish to give the missionaries something extra for their personal use. This is not discouraged because we know that many times God uses this means to supply urgent needs that the missionaries might have.

This doesn't mean that the missionaries do not receive an adequate monthly allowance, but like any other family, financial challenges do occur. Churches are also encouraged to remember the missionaries on their birthdays and at Christmastime.

This is greatly appreciated by all, but especially by the missionary kids (MKs). These special offerings are receipted in the same manner as ministry offerings so the church will receive missions' credit for this giving as well. The World Missions Executive Committee can establish an annual maximum that the missionaries may receive in personal offerings. Any special offerings beyond that maximum can be placed in the missionary's work account. Few, if any, missionaries would ever abuse the receipt and use of personal offerings. Just the opposite is true many times. On numerous occasions my wife and I have received personal offerings and placed them in our work account because that was the most urgent need at the moment.

It is difficult for the missionary when a pastor says to him while giving him the check, "Now this is just for you. We don't want any receipt written. We want no missions' credit and we don't want you to report this to the missions department. This is yours to spend as you please." This places the missionary in a dilemma. On the one hand he wants to honor your wishes. On the other hand he knows that to be totally accountable he must receipt the offering, although he is free to keep the offering for his own use up to the yearly maximum.

Be generous with our missionaries, but please don't ask them to not report the offering received since each missionary must maintain financial integrity with the other missionaries as well as comply with missionary policy.

Part 4

ACCOMODATIONS

When we invite someone into our home as our guest, we want them to feel welcome and at ease. This is just as true when you invite someone as a guest to speak at your church as it is when you invite them into your home.

Although you might think that it goes without saying, but the experiences of many missionaries has made it necessary to say that when missionary speakers have been invited, provision should be made for their food and accommodations during their time of ministry.

When a church invites a guest speaker, accommodations should be provided prior to the service or following the service, depending on whether the speaker is with you for a morning or evening service. If the speaker is to be with you for both services on Sunday, accommodations should be provided for both nights. The only exception is when the speaker prefers to make other arrangements. Of course, this applies to your missionaries as well.

It is obvious that the availability and quality of accommodations will vary greatly from city to town to village to rural area. For those churches located in areas where hotels or other similar accommodations are not available or you are not able to afford the expense, please know that you are only expected to do the best that you possibly can. No one should ask more.

Thousands of our churches around the world are, however, in a position to host a missionary and provide them with the same comforts that the congregation on average enjoys. That being the case, we will look at a few suggestions that will make the missionary feel welcomed and comfortable while your guest.

Contact the missionary speaker by e-mail several days prior to the date with details concerning the hotel reservation that has been made for him or her. Be sure to include directions on how to arrive at the hotel or home from their entry route into the city or town. Directions from their hotel to the church would also be very helpful. Be sure to include a telephone number other than the church office for any emergency that might arise. Inform them of the time that you would like for them to arrive at the church.

When making a hotel reservation, keep in mind that location and comfort are both important. Be sure that the hotel is located in a relatively secure part of the city. Especially in the case of single ladies, make a reservation in a hotel that has inside hallways as opposed to rooms with doors leading directly to the outside. This provides a much greater degree of safety.

Don't assume that the room is comfortable and attractive. See for yourself or send another responsible individual. Does the room have a good bed? Does it provide a restful and appealing atmosphere? Does the hotel serve a complimentary breakfast? If not, arrangements must be made to cover the cost of the breakfast at the hotel or elsewhere. Would you be happy to stay there? If not, please don't put your guests there.

Reservations should be made in the name of the visiting missionary, not in the name of the church, pastor or church secretary. Make certain that the hotel understands that the church will be responsible for the cost of the room, not your guest!

In the event that there is no adequate hotel facility in your community or nearby, it may be necessary to house your guest in a private home. If you plan to house your guest in other than the pastor's home, here some observations that might make the missionary's stay more pleasant for both the host and the missionary. Although the missionary's visit with you or someone in your congregation may be a one or two night experience, it is many times a daily experience for the missionary and may last for 12 to 15 months. It can become very exhausting for the missionary to adapt to a different family, their schedule and routine several times each week.

