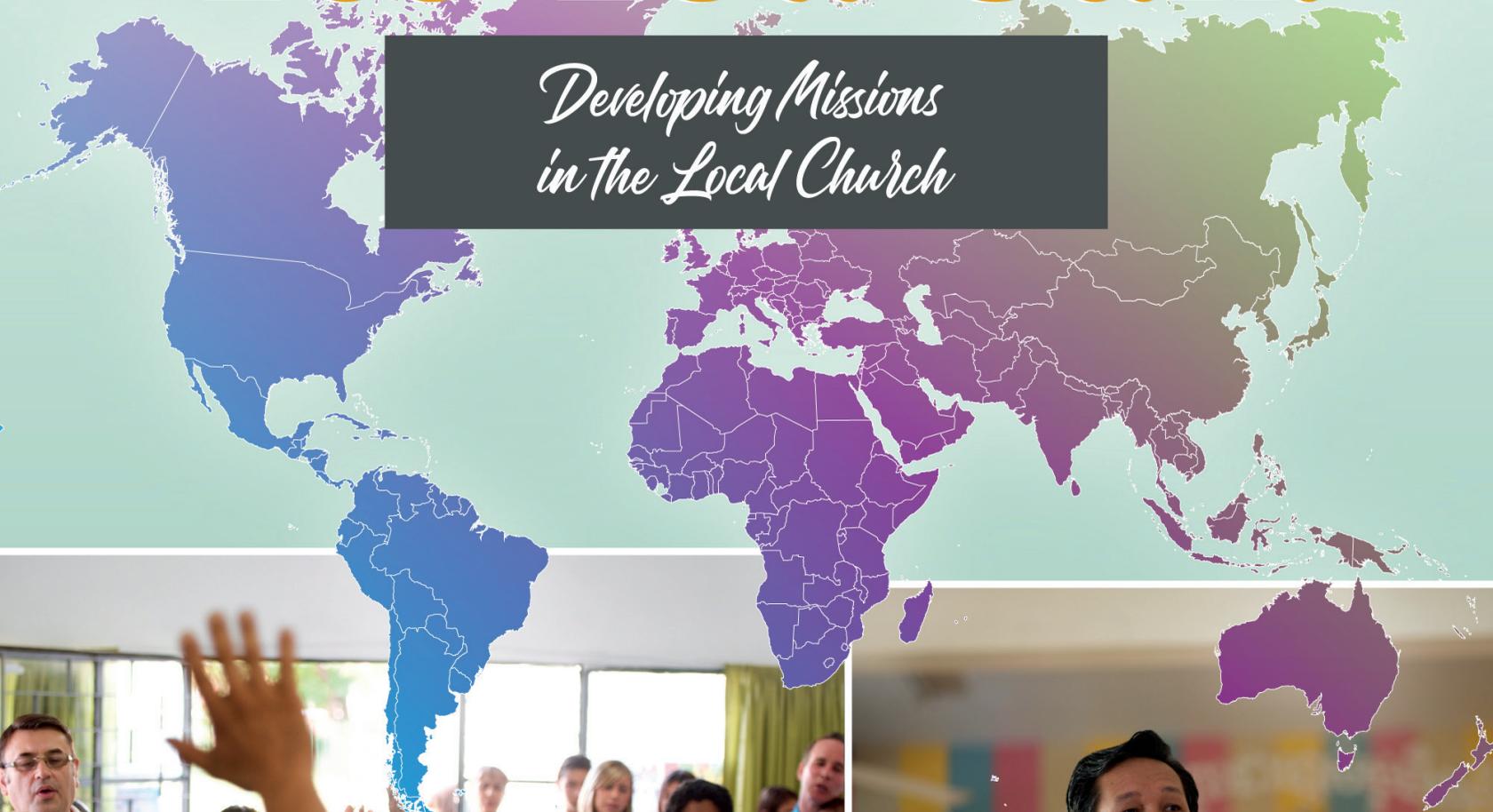


Yes You Can!

*Developing Missions
in the Local Church*



AGWM
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD WORLD MISSIONS



Yes You Can!

*Developing Missions
in the Local Church*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: Gil Rodriguez	1
Introduction: Dave Greco	1
First Things First	2
How a Missions Mindset Benefits the Church.....	3
Components of a Healthy and Growing Missions Program.....	4
Component 1: The Missions Committee	5
Component 2: Hosting Missionaries.....	8
Component 3: Financial Support	11
Component 4: Promoting Missions Regularly.....	14
Component 5: Scheduling Missions Conventions	16
Component 6: Short-Term Missions Trips	19
Component 7: Promoting Regular Prayer.....	24
FAQ: Monthly Commitments to Missionaries.....	25
Materials and Resources	28

Every generation has the opportunity to preach the gospel. The responsibility falls on every person within their lifetime to follow God's call to take the good news to people around the world, according to the Great Commission given by Jesus:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
(Matthew 28:19–20, NIV)

We can go because God sends us with His authority (v. 18). Today—with so many forms of transportation and communication available—is the most opportune time to go and reach multitudes of lost people globally. Matthew 24:14 tells us "this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." Clearly, worldwide preaching of the gospel is God's desire.

