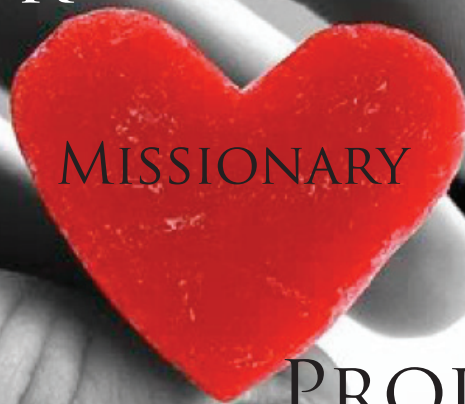


CARE
FOR OUR



MISSIONARY

PROJECT

PUBLISHED BY AMKMC YOM ADMIN 2011

Background

As part of Ang Mo Kio Methodist Church's (AMKMC) Year of Missions (YOM) 2011 effort, each cell group is encouraged to adopt at least one missionary to give care throughout 2011.

The YOM admin will provide the cells with profiles of Missionaries from AMKMC and the Methodist Missions Society (MMS).



Terms of Reference

Missionaries: Missionary life is a high and demanding calling. They not only have to face language but also cross-cultural barriers as they minister to the local. As representatives of Christ and the Gospel there will be also high expectations of them from the people they reach out and minister.

Missionary Kid: Life for the MK (Missionary Kid) is full of exceptional opportunities and challenges. In light of the uniqueness of the MK journey we need to remember their special needs.

Developing Realistic Expectations

Developing realistic expectations of a missionary and his/ her ministry is a key way to start supporting him/ her. AMKMC Missions Committee believes that the ongoing personal development of our missionaries is essential to the task of effective cross-cultural ministry.

This framework of ongoing personal development and care is shaped by the multifaceted needs of the missionaries - needs such as physical/finance, prayer, pastoral, spiritual, physical, continual training/education, team building, family encouragement, and children's education.

For cross-cultural missionaries, receiving "member care" is essential not only from the sending agency but also from the missionaries' home sending church; both are to be in partnership with them in their service. The Missions Committee hopes that this care and development could carry on after the Year Of Mission (YOM) although each cell is only expected to commit to care for the missionary for the whole YOM.

How can we care for a missionary and his/ her family?

The following provides a simple non-exhaustive framework that the cell can use in caring for your missionary:

- 1) Pray.
- 2) Provide care and concerns by writing notes of encouragement.
- 3) Keep the missionaries informed of local updates on trends, news and fashions.
- 4) Remember special occasions such as birthdays, Singapore National Day, Church Anniversary, marriage anniversary if married, Christmas, etc. with one time gifts or write a card.
- 5) Be generous in your giving.
- 6) Where the missionary is serving in a sensitive country please don't expect frequent communication. At times you may convey your care through the Agency.
- 7) Bring them out for a meal with the cell when they come home or if you visit.



Praying and writing notes of encouragement are some of the ways you can care for your missionary.

How to Pray for Your Missionary?

Do you sometimes seem to “get stuck” when praying for missionaries?

15 THINGS EVERY MISSIONARY NEEDS

1) Love for God

Overworked missionaries can become service-oriented rather than love-oriented. Pray that the missionaries’ will deepen in their love for the Lord, and that their love for Him will always be their prime motivation for service.

2) Love for Others

Yes, missionaries are human. Like all of us, there will be times when they find difficulties in showing love and respect to those whom are “difficult to love”. These could be their missionary co-workers or the locals they are ministering to. Sometimes they get upset with the local system or environment, which is not like the clean and efficient Singapore. The cell can pray that the Lord will make your missionaries’ love “increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else” (1 Thessalonians 3:12).

3) A Deeper Relationship with God

Missionaries’ schedules can become so packed that they might skip or skimp on their time with the Lord. Pray that your missionaries would follow the example of Jesus - despite being busy in His Father’s work, they will consistently sought out time alone to commune with our Heavenly Father.

