



# MISSIONARY ENGAGEMENT

This guide is a resource for Adult Sunday School classes as they seek to support and connect with their "class missionary." These ideas are not intended to burden classes but seek to offer a consistent and intentional engagement plan across all classes and missionaries. Classes with an established missionary relationship can use the recommended structure for ongoing missionary support, and classes with newer relationships will be able to springboard off these ideas. Please continue to use established ideas or activities already in practice.

## First Things First

- 1 Designate a Point Person**

This person will serve as primary liaison for your class. A personal knowledge of the missionary and a disposition motivated by love for people and missions is important. The Point Person should not be responsible for total collaboration efforts but seek to lead and encourage others in coordinated participation. Without this person(s), sustainability and success may be difficult. Some missionaries are in countries where communication is sensitive. The "how" and "what" of communication must be reviewed and understood with help from the Global Missions office.
- 2 Identify Missions Advocates**

Each class likely has someone already engaged with FEC Missions who is aware of events or opportunities to bring before the class to foster deeper involvement in taking the Gospel to the least reached (this person may be different than the one above). Familiarity with the mission efforts at FEC will lead to a greater understanding of ministries, missionaries, and the high level of support our church desires to provide in caring for and partnering with them to reach the nations.

## Communicating

- 1 Use Various Methods**

Use email, mail, various text apps, missionary newsletters, and other means to understand the missionary, their work, specific needs, and aspirations. **IMPORTANT:** Ask your missionary their preferred method of communication before asking subsequent questions. The Global Missions office is happy to answer questions for more resources or about their particular story or ministry.
- 2 Ask permission**

Take great care to **ASK FIRST**. Permission from a missionary is necessary before sharing prayer needs or information in any group email, class-wide electronic communication, or social media. Caution is critical due to sensitivity, privacy, and the potential for forwarding or reposting, which could put them or others at risk.
- 3 Develop relationships among class**

Once communication methods are established and some understanding of the ministry and missionary family is understood, all Adult Sunday School members should be encouraged to communicate directly with the missionary.
- 4 Maintain Frequency**

Aim for two "touches" with your missionary each month. Frame all contact on behalf of the class to foster connection. ZOOM is another option throughout the year, and the Global Missions office can help set this up.



## Communicating

- 5 Lack of Response**  
Don't be discouraged if missionaries don't respond as often or quickly as you prefer. Continue your efforts with an open posture and leave room for the relationship to take root. Sometimes, those in the field have been wounded by past relationships dissolving or not surviving ministry strains. We want to be sensitive to avoid adding additional pressures for maintaining relationships that may shift over time, while making them aware that a specific group at their home church is committed to praying for them and encouraging them.

## Connecting

- 1 Birthdays**  
No matter how old, we all appreciate a greeting on our birthday, anniversary or special occasion. Recognizing our missionary(ies) or other family member birthdays shows genuine interest. The Global Missions office can provide dates and information.
- 2 Travel**  
Look for opportunities to host your missionary when they're in town. Options include housing, fellowship events and facilitating connection efforts in the city and at FEC. When in Memphis, we encourage you to set aside your normal schedule and invite them to speak on a Sunday morning, if possible. Almost all of our missionaries are responsible for raising support. Assisting them with meetings and networking is a welcome offer to most.
- 3 Influence**  
Missionary relationships allow you to influence others regarding introductions, frame of reference, and promotion.
- 4 Projects**  
In some relationships, there may be an opportunity for participation in short-term trips or projects. This will not be the case for every missionary due to the nature of their ministry and location. However, there are always opportunities for creative ideas to engage with their work. Consider praying for opportunities to partner. It might be as simple as a care package for children, help funding a particular need, etc.

## Caring

- 1 Prayer**  
Establish a habit of prayer for your missionary. This may feel rote at first, but it will gain intimacy as trust develops. Ideally, this will become a weekly practice during your class prayer time.
- 2 Sharing**  
As prayer patterns develop, your class may sense an openness to sharing their own prayer needs with your missionary. Missionaries often desire a reciprocal prayer ministry that will also strengthen the relationship.
- 3 Encourage**  
Develop a commitment to prayer outside of Sundays as needs are shared.

Over time and with committed, regular efforts, tremendous mutual relationships often develop between missionaries and Adult Sunday School classes. These relationships can have lasting effects on our families, ministry partners, and the body of First Evan.

**Our prayer is that your class and your missionary will experience the life-changing blessing of your faithfulness.**