If you are in a smaller church that cannot afford a hotel or there is nothing adequate in your community, please do not allow this to hinder you from inviting missionary speakers. Most of the missionaries, myself included, have spent some very delightful times of fellowship in the homes of both pastors and laypeople.

A word of caution is advisable if you are thinking of placing the missionary in a home other than that of the pastor. From experience I can say that I have stayed in the homes

of church members on many occasions. We have enjoyed a delightful time of fellowship, but the awkwardness presents itself on Monday morning when the man of the house has gone to work, the children have gone to school and the missionary is left alone with the hostess. There can be great discomfort in such a situation. More than likely, the missionary will probably make it a point to leave the home just as soon as possible in order to prevent any appearance of impropriety, even when he has nowhere else to go at that hour.

If the missionary is to be housed in a private home, it is better to take him there and introduce him to his hosts rather than just giving him an address.

When housing the missionary in a home, ask yourself the following questions: Is the room clean and does it have a good bed? Does the room offer some privacy? Will the temperature be adequate? Is there a writing table or desk available? Whatever you would need, your guest will probably need as well. Make sure that there are plenty of fresh towels. They may need to do some laundry or take some clothes to the cleaners. If the wife is along, she might appreciate a trip to the beauty shop. Could that be your small token of appreciation to her?

If the missionaries are traveling with small children, will the children's needs be met? Remember that families with small children may need a baby bed, potty chair, bottle warmer, etc.

Let the missionaries know the hosts schedule and whether they are expected to be in any of these activities. The hostess might say, "I will be in the kitchen if you need me," or "we will be in the backyard, but we understand if you need time to rest or pray or study.

On a few occasions I have not received enough to eat while hosted in a private home, but the opposite is usually the problem. It is normal for the hosts to want to prepare a large meal for the guests. This means that many missionaries fight the "battle of the bulge". If a large meal is to be served, it should not be just before service time. It would be helpful to keep the desserts light and please don't insist that the missionary takes a second helping when it is close to time for the service. It would be very helpful to ask the missionary if they have any diet restrictions and what meal schedule would they prefer.

It is important to remember that, even when the missionary is staying with a family other than the pastor, time should be set aside for the missionary and pastor to spend together following the service.

Part 5

AFTER-SERVICE FELLOWSHIP

If your guest is with you on a Sunday morning it is assumed that you will provide lunch. Although most are not interested in eating a full meal following an evening service they will usually want something before going to bed. Why not invite the missionary for a snack or dessert and enjoy a choice time of fellowship. It will give you opportunity to learn more about the missionary and their ministry.

Itinerating missionaries look forward to this time of fellowship with the pastor and family. Friendships are formed that will last a lifetime. The bond that is formed makes us family, not just business associates.

Many times a pastor is going through a difficult moment. He or she does not feel comfortable talking with a neighboring pastor and may not wish to confide in their district leadership at that time, but the missionary is non-threatening and, if a person of experience and wisdom, can be a unique blessing to the host pastor.

Speaking from personal experience I can remember that many times I sat with a struggling pastor until well after midnight listening to and praying with him about a burden heavy on his heart. You don't plan those occasions, but when they occur, hearts are melded together as one. You can't buy that kind of kinship!

Part 6

A MONTHLY COMMITMENT

There are three overarching reasons why missionaries itinerate within our churches: To challenge every believer to pray and give and for others to go. It should come as no surprise then that finance becomes a major issue in iteration. Since we all know that the missionaries are seeking financial support, we shouldn't ignore the subject when the missionary visits.

There is an expression from another era that says, "Every tub must sit on its own bottom". It certainly applies to missionaries in the Assemblies of God who must raise every dollar of their own budget for both personal support and ministry expenses. The missionaries are seeking **partners** for the "end-time harvest". They are hoping that you as pastor will lead your congregation to join them as financial **partners**.