Missions is the greatest responsibility of the Church, but obedience to the Great Commission does not depend on the size of an individual local church. We all participate in taking the gospel to every corner of the earth. I trust this manual will help you follow God's divine imperative to send missionaries around the world. Allow the Holy Spirit to use you as you guide your congregation to becoming a Great Commission church.

Thank you for being His channel to reach the lost and establish the Church among all peoples everywhere.

Gil Rodriguez
Director of Mobilization

"We commit ourselves and the movement to Him
for the greatest evangelism that the world has ever seen."
The General Council of the Assemblies of God, 1914

From our inception the Assemblies of God has been committed to world missions and fulfilling the Great Commission. That passion continues today as we work to send new missionaries around the globe.

We attend many conferences and seminars that raise awareness of the responsibility to preach the gospel and make disciples throughout the world. Yet no matter how powerful the event or how motivating the speakers, a gap often exists between the excitement of the conference and the difference made in the local church. This manual was created to close that gap. Use it a tool to help convert passion into action to see missional growth in the people of your congregation. We pray this tool is a blessing to you, your congregation, and ultimately, to the nations. May God bless you richly for your desire to partner together to fulfill the Great Commission.

Dave Greco
Multi-Ethnic Mobilization

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Promoting missions in the local church requires a clear, simple strategy. The primary goal is to develop a missionary mindset among the congregation. The suggestions that follow can help you lead your congregation in missional growth. Growth requires attention, planning, and time—but the benefits are amazing and affect every aspect of church life in a positive way.

Growth is a process. Please do not try or expect to accomplish everything all at once. That would be overwhelming and counterproductive. The best plan is to begin where you are and move ahead step by step. Allowing growth to occur at its own pace is most effective and also exciting. Remember, the ultimate goal is not to simply increase the church's missions budget but to increase individuals' commitment to the Great Commission.

The Great Commission is our reason for existence:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28:18–20, NIV)

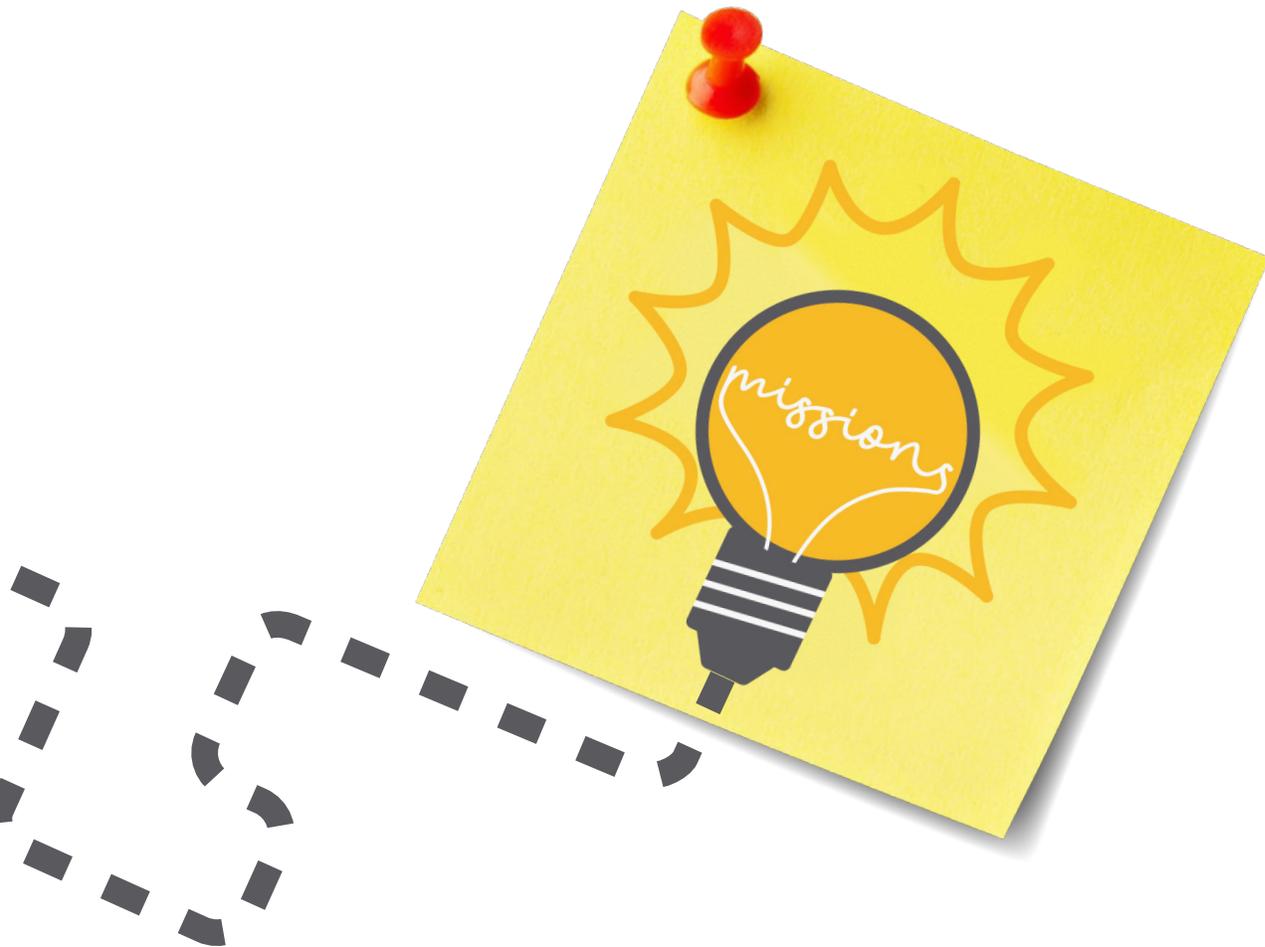
God's ultimate purpose for the existence of the Church is to fulfill the Great Commission, making disciples of all nations. Every local church ministry should be focused on this shared goal. Churches focus on this at the local level, while missionaries do so among people of other languages and cultures on a global level. The goal is the same and motivates every ministry conducted by local churches.