4) Spirit-Controlled Lives

Just like the rest of us, sometimes missionaries have a tendency to do the Lord’s work in their own energy and human ingenuity. Pray that the actions and activities of your missionaries will be under the control, and by the power, of the Holy Spirit.

5) The Fruit of the Spirit

As you pray that your missionaries will be under the control of the Holy Spirit, pray that the fruit of the Spirit, the very beauty of Jesus, will be manifest in their lives.

6) Wisdom and Knowledge

Often strong-willed missionaries often come into conflict when two or more of them have opposing viewpoints. Pray that missionaries will have the wisdom of God, which James describes as “first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere” (James 3:17).

7) Courage

Imagine your missionaries making the same prayer request as Paul did in Ephesians 6:19: “Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.”

8) Receptive Hearts

Pray for divine providence and appointments. Ask the Lord to lead your missionaries to people whose hearts will be open to hearing and receiving the gospel message.

9) Disciples

Pray that your missionaries will experience the joy of leading others to salvation, and of “teaching them to obey everything [Christ] commanded” (Matthew 28:20).

10) Strong Faith

The apostles once made a direct request of Jesus: “Increase our faith!” Pray that your missionaries will have great faith that will lead them to ask great things of our Lord.

11) Steadfastness

Pray that your missionaries will follow Paul’s advice to the Corinthians: “Stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

12) Strong Family

Cross-cultural living can magnify even small family conflicts. Pray that members of missionary families will be drawn together, not torn apart, by living in a new culture.

13) Protection

Missionaries are prime targets of the enemy. Join Jesus in praying to the Father: “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one” (John 17:15).

14) Material Needs

Missionaries often face harsh living conditions, and may have to struggle to meet basic physical needs. Pray that the Lord will supply all their financial and material needs “according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

15) Health and Strength

In today’s increasingly violent world, missionaries face not only sickness, they may also be victims of crime, civil unrest or political upheaval. Pray that the Lord will grant the measure of health and strength that will bring his greatest glory and the greatest good for the missionaries.

The next time you sit down to pray for your missionaries, use this list as a guide to help you pray specifically. And pray for your missionaries consistently. They need you, and the Lord needs you to help fulfill his Great Commission. Your prayers count!

How can the Cell show care to the missionaries in a tangible way?

Let's send "We Care!" Packages throughout the whole year!

Preamble

Many **missionaries wanted to make it clear that they're content** - they don't need you to send them stuff. One missionary writes: ...[this] is not a plea to send me things. I am very content already. God is always good, whether or not there are DVDs in the drive or Nutella on the bread (Habakkuk 3:17-18). (from **'Voice in the Desert'** on Care Packages)

Also, missionaries will tell that they want to fit in to their new culture. They do not always wear clothes from their native land, perfume from their native land, and eat food from their native land.

So why send a care package?

*The greatest thing about care packages though is the little glimpses of home they offer. They scream "we miss you," "we are thinking about you," and "we care." I guess that is why they are called "care packages" and not "things-you-need-to-survive packages." (from **'Following an Unknown Path'** on care packages)*

Before You Start...

Ask the missionary before sending your care package. This is important for a few different reasons.

First, there are some things for which the missionary may end up having to pay a duty or other tax.

Second, if the missionary is in a sensitive location, they may prefer certain things to be delivered to a different address (to be hand-carried in).

And finally, you may be sending the missionary something which they can already get in country. There is a case where someone once sent toothpaste and a large box of tissues - both of which are in abundance where the missionaries were. Try to find out from the missionary what items they really can't get where they are.

Don't be afraid to ask the missionary specifically for ideas. For example, "I'd like to send you some reading material is there a book or magazine you've been wanting to read?" or "We are wanting to send you some personal items, do you need razors or deodorant? If so, which brands and scents could we get for you?" By asking specifically, it helps Missionaries not be so shy in telling you what they need. It's better than sending a care package only for the missionary to find the contents not to his/her preference!

Ideas for “We Care!” Packages

The best missionary care package ideas are things that are *personal* or *local*. That is, local from the sender. Here are some ideas:

Food items: This is usually something from the person’s native land that they can’t get at their current location. For example, some may think of Maggie curry fish head powder, Kong Guan biscuits, Marmite, or Tim Tam chocolate wafers. Food and drink mixes were a favourite.