When possible, present the missionary with a signed monthly commitment form before he or she makes their departure. It is a great encouragement to the missionary and it hastens their departure for the field. If the church board or missions" team must be consulted before making a commitment, tell the missionary when a decision will be made. Ask the missionary to give you a call after the date of your meeting.

If your church is really not in a position to join the missionary with monthly support, please don't tell the missionary, "maybe". As painful as it may be for both you and the missionary, it is better to just tell the missionary that the church will not be able to make a monthly commitment. This will save time for the missionary to seek that support elsewhere.

Sometimes churches opt to wait until the missionary is ready to leave for the field before making a monthly commitment, but if every church did this the missionary would never leave! While the missionary is itinerating, your monthly commitment is supporting them personally and/or accumulating toward their cash budget.

Many of our churches respond to emergencies. This is commendable. It would, however, be so much more helpful if we all responded before the emergency occurs. Your prompt response with a monthly commitment can prevent these crises from ever taking place.

A missionary's dream is to receive a signed monthly commitment form from the church before they leave your city. Why not make this your goal as well?

A sample monthly commitment form can be downloaded at worldagfellowship.org/missions/

LITTLE THINGS THAT MEAN A LOT

Through the years, my wife, Betty and I have enjoyed many acts of kindness. These deeds have shown how much the congregation and Pastor appreciated what we were doing and how happy they were to have us as their guests. Let me list a few of these gestures that you may want to file in the back of your mind.

In some churches where we have visited, the pastors have taken an interest in our family, even when our children were not present. On occasion the church has given a cash gift of \$10 or \$15 U.S. for the children. Some have made it a point to give me a gift to take to my wife.

Sometimes when I have checked into the hotel that was reserved by the church, I have found a basket of fruit and other goodies placed there by the missions' team. Not only is this extremely thoughtful, but practical as well. Many times the missionary would like a little something to eat, but really doesn't want to go to the restaurant. He may just want something to nibble on. And it's healthy, too.

There is always a warm feeling in my heart when I arrive at an airport and the pastor is there to meet me personally, take me to the hotel and come back later on Saturday evening to take me out to dinner. These are gracious hosts and their kindness is certainly not wasted. The performance of your missionary will be at its maximum when you have treated your missionary so courteously

SECTION 5

How Are Assemblies of God Missionaries Supported?

I have received my full pay, and even more than that. I have everything I need. That's because Epaphroditus brought me the gifts you sent. They are a sweet-smelling offering. They are a gift that God accepts. He is pleased with it. Phil 4:18 (NirV)

HOW ARE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD MISSIONARIES SUPPORTED?

WHAT SYSTEM DO WE USE?

“It seems such a shame for missionaries to spend 4 years overseas and then be forced, upon their return to the United States, 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 with frequency by pastors and laity alike. It is a reasonable observation and deserves a reasonable answer.

There are three methods commonly employed to raise missionary support.

- First, the independent faith system leaves every missionary to raise what he or she can, with no guarantees. Donors send their support directly to the missionary. It leaves the missionary with no assurance of a stable income.
- The second is the budgeted system where churches send 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 very impersonal and relieves the average church member from any sense of individual responsibility.
- The third method of raising missionary support is a modified system. This system, a combination of faith and budget, is used by Assemblies of God World Missions. It requires missionaries to travel among stateside Assemblies of God churches to raise their financial and prayer support. This is called itineration. Monthly offerings are then sent to the national office, designated by the donor for the missionaries and their projects.

The Assemblies of God World Missions Department in many countries requires that all its missionaries raise their own support. No one is supported through subsidies since such funds are non-existent.

WHY DO WE 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 and have encouraged AGWM not to make the same mistake.

Missions’ giving continues to increase for World Missions. Someone said, “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.”

Itineration has biblical precedents. In 1 Corinthians 16:6 Paul wrote to the church in Macedonia, *“Perhaps I will stay with you a while, or even spend the winter, so that you can help me on my journey (propempe*) wherever I go.”*

* A Greek word that often implies providing a traveler with material provision for the journey.