HOW A MISSIONS MINDSET BENEFITS THE CHURCH

As a church's commitment to missions increases, other areas grow:

- **Witness.** When people realize the importance of sharing the gospel with strangers across the globe, they find sharing the gospel with their neighbors across the street equally important.
- **Giving.** When people give to what they can't see, they naturally give to what they can see.
- **Prayer.** When people see the effects of their prayers for missions, they are encouraged to develop their prayer life in all areas.
- **Kingdom minded.** When people are mindful that the church is the vehicle God uses to fulfill the Great Commission, it brings about a cooperative spirit and unity.
- **Global awareness.** When people are exposed to missions, it brings an awareness that the world is a lot bigger and different than the world they live in, producing empathy and appreciation.



COMPONENTS OF A HEALTHY AND GROWING MISSIONS PROGRAM

Each of the following components is important to establishing and maintaining a healthy and growing missions program in the local church.

- 1. Establish a missions committee.**
- 2. Host missionaries.**
- 3. Support missionaries financially.**
- 4. Promote missions regularly in the church.**
- 5. Schedule an annual missions convention.**
- 6. Go on a short-term missions trip.**
- 7. Develop prayer for missions and missionaries.**

As each component is discussed in the following sections, please remember the suggestions given are flexible. Each church is unique, and you will probably need to adapt suggestions to your context.

Component 1: The Missions Committee



Suggested Members

A good-sized missions committee can have four to six members, including the following:

- The pastor
- The committee leader (preferably not the pastor)
- A church board member
- Other individuals or couples with a missions heart

General Qualifications

- Faithful members of the church
- Genuine heart for missions
- Responsible to commitments
- Willing to actively serve
- A history of tithing and missions giving

Job Description and Responsibilities

The primary responsibility of the missions committee is to keep missions visible before the congregation. All members should attend regularly scheduled missions committee meetings.

The following responsibilities can be distributed among committee members to best suit their abilities:

- Periodically email missionaries the church supports.
- Update the congregation monthly on missionary need, activity, newsletter quotes, etc.

- Maintain a missions display, such as a bulletin board with photos, maps, and newsletters.
- Attend to the needs of visiting missionaries.
- Meet with visiting missionaries, possibly for a meal before or after the service.
- Monitor the overall missions giving and commitments of the church.
- Give input and/or approval on commitments to monthly financial support of new missionaries.
- Plan and/or conduct missions prayer nights.
- Plan and/or conduct an annual missions convention.
- Review annually the list of missionaries the church supports to ensure each missionary has received the support promised.
- Review annually any changes in support: new missionaries to add, increases to current monthly support, missionaries who are no longer on the field, support that may need to be discontinued, etc.

Selecting Members

1. Make a list of potential members.
 - a. Consider including people who are not already serving somewhere.
 - b. Consider including a newer church member who would benefit from the group environment.
 - c. If potential members have other church responsibilities, consider the time they might have available.
4. Ask God to give direction regarding who should serve.
5. Prayerfully prioritize the list.
6. Starting at the top of your list, meet with the same number of people you want on the committee.
 - a. Provide a written copy of responsibilities, and explain everything clearly.
 - b. Ask them to pray about serving and to respond within one week.
 - c. If someone declines, meet with the next potential member on your list.

