



WELCOME TO THE MISSIONARY SUPPORT TEAM
(A Letter from the missions committee)

Dear Friend,

We hereby request you to join with us as a member of one of our missionary's Support Teams. This is a wonderful opportunity to be personally involved in the Great Commission, and we want to encourage you in this endeavor. Enclosed in this letter is a list of ways you can be helpful and encouraging as you embark on your solemn endeavor. May God bless you richly as you undertake this crucial role.

"You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.

*For they went out **for the sake of the Name**, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.*

Therefore we ought to support such ones, that we may be

fellow workers with the Truth." 3 John 6b-8

Apostolic Missionaries are often going out to champion the Name of God where His name is unknown or horribly neglected. If we love God's glory, His Name, then we will love to see the fame of his Name spread to every unreached people. Therefore, those who go



out from us **for the sake of the Name** will be seriously and substantially supported by those of us who stay behind. After all, isn't the reason we are staying behind also for the sake of the Name, and not for the sake of comfort, convenience, money or private ambitions?

At The Apostolic Missions Network we are learning to take this sending process seriously. One avenue by which we accomplish that is to require that each missionary, both short term (six months or more) and career have an Apostolic Church-based Missionary Support Team. In this way we hope to ensure that the needs of our missionaries are more fully met, and to be active fellow workers with them in the Truth.



What is a Support Team?

A support team is a small group (6-12) of committed people who come together to care for their Missionary Associate in a variety of ways, striving to help meet their physical and spiritual needs. It is a group of people with whom the missionary can be open and honest,

allowing them to see his needs and share his successes and defeats.

Why Have a Support Team?

Support teams help our missionaries feel understood and provide them with a committed group who will show them practical love, keep them visible before the rest of The Apostolic Missions family and strengthen them while on the field.

What does a Support Team Do?

In a nutshell, a support team works together to care for their Missionary associate, striving to meet their spiritual and physical needs. To a large extent, this will happen only to the degree that the missionary is willing and able to make his needs known to the team.

The specific ways in which a support team goes about meeting their missionaries' needs will vary depending on the specific personality and needs of the missionary, as well as the personality (creativity) of the support team. Ask your missionary how you can best assist them; learn from the example of other teams; be creative; pray about it.

This doesn't mean that the support team does everything but they do take personal responsibility to serve as that missionary's advocate. Minimally, every support team member should make a commitment to:

1. A specific term length. Commit to being on the team for at least one year or preferably the length of the missionary's term (or career!).
2. Meet together on a monthly or bimonthly basis or as special needs arise.
3. Pray for your missionary often, individually as well as corporately.
4. Work to create an atmosphere where your missionary friend feels safe and comfortable to share himself or herself very personally with the team – keeping confidential concerns confidential.
5. Be available to provide practical care for your missionary friend.

Various support teams have organized themselves differently, depending on the gifts of the individuals involved. Many support teams have found it *helpful* to have the following roles assigned to various people on the team,

leaving other members of the team open to volunteer for other specific, occasional duties. These are just suggestions to consider.

- *Missions Advocate* - The purpose of Missions Advocates is to encourage their congregations or the fellowship they are part of to develop and deepen their passion for global missions. The Missions Advocate is to be a catalyst in the area of international missions and act as a communication link between members of the local congregation and The GPF Apostolic Missions Network Inc.

If the church needs information about a missionary, or if they need to organize a support team's involvement in church activities (Missions Conferences, missionary displays, etc.) they will contact this member of the missionary's support team.

- *Meeting Facilitator* - The individual will be responsible to call meetings to order, keep meetings focused on the missionary and help the team's discussion to keep moving.
- *Team Organizer* - Many support teams have found it helpful to have someone on the team organize a number of details that will assist the team to better support their Partner missionary. These include keeping track of missionary prayer requests and answers, keeping track of projects, making up a calendar of team member letter writing assignments, etc.
- *Communication Person* - In case of emergency, it may be helpful for the support team to be organized into an information chain with a contact person at the head of the list. If anyone on the team hears of an emergency that their missionary friend is facing, they should contact that individual so that information can be passed on quickly and accurately.

Other teams have found it more helpful to divide the work further by assigning each specific role (care package, meeting treats, sermon CDs / DVDs, missionary displays, article writer, etc.) to one person on the team so that each member is always responsible for making sure that their role gets taken care of, whether they do it themselves or assign it to someone else.

How are Support Teams Formed?

The individual missionary prayerfully chooses members of a support team. Some missionaries ask friends from their Life groups, various ministry involvements, etc. to come together to form their support team. Others have asked the Life group that they're involved in to also function as their support team. Not everyone on the team has to be from The GPF Apostolic Missions Network Inc, but the majority should and the designated leader must be. The key is for the missionary to choose people with whom they have already established a level of trust, with whom they can be "real."

Why does the World Missions Committee Require Support Teams?

Missionaries do not go out for adventure, they do not go out for material profit, they do not go out for prestige, nor do they go out merely for humanitarian purposes. *They do go out for the sake of the Name.* We want the missionaries we support financially to sense deeply that they are genuinely cared for, that they are more than just names on our lists or line items in our budget.

The GPF Apostolic Missions Network Inc. doesn't just want to "have" missionaries; we want to "send" missionaries in a manner worthy of Christ. How can this happen? The World Mission Committee is responsible for all of the missionaries we support, and while they can do this on an

organizational level, we cannot really *care* for all of these people. This is the responsibility of the Body of Christ, and that is where Support Teams come in.

May the Lord richly bless you and may you know His favor upon every area of your life as you seek Him and seek to be a blessing to others as the Lord directs you.

Sincerely in Christ,

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