Paul intended to return to Corinth and receive help from them in order to return to Judea (2 Corinthians 1:16).

Paul wrote to Titus instructing him to do everything he could *“to help Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollos on their way (*propempe) and see that they have everything they need”* (Titus 3:13).

MISSIONARY ITINERATION

Effective missionaries do not work independently in foreign lands. They are sent by churches that share together in the burden, the work, and the rewards. The sent and the senders must answer to 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 to raise their prayer and financial support. Itineration is vital for a successful 4-year term of foreign missionary ministry. It requires about 1 out of every 5 years of a missionary's career.

All Assemblies of God missionaries and their ministries are financially dependent on monthly commitments from churches and individual donors. Each itinerating missionary is given a supply of monthly commitment forms by the Missions Department. Each donor or church is asked to complete one of these forms and send it to the World Missions office. Once the signed monthly commitment form is received by the missions office, a monthly support certificate with the missionaries' photograph and the amount of monthly support is returned to the sending church to be a part of the display of missionaries supported by that congregation. Both of these items are available at worldagfellowship.org/missions/

Each missionary unit is given a budget determined in great part by the cost of living in their assigned country. This budget is divided into two categories: a personal budget for their support and a work budget to cover the expenses of their ministry overseas. In addition to raising monthly support for each of those categories, the missionary is required to raise a cash budget for initial expenses of fare, freight, duty, equipment, and language study if applicable. A project budget may also be included. The cash budget is raised by missions' offerings from churches, contributions from individual donors, and accumulated support from incoming monthly commitments during their itineration.

Missionaries are not cleared for the field until they have raised their required budget. When missionaries go to the field without raising their full budget, their budget is not underwritten. This means that if the money does not come in to meet their monthly allowance the missionary suffers a shortfall.

World evangelization requires teamwork between the sending churches, World Missions, and the missionaries it sends. We must make certain that missionaries are not limited in their ministry on their field because of insufficient prayer and financial support at home.

SO, REALLY, WHY DO WE ITINERATE?

Itineration is about much so much more than raising money. It is a spiritual exercise for both the missionary and the congregation.

- The missionary ministers the Word as directed by the Holy Spirit, adding a spiritual dimension that would be missing without such ministry.
- Missionary itineration is informational. People respond to the needs of a lost world when they are informed.
- Missionary itineration is motivational. It challenges the people to pray and give, and for some to go.
- The ministry of the missionary will bless the missions-minded congregation. Studies have shown that often a church that becomes missions-minded will experience an increase in the general fund revenue of about 15%. This is an added benefit to the fact that missions-minded churches win more people to the Lord in their own city.
- Itineration ministry blesses the pastor. Many times the missionary has the unique opportunity to encourage the pastor and spouse during his visit.
- And missionary itineration has the purpose of demonstrating to the congregation the lostness of man and the value of a soul.

SECTION 6

What Missionaries Wish that Pastors Knew About Missionaries

Would you do me a favor, friends, and give special recognition to the family of Stephanas? You know, they were among the first converts in Greece, and they've put themselves out, serving Christians ever since then. I want you to honor and look up to people like that: companions and workers who show us how to do it, giving us something to aspire to.

1 Corinthians 16:15-16 (THE MESSAGE)

WHAT MISSIONARIES WISH THAT PASTORS KNEW ABOUT MISSIONARIES

It has been said that it is impossible to understand another man until you have walked in that man's shoes. In an effort to help missionaries and pastors understand the challenges that each face in their ministry, a survey was conducted within the two groups. The missionaries were given one question: What do you wish that pastors knew about missionaries? Following that question were several categories to which the missionaries could respond.

Pastors were then asked the question: What do you wish that missionaries knew about pastors? The same categories were given for their response.

The responses were collected from each group and edited to express their most salient concerns. The results were reduced to 58 pages. The results from the pastor's survey were then communicated to the missionaries to help them better understand the challenges relating to missions that face the pastors. The results from the missionaries' survey have been communicated to hundreds of pastors with the same motive.