Selecting the Chairperson

Select one person to serve as committee chairperson. He or she will conduct the meetings and communicate with the entire committee. In addition to the general qualifications of all members, the chairperson should have the following qualities:

- Organized
- Responsible
- Dependable

- Punctual
- Comfortable leading
- Unlikely to abuse the position

Meetings

Meeting every other month works well, but discuss meeting frequency with the team and allow them to determine meeting frequency and times. Suggested agenda items include the following:

1. Reviewing missionary newsletters
2. Reviewing missions giving
3. Reviewing requests for monthly support
4. Planning upcoming missions Sundays and missions events
5. Planning the annual missions convention
6. Praying for missionaries on the field
7. Praying for God to raise up missionaries from the church (Matthew 9:38)
8. Openly discussing ideas to increase missions awareness in the church

Promotional Oversight

The missions committee should coordinate the following:

1. "Adopt-a-Missionary," where church members "adopt" single missionaries or missionary families to pray for and communicate with
2. Video/Skype visits during a Sunday service
3. Gathering and presenting promotional videos on missions Sunday
4. Scheduling and conducting missionary prayer events for the congregation

Component 2: Hosting Missionaries



Scheduling

Plan to host a missionary at least every other month (six times per year). The precise schedule depends on your church calendar. Try to schedule missionaries when the pastor will be present.

If possible, host missionaries in the Sunday morning service. However, anytime your people can connect with missionaries will be a blessing, so also consider scheduling them for men's breakfasts, youth meetings, home groups, women's retreats, and other meetings that occur in addition to main services.

Hotels and Flights

Due to travel schedules, visiting missionaries may need to spend the night before or after a service. If possible, offer to cover hotel accommodations. If that is not possible, suggest clean and reasonably priced hotels or accommodation with a church family who will offer excellent hospitality. If the missionary visit requires a flight, reimbursement or assistance with expenses is a great help.

Services

If you want to grow your congregation's missions awareness, regularly allow missionaries to address your congregation. Remember—the best people to communicate a missions challenge and educate the congregation in missions are missionaries. Missionaries can preach in a main service, share during a short window, and/or show a video.

If the schedule does not allow for the missionary preaching your service's message, try to provide a window of time during the service so missionaries can greet the congregation

and share briefly about their ministry. Clearly communicate to missionaries the time you have set aside—3 minutes, 5 minutes, 10 minutes, etc.

Other Opportunities

Take full advantage of a Sunday visit by opening other opportunities for missionaries to interact with your church members.

- Sunday school
- Children's church
- Small groups
- Other congregations meeting at your location
- Meal with the missions committee

The Offering

- Always give a generous offering. Remember, in addition to raising financial support, missionaries have travel expenses for the trip to your church.
- Receive an offering after their presentation, allowing the congregation a chance to give.
- Missionaries should receive no less than the amount of the offering.
- You might want to predetermine a minimum amount to give to each missionary, and if the offering does not reach that amount, the church makes up the difference.

Missionary Inquiries

- If a missionary calls and the pastor is occupied, let the missionary know when to call back and whom to speak with, if it's not the pastor.
- Respond to every inquiry one way or another.
 - If the missions committee needs to meet before a missionary is scheduled, let the missionary know, and then get back to him or her.
 - If you cannot schedule a service, let the missionary know that. Missionaries would prefer to know the calendar is full rather than continue calling without getting an answer.

Missionary Contact Information

- Call your district/network missions director and ask for the names and contact information of missionaries who are currently home and itinerating.
- Look up AGWM missionaries online at agmd.org.
- Call AGWM to request contact information.

Planning When to Host Missionaries

Good planning is the best way to ensure you keep missions visible in your church.

- Decide at which services you prefer to host missionary visits.
- Determine how often missionary visits should occur (once a month, every two months, etc.).
- Try to schedule missionaries 3–6 months ahead.
- Be flexible with your schedule. Some missionaries plan their schedule a year in advance, some plan closer, and some have cancellations and are available on short notice.

Component 3: Financial Support



The Missionary Budget

Missionaries receive a detailed budget they must raise before they are cleared to go to the field. The budget amount is comprehensive and includes everything a missionary and family will need to live and minister on the field. It has two components:

1. **Cash.** A cash amount must be raised prior to departure to cover major expenses such as travel to/from the field, visa and immigration fees, children's education, and approved ministry projects.
2. **Commitments.** This is the cumulative amount donors commit to give on a monthly basis to cover ongoing expenses such as travel on the field, ministry support, rent/mortgage, vehicle maintenance, health insurance, personal salary, and withheld taxes (missionaries are not exempt from federal taxes). As funds are received each month, they are disbursed to the missionary.

