

## While they're home, tap into their expertise...

Apart from sharing about their work on the field, missionaries on home assignment can be a helpful resource to the sending church. Invite them to give a workshop, class or seminar on a topic along the lines of their expertise that would be helpful to the ministry of the church. For example, a missionary who works with Muslims could teach a session on "How to reach your Muslim Neighbor for Christ." A church planter could help the sending church reproduce itself.

Churches could invite missionaries to be involved in ministries of the church that are related to their particular gifts, such as teaching Bible classes, working with specific age or gender groups in the church, or advising short term mission teams. Of course, these opportunities should fit in with their allotted time, giftedness and priorities for home assignment, so as not to be an unnecessary source of stress during their time at home.

## 10 Practical Ways to Care for college-age missionary kids while their parents are overseas



1. Telephone and e-mail them regularly, especially for current prayer requests.
2. Invite them to your home for holiday, break or summer times.
3. Invite them to your church functions and introduce them to people in your congregation.
4. Let them use your telephone to call their parents on the mission field.
5. Send them care packages on occasion.
6. Offer them help in procuring a job, if necessary.
7. Do something special for their birthdays.
8. Take them to special events—concerts, sporting events, etc.
9. Give them subscriptions to Christian news or devotional magazines, Bible study guides, etc.
10. Pray for them faithfully and specifically and let them know you are praying for them.

## OpSheets

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## Practical Ways

To Care for Your Missionaries

War, terrorist threats, learning difficult languages, cultural tensions, undiagnosed fevers, rejection from the people they are trying to reach, extreme heat, loneliness, separation from children... These many realities, pulled from a stack of missionary prayer letters, can bring daily discouragement to missionaries and their families.

You can help. By getting involved in the lives of your missionaries in some practical ways you can be an incredible source of encouragement as they impact lives half a world away, and as they readjust to life here at home. Your involvement could mean the difference between a missionary who is barely surviving, and might leave the field prematurely, and one who is thriving, vibrant, and much more effective in establishing Christ's kingdom.

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A person wearing a hat and a light-colored shirt stands in a vast, open field under a sunset sky. The horizon is low, and the ground is a mix of brown and green. The person is looking towards the horizon.

# 10 Practical Ways

## to Care for Your

### Missionaries on the Field

1. E-mail your missionaries regularly—to give them news from home, and to receive their current prayer requests and news for your Sunday services and prayer meetings during the week.
2. Personal letters—writing to your missionaries conveys your love and concern in addition to the news you communicate. Include photos of your family, church people and events in your letters.
3. Telephone calls—hearing a familiar voice from one's supporting church means so much to a missionary who is thousands of miles away! Telephone your missionaries especially when you know they are facing special needs or trials. This helps you to share their burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2).
4. Send tapes or CDs of your pastor's messages or other Bible study tapes on a regular basis. Missionaries need to be fed spiritually—maybe even more so than when they were in the U.S.
5. Send church bulletins and newsletters on a regular basis. You would be surprised to know how much they are appreciated by missionaries.
6. Send videos of special church events—such as choir concerts, VBS, Sunday school picnic gatherings, etc.
7. Remember their birthdays and anniversaries. Card showers on special days are greatly appreciated.
8. Send them magazine subscriptions (Christian news and devotional magazines, but also secular magazines—news, sports, hobbies, etc.).
9. Send care packages. But check first with the missionary regarding customs and other country regulations.
10. Visit your missionaries in their country of service. Visits by the pastor, missions committee members or others from your church can have a profound effect on both the missionaries and the ones who visit them!

A long, straight highway stretches into the distance at night. The lights from cars create long, horizontal trails of white and red. The road is flanked by dark trees and bushes. The sky is dark, and the overall scene is illuminated by the artificial lights of the highway.

# 10 Practical Ways

## to Care for Your

### Missionaries on Home Assignment

1. Communicate with your missionaries before they arrive in the U.S. to see if you can assist them in procuring a vehicle or housing for their home assignment. If your church provides housing, the missionaries would really appreciate having the pantry and refrigerator stocked in time for their arrival.
2. Send a welcoming party from the church to meet and greet them at the airport.
3. Provide meals for your missionary's family the first few days after arrival and have a potluck meal for them in the church soon after their arrival.
4. Give them a month or so to rest, unwind, become adjusted to life in the U.S., visit family and relatives and prepare for their ministering in churches.
5. Line up engagements for them to speak from the Word and about their ministry in your Sunday services as well as other times to various groups in your church.
6. Take them shopping (they probably need clothes that are currently in style in the U.S.)
7. Treat them to a Bible conference vacation where they can be ministered to spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically.
8. Offer help in obtaining good professional services (dental, medical, legal).
9. Encourage your missionaries to pursue continuing education (short term courses in Bible or in their vocation, workshops, and seminars). Ask if financial assistance is needed.
10. Arrange for interviews with the pastor and the Missions Committee. Listen carefully as they share their experiences, feelings and burdens and seek to be sensitive to their spiritual, emotional, material and physical needs.

## Pray!

Faithful, specific, earnest prayer is the best way to care for your missionaries. Contact Africa Inland Mission or visit our website for resources to help you pray more specifically.

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