Our missionaries are deeply grateful for the loyalty and faithfulness of thousands of our pastors in supporting the missionary vision. The following missionary responses are not intended as criticism, but rather an attempt to help pastors understand some of the challenges that our missionaries face. You as a pastor may be able to assist the missionaries more effectively in some areas after reading their concerns. Admitted, these results reflect the challenges and values of just one country, but many of these observations are cross cultural in nature. At least you will be able to pray more knowledgeably for the missionaries as they face the challenges that may be unique to their ministry and calling. Following is a sampling of those responses.

ABOUT BUDGETS

- Budgets are not set by the individual missionary, but according to guidelines in World Missions.
- Budgets are not "personal funds" but, compare with the pastor's "church budget" rather than with their personal income.
- The funds given by the churches, except for the missionary's personal salary, are controlled by World Missions in accordance with budget, policy and need.
- A missionary has to raise his own "work support" in addition to personal support. We often hear the statement from pastors, "What? You mean world Missions doesn't pay for that?"
- I wish a pastor would ask us, "What is your financial need? How can our church help you?"

ABOUT COMMUNICATION

- Concerning possible support, scheduling of a service, etc., missionaries would rather have communication be “no” than to have no communication at all.
- Communication is the name of the game. Pastors want to hear from us. We also appreciate an occasional letter from a pastor, especially when we are going through „tough stuff“ on the field. Even one letter from the pastor during a four-year term would be encouraging.
- Pastors, please return phone calls and answer letters even if done by a secretary, or a reply hand-written on my original letter and returned.
- We love to hear from churches either through church newsletters or personal correspondence.
- If a pastor/church cannot have us for a service or cannot pick us up for a monthly commitment, we understand. Letting us know as soon as possible would help cut down on phone charges and time.
- Pastors should demonstrate preparedness when inviting a missionary for a service. A missionary should not be left to guess as to whether or not he has lodging for the night or a hot meal after the service. The pastor and missionary need to communicate these things in advance of the service.
- The first three months on the field are the hardest and regular correspondence and encouragement through this time would help.
- We need to know about pastoral changes, congregational changes, financial difficulties and victories so that we can pray and feel a part of the church family.
- If you drop or lessen your financial support, simply let us know. We don’t need to know the reason, just let us know.
- Our “life” depends on keeping up on pastoral and address changes.
- We need to know how correspondence should be addressed: 1) Pastor, 2) Missions Committee, 3) Other?

ABOUT CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

- Since missionaries returning after a 4 or 5 year term are not aware of changes in society, nor the law, prepare the speaker about the things that might be offensive.
- So called “tourist destination countries”, have great spiritual needs and spiritual darkness. They only see the beach, not the real people when they come on vacation.
- It is most humbling and discouraging to have to call some pastors repeatedly and hear the same story from their secretaries, “I’m sorry, the Pastor is in a staff meeting”. Or, “I’m sorry, he is in an important meeting, can you call back?” After calling back many times and getting the same

response and even telling the secretaries to have the pastor call us collect at our expense, they rarely return the call.

ABOUT ITINERATION

- Within an 11-12 month period the missionary family tries to do things they enjoy while in their home country. There is only one chance in every 5 years to do so.
- Let pastors understand that itineration is like an 18 month long job interview for the new missionary.
- Itineration is not “furlough”. It is oftentimes a difficult year of intense fund-raising. Therefore, please return calls and be up front, even if you have to say “no”.
- Itineration is a required part of “field” service. We are not on vacation with a full salary from Headquarters. We are usually supporting our ongoing ministry on our field of labor even while we are itinerating.
- We wish the pastors knew that we don’t have a year of “vacation” during our itineration time. It is hard work trying to keep a full schedule, preparing for services (just as pastors do), spending long hours on the road away from our families, while spending precious little time with elderly parents and grown children and disappointing them.