Only a small amount (7 percent) of funds raised by missionaries is deducted for administrative purposes, and every dollar is accounted for. The small percentage covers essentials such as AGWM support staff, accounting, member care, and other administrative structures.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why should churches provide financial support for missionaries?

Churches and missionaries working together showcase a divine partnership. Missionaries don't just decide to go—they are sent. The Great Commission was directed to the Church as a whole, not just to missionaries. The missionary is not simply pursuing his or her own interests, but serves as an extension of the local church responding to the Great Commission.

Missionaries minister on their field as individuals and churches faithfully support them. Without that support, they cannot go. And without the missionary who goes, the local church cannot truly fulfill the Great Commission.

How does the support system work?

1. Missionaries itinerate and raise support. Having 100–200 churches and individual supporters per missionary unit is common.
2. Supporters send their contributions, designated to each missionary by name and account number.
 - a. They can mail support to Springfield, Missouri, or set up one-time or recurring donations at giving.ag.org.
 - b. Faithful monthly support is critical. There is no central account from which a missionary's support comes apart from what each church and individual supporter contributes.
3. Each month AGWM disburses funds to missionaries electronically.
4. Supporters receive detailed tax receipts for their contribution.

How much should churches give monthly?

Churches determine what they are able to commit, and they often start all new missionaries at the same predetermined amount. Some churches can commit more, some less. Participation is the most important component—each church should do what it can. An average church commitment is between \$50 and \$100 per month. The church should review missionary support levels annually, considering increases for rising costs of living, years of missionary service, and other factors.

How does the church decide whom to support?

The missions committee should ask themselves some important questions before deciding to support a particular missionary:

- Is the *missionary* someone the missions committee agrees the church should support?
- Is the *ministry* something the missions committee agrees the church should support?
- Does the church have a *financial plan* that makes fulfilling monthly support realistic?

If the answer to all these questions is yes or no, the decision is simple. If the only issue is finances, the missionary's name can go on a waiting list to receive support when it becomes available, even if that is several months in the future. The final decision can be made by the church board, the missions committee, or the pastor. Each church should determine its own procedure and follow it.

How does the church say no to a missionary seeking support?

A church cannot make a commitment to every missionary who asks for it. If the church decides not to support a missionary, common courtesy dictates informing the missionary, whether by phone call, letter, or email. A simple reply, such as “We are sorry, but at this time we are not able to make a commitment to monthly support,” is adequate.

Interrupting, Reducing, or Discontinuing Support

Financial Crises

Missionaries normally count on the support promised by a church for the duration of their missionary career. However, extreme economic situations may affect what your church is able to give. If your support cannot be sent in a given month due to a financial crisis, please let your missionaries know you are facing challenges and ask for their prayers—remember, we are in this together!

Before altogether discontinuing support, consider temporarily reducing or suspending support until full support can be resumed. If support must be discontinued, give missionaries plenty of notice, and if at all possible, wait until they are back in the States for itineration and can work to replace the support.

Other Reasons

Early on, your church should determine under what circumstances a missionary would be removed from the support list, such as doctrinal or moral issues. Try to resolve lesser issues (for example, lack of communication, questions about ministry focus) with a missionary before moving to discontinue support.

When a missionary retires or resigns, you will receive a letter from AGWM that includes a date to discontinue support. Do not discontinue support until that date. Then consider reallocating that amount to another missionary from your district. AGWM often provides names in the letter, or you can contact your district missions director for recommendations.

Ideas for Raising Financial Support

- 1. Conduct an annual/biannual missions convention.** During the convention, challenge the congregation to commit to monthly giving.
- 2. Receive a monthly missions offering.** Receive a general missions offering once a month designated exclusively for monthly missionary support.
- 3. Receive offerings when hosting missionaries.** Receive a missions offering and a separate love offering after the missionary’s window or message.
- 4. Encourage missions committee promotion.** The missions committee should regularly report on missionary activity and urge the congregation to be faithful in prayer and financial support of their missionaries.

2. Youth:

- Speed the Light (STL, <https://youth.ag.org/Participate/AIM>) provides vehicles and major equipment to missionaries
- Ambassadors in Mission (AIM, <https://youth.ag.org/Participate/Speed-the-Light>) brings youth on short-term missions trips.

3. Men:

- Light for the Lost (LFTL, <https://lftl.ag.org/>) provides evangelism resources to our missionaries.

4. Women:

- Light the Way (<https://women.ag.org/light-the-way>)
- Women's ministries groups raise funds to provide for a variety of missionary needs and projects.

Component 5: Scheduling Missions Conventions



A missions convention is a time set aside each year to focus on and motivate your congregation toward missions. Your convention can last a week, two weeks, or a month—but at whatever length, it should generate excitement for missions and passion for the lost.