Electronic: Sermon MP3s or CDs. You can send MP3s via email. However, DVDs are still great to mail. Many people mentioned DVDs of TV series. Like it or not, TV series are a big part of culture in many countries, and when you can’t watch you feed disconnected. However, naturally you should ask the missionary first about what’s appropriate (especially if you’re sending a show or movie for the kids!)

Personal: I love the way this post said it...*‘the first thing I ever look for in a package is a note! People don’t always realize that a hand-written letter or note is often more appreciated than any goods that you can send. Add a picture, and wow, you’ve just made my week! (If there’s no danger of it breaking, a framed picture is even cooler!’*

More personal stuff: Personal items are great missionary care package ideas. For example - something your kids made, a church bulletin (good idea if it contains news of the sending church), or simply a recording of your cell’s voice.

Books: One of the best missionary care package ideas, because they’re often in small packages, they’re less likely to be taxed, don’t get destroyed easily, they’re less likely to be stolen, and they don’t melt or get broken en route.

Misc

- Reading material (eg magazines, newspapers) in the missionary’s first language is a great missionary care package idea.
- Supplies for the missionary’s hobby.
- Small games and puzzles.
- Items to give out, like good quality second hand clothes, or basketballs/footballs.
- Remember the kids (and their ages; different age has different needs!) in the family when you’re getting together missionary care package ideas. For something simple and inexpensive, Stickers are often a winner with young kids.
- Some people asked for smells. We’re talking perfume, essential oils, even air fresheners.

People: The best thing you can send is YOU! Three ideas - go and visit, go to help, or go to help long term. You can’t imagine what a big help it is to have someone help with the kids – baby sitting (remember, usually a missionary can’t drop them off at Grandma’s house!).

Shipping the “We Care” Packages

Often packages have to travel through several countries before they reach their destination. They may be thrown around, crushed, opened, and tax might be charged. In poorer countries, they may even have specific things stolen, or they may not arrive at all! So how should you ship things? Here are a few ideas:

- Envelopes are best. If something is small enough to fit in an envelope, even a big bulky one, it's less likely to be opened.
- If you have a lot to send, use more than one package. If one is lost, you won't lose everything!
- Seal the package up. It makes them more difficult to open.
- Remove the original packaging to make the package smaller/lighter. Remember to include all the contents/parts (e.g. cables, operating instructions) from the original package.
- Try not to send liquids. But if you must remember to triple bag them.
- Send edible (eg foodstuff) and non-edibles (eg soap) in separate packages. Label with an address in the language of the target country (possibly as well as our local language). You can ask the missionary send a copy of the address, and simply print it out or photocopy it.
- For shipping companies, the cell can use global courier companies (eg DHL, UPS). They have excellent networks for quick deliveries but they can be pricey. For a cheaper (and slower) alternative, Cells can send their “We Care!” packages using Singpost.



You could send edible and non-edibles in separate packages.

What **NOT** to send...

Money - there are better ways than sending cash and cheques through the mail

Chocolate - Everyone wants it. But remember that they will likely melt along the way. The same goes for foodstuff, consider the freshness and expiry of the foodstuff.

Heavy stuff - Heavy stuff is ok if it's being carried in, but be careful if you're mailing it. It may cost more than it's worth and the recipient may not be able to carry it home. One missionary recommends sending packages of a maximum of 4.5 kg.

Wish Lists

Some missionaries have wish lists, either on their website or one another site. Depending on where the missionary is, it might be a great missionary care package idea to simply order something from Amazon and have it shipped right to them.

Last but not the least....

No matter what you do, remember that your care package may not arrive. Insurance may have little influence in most countries. Try not to get upset if your package never makes it. And don't be afraid to try again!



Drafted and Prepared by Rev Leslie Lim
Edited by Lee Ching Lu & Calvin Lim
Booklet Design and Layout by Serena Chew
Copyright Reserved Ang Mo Kio Methodist Church (TRAC) Singapore 2011