



*A common witness of the Division of Overseas Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
and Wider Church Ministries, United Church of Christ*

Planning a Missionary Visit in Your Conference or Region

For Conference/Region missionary visit coordinators/committees who are receiving a missionary visit.

Goals for a missionary visit:

- Help “put a face” on Global Ministries.
- Learn about another part of the world.
- Show what gifts to mission can do.
- Connect with our international partners.
- Grow in understanding our interconnectedness with the global church.
- Help take the next step in mission involvement.
- Create connections with Global Ministries.
- Develop global mission in your churches.

What is the new policy on missionary visits?

- Develop on-going communication with the missionary prior to the visit in your Conference/Region and after the visit.
- Encourage longer stays in a Conference/Region utilizing the missionaries in new ways as an extension of the Conference/Region staff.
- Promote cooperation between UCC and DOC in planning the missionary visit.

10 Steps to Planning a Successful Missionary Visit in a Conference/Region:

Step 1: Get to know one another

- Get to know the missionary (ministry, gifts, passions, expertise...) through e-mail and Skype.
- Let the missionary get to know your Conference/Region (goals, priorities, challenges, projects...)
- Make the missionary known in your Conference/Region through your various communication channels.

Step 2: Set the visit dates

- A year to 6 months in advance, work with the Coordinator of the Missionary Relationship Program to set the visit dates.
- Discuss the logistical details of housing, transportation, meals, etc.

Step 3: Designate a missionary visit coordinator

- Designate a joint coordinator who takes requests from both UCC and DOC congregations (alternate visits between UCC and DOC coordinator)
- Or split the time up and have a coordinator for each denomination.

Step 4: Map out the visit

- Determine the “homebase” possibilities with the missionary.
- Identify geographic groupings (associations/clusters) of churches in Conference/Region who might want a visit
- Sketch in 5 day (1 weekend) or 10 day (2 weekend) visit blocks with rest days in between the blocks.

Step 5: Publicize the visit

- Make known the available dates and skills of the missionary to the congregations through all available Conference/Region communication channels.
- Encourage congregations to host joint gatherings or mission-fest weekends.
- Everyone wants a Sunday – but this is a chance to bring people together - utilize existing weekday gatherings like choir practice or bible study; be creative.

Step 6: Fill in the visit calendar

- Based on the predetermined plan with the fixed blocks of time in certain areas plug in the requests
- Pick up the phone and call churches in a given area to get them on the schedule
- Try to schedule clergy meetings, committee meetings, youth groups, women’s/men’s groups, local mission sites, etc. during the open week days.

Step 7: Share the schedule with the missionary

- Update the missionary on a regular basis concerning the evolution of the visit schedule.
- Help the missionary understand the context and expectations in each planned event.

Step 8: Meet, brief, and involve the missionary upon arrival in Conference/Region

- Make the missionary’s first visit the Conference/Region office.
- Help the missionary to understand where they are; ministry context and culture; does and don’ts.
- Help them to feel a part of your staff during their stay; provide office space.
- Utilize their gifts and skills for projects that your Conference/Region wants to develop.

Step 9: Provide oversight and support during the visit

- Designate a supervisor, ways to communicate and meeting times.
- Travel with the missionary or check in with the missionary from time to time.

Step 10: Evaluate the visit

- Make sure each church visited fills out a church evaluation form.
- At the end of the visit, fill out the Conference/Region evaluation.
- Get the missionaries feedback on the visit; continue the relationship in order to build momentum for the next visit.

For any other questions concerning missionary visits, please contact:

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