Planning

When

Plan at least one year in advance. Be sure to consider national holidays, the church calendar, and school vacation schedules. Spring and fall are popular times to schedule missions conventions.

Who

Consider the missionaries you would most like to have speak, and contact them as soon as you decide. If they are currently on the field, see if they have an itineration cycle planned for the time of the event. If they will not be back in the States yet, AGWM missionaries can return to do one missions convention during their term as long as the host church covers all the expenses. Also contact your district missions director to learn who will be in the area at the time of your event. Regardless of whom you choose to invite, it is important to contact them immediately and confirm the date to avoid scheduling problems.

What

Promotional materials are available at AGWM's online store at <https://agwm.myhealthychurch.com>. Each year AGWM has a new promotional theme and prepares items for purchase at reasonable cost—banners, music, children's activity books, maps, faith promise cards, and more.

Faith Promises

Faith promises are financial commitments individuals in the congregation make for the coming year, as God provides, to be used for the support of missions.

1. Two to three weeks before the event, present and explain the concept of faith promises, and ask people to begin praying that God would direct them in their response.
2. Order cards ahead of time through the AGWM online store, and distribute them during the convention, offering everyone an opportunity to participate—members, non-members, youth, and children.
3. Ask the congregation to write down the faith promise commitment they prayed about and deposit it in a special offering. Leaders should model participation.
4. Tally and announce the total in an atmosphere of celebration as the congregation unites in participation.

How

1. Decorate with flags, posters, and banners of various countries. Make it clear to all who enter the church that something is going on!
2. Enlist participation from each department (children, youth, men, women) during the services. Songs, dramas, and special presentations all add to the atmosphere and increase involvement at all levels.
3. Have people of different native language backgrounds in the church pray or read a Scripture in that language.
4. Gather high-quality missions videos and music or other materials to present.
5. Ask the missionaries you support to send a brief note or video of appreciation and encouragement to the church.

Sample One-Week Missions Convention

Carefully think and pray about what you want to accomplish and how best to achieve that as you plan the schedule. Accent all services with videos and short presentations.

First Sunday

- In the morning service, the pastor can preach about the priority of world missions to kick off the week.
- In the evening, hold a missionary prayer service in the church or pray in homes in small groups.

Midweek

- Have the missionary speak on how anyone can participate in reaching the world.

Friday

- Hold a missions banquet, with the missionary giving a short presentation suitable for a banquet atmosphere. Include international foods and music.

Saturday

- Schedule 60–90-minute home meetings with the missionary throughout the day (one each in the morning, afternoon, and evening) at people’s homes in a casual atmosphere. Have the missionary share about ministry, family, and culture, allowing ample time for questions and prayer together.

Second Sunday

- In the morning service, receive faith promises, have a missionary preach on missions giving, and conclude by announcing the giving total for the coming year.
- Hold a celebration service in the evening.

Component 6: Short-Term Missions Trips



Nothing impacts a person more than first-hand experience in missions work. Take a group from the church or participate on a trip with another church.

“Man’s mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.”—Oliver Wendell Holmes

When to Begin Planning

At least one year ahead, choose a date and location. You can search available opportunities at wideopenmissions.org/opportunities, using the filters to show team trips where you want to go. When choosing a location, some items to consider are cost, ministry opportunities available, accessibility and travel routes, climate, and political environment.

Several months ahead, register the team with AGWM at wideopenmissions.org/go-short-term/short-term-trips. *Travel insurance is required but inexpensive, and AGWM facilitates the process.*

Costs to Count

- Flights
- Tourist visa fees and/or entrance and exit taxes
- Hotel
- Food
- On-site transportation
- Ministry expenses (Teams should always bring money to fund the work they want to do.)
- Sightseeing expenses
- Emergency fund (10 percent of the total costs)—if unused at the end of the trip, it can be given as a donation to the missionary host or church.

The Host Missionary

Don't plan a trip where a missionary is not assigned. If you haven't chosen from among the opportunities listed on the Wide Open Missions website, you can locate a missionary on agmd.org. Use the filters to search by name, region, or sending district.

Contact the missionary you are considering working with, and provide the following information:

- The approximate size and age of your group
- When you want to come
- What type of ministry you can do
- How long you want to stay
- Your planned budget

If the missionary is interested, then ask some more questions, such as:

- What ministry opportunities are available?
- What are the political environment/safety concerns?
- Where is the nearest airport?
- What hotels are available?
- What are the on-site transportation options?
- Is medical care available in case of injury?
- What is the experience and process for hosting teams?

Before Making the Final Decision

- Seek counsel from church leaders and from others who have led teams.
- Consider the pros and cons of all the opportunities available.
- Pray and seek God's guidance on your choice.

Preparing the Team

1. Abilities

- Identify the unique talents and ministry abilities of your team before you commit to a ministry focus.
- A missions team should serve the local church and missionary while functioning within the limits of their abilities.