ABOUT EXPECTATIONS

- Please advise the missionary what you expect of him. Example: A sermon with illustrations from the field, a report from the field, video or other visual presentation? Give sufficient time for his participation.
- Be clear on the time element. Example: arrival time, minutes allowed for presentation, etc.
- When the missionary arrives, it would be nice if there was someone there to greet him and show him where to go, let him know what is expected, etc.
- Tell us in advance how you want us to conduct your service. We travel so much and are in so many diverse congregations that we cannot guess and get it right all the time. Talk the service over with us; tell us what you expect and the time do you dismiss, etc.

ABOUT THE FAMILY

- Families cannot always travel together. The missionaries’ children have school just like all children.
- If the missionary’s wife and family are able to be in the service, please have someone assigned to make them feel at home.
- If the teenagers of the family don’t come along, it’s because they need their own language-speaking youth group in our church.

- Don't assume all missionary wives are proficient at or like to do speaking engagements. Have the courtesy to ask rather than assume and assign.

ABOUT FELLOWSHIP

- I wish pastors understood that the time after the service is, sometimes, just as important to the missionary as the service time. The meal together is not just another restaurant meal; it is a final opportunity for the missionary to communicate his call, the needs of the field, and the need of continual support. Things can be said here that cannot be said during the service.
- We need friends while itinerating even though we are only home for a year.
- As a missionary wife, I would like to be introduced to the pastor's wife before the service so I don't wonder if she is the pianist or organist or if she is even there. It is not necessary that she sit with me.
- I wish that pastors knew that I want to get to know them as people. A chance to talk and share for a while before the service is very helpful. If I were scheduled for a Sunday morning service, I would love to go out for dinner on Saturday night. The time invested will pay real dividends in the service.
- We are people, too. It gets lonely always traveling. Fellowship with people in churches is very welcome and refreshing after the services.
- We really need a church and a pastor to "adopt" us and our family when we come home on furlough.

ABOUT ADDITIONAL MINISTRY

- Please pray with us before the service. If you can include members of your missions committee and other staff members we can answer personal questions of interest to them.
- Adult Sunday School classes are a wonderful time for Q&A. Some people do have lingering doubts about missions; give them a chance to get an answer.
- Tell us what we can do to help you raise your missions' vision and budget.
- Help us to know how to pray for you and your congregation.
- Even though your budget is strained and you cannot make a monthly commitment to us, let us come to keep the current vision that you have alive.
- We want to minister! Let us have an altar call. Let us preach. We want to bless, encourage and challenge your people.
- Please don't refuse us a Wednesday evening service. We don't mind ministering to a smaller attendance.

- We do all these things for one reason only: The Harvest Master has called us, and we have committed to obey, whatever the cost.

ABOUT HOUSING/FOOD ARRANGEMENTS

- If the missionary will be staying in a motel, it would be helpful to be advised in advance of the motel and location.
- Missionaries don't need to eat a big meal before the service. They usually feel better if they don't. A snack after the service is welcomed.
- There are quite a few churches that have missionary quarters. I would have appreciated these pastors offering these accommodations for the time spent in their area.
- Thank you for offering meals and lodging before we ask for help. We appreciate that hospitality and generosity very much! It's really nice when you ask if we have a place to rest between Sunday morning and evening services.

ABOUT OFFERINGS

- Please refer to the offering received as a "cash offering for their work budget", as opposed to a "love offering for this missionary". When they think of it as a "love offering", they think of it as an honorarium to us personally.
- Missionaries would rather receive \$125 offering from the congregation than a \$200 honorarium from the general fund. Giving the people a chance to respond is very important to the missionary.
- Take a cash offering for the missionary. Please don't mix it with other offerings or mention other needs at that time. To give only an honorarium is to tie God's hands.
- Pastors should know the expenses missionaries incur by coming to their church. For example, if a pastor invites a missionary to their church and knows that he must drive hundreds of miles to get to the church and the check does not cover the mileage, in essence it costs the missionary money to minister in that church.
- I would rather trust God for a good offering than have an honorarium.
- It makes it difficult for the missionaries when they have to wait for an offering in the mail. A check should be given at the time of the service.