2. Team Composition

- **Size.** The dynamic of the trip changes dramatically depending on team size.

- 6–10 people: personal and easy to transport, but less strength and ability to offer
- 10–20 people: ideal because it is small enough to be personal, yet large enough to handle a significant amount work
- 20–40 people: only for experienced team leaders, can do much but requires careful planning, and transportation and meals are major challenges
- **Age.** Due to the stresses and emotions of ministering in a foreign culture, including children under the age of 15 is not recommended. Information is found on the WideOpenMissions website: <http://wideopenmissions.org/go-short-term/short-term-trips>
- **Maturity.** A missions trip often involves spiritual warfare. Each team member should be a person of faith. It is not recommended to include people on the team who are not believers or who do not have a strong spiritual foundation.

3. Training

- Training focuses on the ministry the team will undertake. Be sure to arrive completely prepared for that ministry.
- Dramas, songs, and other presentations should be practiced repeatedly so team members are ready to go when they arrive.

4. Physical, Cultural, and Spiritual Readiness

- Everyone should be in good health and check with their family physician prior to leaving, especially if they are managing any type of medical condition.
- Provide reading material about the history, language, food, and culture of the country. Teach basic phrases (greetings, “God bless you,” etc.).
- Provide a devotional schedule for members to use in the weeks prior to the trip.

5. Travel Details

- Team travel to the airport for departure
- The flight schedule and its impact on the ministry plan
- Transportation from the airport of arrival to the hotel
- Transportation from hotel to ministry site each day, to tourist attractions, etc.
- Transportation to the airport to return to the States
- Transportation from the airport upon arrival home

6. Team Leader Planning Trip

- Discuss the daily schedule in detail with the host missionary.
- Meet the pastor of the local church.
- Visit the hotel the team will use.

- Eat at some restaurants where the team will eat.
- Visit any tourist site the team may visit.

7. Team Trip Duration

- The ideal time frame for a missions team trip is 6–8 days.
 - If less, the team does not have time to embrace the people they work with.
 - If more, you run the risk of team members experiencing an emotional crash. Better to come back three days too soon than stay one day too long.
- If possible, plan to be with the local congregation for the main service on Sunday.

Sample Weekly Schedule

- Monday: travel to location
- Tuesday–Friday: ministry A.M. and P.M.
- Saturday: tour/sightseeing/recreation
- Sunday: closing service
- Monday: travel home

Planning the Return

A missions trip can be an overwhelming experience. Ending well is as important as preparation—these ideas should help team members assimilate their experience in the most positive way.

- **Debriefing.** The last meeting you have before returning home should be a wrap-up, allowing each person who wants to share something that was meaningful, funny, or surprising to them. Be ready for an emotional and powerful time. Consider closing by taking Communion together.
- **Survey.** On the trip home, distribute a “How was it?” form asking for their comments and suggestions.
- **Parent Letter.** If the team has youth members, prepare a letter for parents helping them understand what to expect when their child returns home. Most team members return deeply moved, physically exhausted, and emotionally drained. It’s good to let parents know what to expect!
- **Church Testimony.** Allow some team members to give a testimony in church about their experience.

10 Common Team/Trip Mistakes

1. **Cost**—choosing less expensive hotels, meals, and travel methods without considering health and safety
2. **Duration**—staying too long and experiencing fatigue, stress-related issues, and illness

3. **Schedule**—not planning wisely, planning too many activities or not enough
4. **Size**—large-team travel challenges, on-site transportation, restaurant size, etc.
5. **Composition**—having unbelievers, young children, or people with serious health risks on the team
6. **Budget**—not planning for emergencies and other contingencies
7. **Host**—not working with a competent missionary, choosing to work with friends or relatives, risking team safety and approval of the national church
8. **Ministry**—wanting to minister but not prepared to do so
9. **Free Time**—too little or too much
10. **Debriefing**—not allowing time at the end of the trip for team members to share

Component 7: Promoting Regular Prayer



Develop consistent times of prayer for missions in the church service, Sunday school, prayer meeting, or home group.

1. Gather the names of the missionaries the church supports and pray over their families and ministry.
2. Pray for countries, regions, governments, access to the gospel in difficult areas, unreached people groups, and spiritual breakthrough.
3. Pray over the prayer requests stated in missionary newsletters.
4. Pray for a spiritual covering for missionaries' lives and protection as they travel.
5. Develop a prayer team that can lead prayer times in the service, prayer meetings, home groups, etc.
6. Bring prayer requests for the church to pray over corporately in church services.

FAQ: MONTHLY COMMITMENTS TO MISSIONARIES

When church board members, missions committees, treasurers, and pastors change, confusion about missionary support may result. This FAQ may help dispel concerns about missions giving.