ABOUT PARTNERSHIP

- I see the cooperation as a partnership. We could not go to the front lines without the „support troops“ back home. And we help you to fulfill the Great Commission.

- We desire to be partners. The more involved the church is in our work, the stronger our relationship will be.
- We need you and we know we do, but you need us also in order to obey the Great Commission!

ABOUT PHONE CALLS

- Please return phone calls even to say, “No, you can’t come for a service.” Answering machines say they will return the call, but they seldom do.
- How frustrating it is to try to reach a pastor who has a secretary whose sworn duty is to shield him from all callers.
- Please return a missionary’s phone calls! If you cannot have a missionary, please tell him up front. This will save missions money.

ABOUT MONTHLY COMMITMENTS

- A simple “no” for a service or a monthly commitment is more loving and more cost effective for the Kingdom than is a “maybe” or a check with me later”, if “no” is in the pastors heart.
- When support money just doesn’t come in, don’t drop us, but write and tell us that. We will write a letter encouraging the people to involvement. At least tell us so we can pray and write.
- I find it difficult as a missionary when I am dumped from the support list each time a church gets a new pastor.
- We wish pastors knew the need for faithful monthly giving as opposed to high amounts sporadically given.
- While on itineration, we still need your monthly support!
- Some churches have a policy of increasing a missionary’s monthly commitment every year, or certainly every term before adding candidates. This covers inflation, which can be outrageous overseas, and a variable drop in other pledges. Since our budget always goes up, this is a great policy and practice. Please consider this!
- We wish pastors would tell the missionary that they can’t take on any new commitments if they really can’t rather than leading the missionary to believe there is a good possibility that they will be sending something in the near future.

ABOUT THE PRESENTATION

- Please don’t feel like you have to let us preach. We would prefer a 10 minute window rather than a closed door.
- We want to communicate to pastors that the missionary’s role in a service is not just to preach, but to inform and report on the results of the church’s investment and to try to weave it into a message.

- We may have years of service and travelled thousands of miles to minister in to your people. Please ask the worship leader to shorten their segment and perhaps cut special music back to one number, giving us the opportunity to present missions to your congregation.
- We appreciate it when you, Pastor, give us plenty of time and freedom in giving our presentation.
- Pastors, please be there at the service when the missionary speaks.

ABOUT SCHEDULING

- A simple “no” for a service or a pledge is more loving and more cost effective for the Kingdom than is a “maybe” or a “check with me later”, if “no” is in the pastor’s heart.
- Pastors should avoid making a “tentative” booking. This makes it harder for the missionary to schedule services in an organized manner.
- Being scheduled for a missions service when the pastor knows he will not be there is sometimes awkward. Often, no one is left „in charge” and the missionary ends up being a pulpit supply „fill-in” speaker.
- Please don’t use us missionaries as “pulpit fill-ins” without prior consultation. I feel cheated, (presumed upon), when I show up and discover you are not there.

ABOUT CANCELING

- I realize that it is sometimes necessary to cancel a service. However, I wish pastors knew the effect that this has on the missionary’s itinerary. It is next to impossible to schedule a replacement service less than four weeks away, and even then it is difficult. In one case, I had a church cancel less than two weeks away when they knew they had to cancel at least two months prior. I did not find out until I called to confirm the service.
- Please, Pastor, reschedule if you say you will.

VIEWS FROM A MISSIONS SECRETARY

We just finished my first attempt at a missions convention in our small church (around 100). What a wonderfully blessed weekend of activities!

Since January of this year, we have hosted missionaries in our home for dinner and fellowship, with a few couples and the pastor and his wife. This has had a tremendous effect on the missionaries as well as each of us present. One missionary told us that this was their first time to be in a home just for food and fellowship.

As a missions secretary, I have the privilege to be in contact with some of our missionaries by way of e-mail. This contact has further developed our friendship and concern for them in their struggles. They are able to send prayer requests to us and we can pray for them on Sunday as a congregation. What powerful stuff!