How Is a Faith Promise Different From a Missionary Commitment?

In general, faith promises have to do with individuals, and missionary commitments have to do with churches.

More specifically, a faith promise is a financial commitment made by an individual to the local church for missions support. It is generally made at a missions convention and extends for one year. When faith promises are tallied at a missions convention, the local congregation has an idea of the funds available to designate for missionary support.

A missionary commitment is a long-term promise of financial assistance, usually made by a local congregation, to support a specific missionary.

Can an Individual Make a Monthly Commitment Directly to a Missionary?

Certainly! Missionaries are happy to have individuals support their ministries. Recently, there has been an increase in individual support giving. It is just as important to seek after support from churches and individuals. Many individuals are willing to give to missionaries. They just need to be approached with a clear missionary appeal. Many individuals are looking for good worthy causes to give and missionaries easily fit into this category.

How Should Missionary Support Be Determined?

A missions committee, if available, should develop criteria for supporting missionaries, giving attention to:

1. The type of ministry in which the missionary is involved
2. The geographical areas where missionaries work
3. The missionary's current financial need
4. The missionary's sponsoring district

Churches are encouraged to be loyal to missionaries sent from their home district/network before committing to support missionaries from other districts/networks. Most missionaries have some support from other districts/networks; however, going outside their home district requires more travel, time, and expense. Some districts/networks are smaller than others which causes missionaries to visit other districts/networks. Collaboration from other districts/networks makes AGWM a great mission sending

agency. When the World Missions Board approves a missionary, the home district/network accepts the responsibility to do everything possible to assist that missionary in raising the necessary support.

When Should Monthly Commitments Be Made?

The sooner the better! It would be great if a church could make a commitment when the missionary comes for a service—or even prior to it. If the missions team/board must meet after a missionary's visit to discuss support, determine to give the missionary a response within 30 days. If every church made commitments in a timely manner, missionaries could leave for the field much earlier.

Why Do We Have to Send in a Commitment Form?

AGWM has no way of knowing a donor's intention without a commitment form. Every missionary must raise a budget and will receive clearance to leave for the field only when commitment form totals meet or exceed the assigned budget. Without a commitment form, an offering sent each month will help the missionary's cash account but will not be counted toward his or her monthly budget.

How Much Should We Commit to a Missionary?

The national average for church commitments to missionaries is approximately \$50. If your church exceeds the average, great! If your average church commitment to missionaries is less, perhaps your next missions project could be to increase the amount of monthly support given.

Some churches give the same amount to every missionary they support, while many churches feel they should give more to missionaries from their home district, so the amounts can also vary.

Also, be sure to review your commitments each year and, when possible, give your missionaries a cost-of-living increase.

When Should We Begin to Send Monthly Support?

Right away! Living and travel expenses are included in the budget each missionary must raise. Some churches want to wait until the missionary leaves for the field to begin sending their monthly commitments, but in actuality, this only delays the missionary's departure. The sooner a monthly commitment begins, the sooner the missionary can leave for the field.

Where Should Monthly Commitment Offerings Be Sent?

Monthly support should be sent to Assemblies of God World Missions, 1445 North Boonville Avenue, Springfield, MO 65802, or you can set up online giving at

giving.ag.org. You can give extra monetary gifts to missionaries for birthdays or Christmas as well; simply mark the gift "Special Offerings (09)" on your check or note it as such on the online giving portal.

How Often Should We Send Our Commitment?

Most commitments are sent monthly for two reasons:

1. It makes keeping commitments easier for the church.
2. It ensures finances are available as the missionary needs them.

Who Is Responsible for Sending Monthly Commitments?

The missions committee treasurer usually will do this. If not, the church treasurer would have this responsibility. The pastor should make sure the individual responsible does the following:

1. Knows how to send in the designated missions giving
2. Sends the missionary offerings in a timely manner each month
3. Does not spend missions funds for other church expenses

How Long Should a Missionary Commitment Last?

There is no time limit on a monthly commitment to a missionary. The commitment should last at least through the missionary's four-year term on the field and, ideally, as long as the church is financially able and the missionary is serving under official missions appointment.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

agmd.org

Missionary directory, searchable by name, location, and/or sending district

wideopenmissions.org

Information about becoming a missionary or associate, missions opportunities, and going on short-term missions trips (including required insurance)

agwm.org

Missions resources such as posters, books, magazines, music, and videos

agwm.org/news/worldview/

WorldView magazines

agwm.org/hub/

AGWM's secure media hub for videos, resources, and streaming options for local churches

vimeo.com/agwmvideo

Free promotional videos

Multiethnic/Culture/Language-Groups Resources

Email Dave.Greco@agmd.org

Social Media

facebook.com/agwmmobilization/

twitter.com/agwmlaunchpad

instagram.com/agwmlaunchpad