

Hosting a Mission Co-worker

One of the essential tasks of mission co-workers is the work of mission interpretation. This part of mission service used to be called “furlough” or “home assignment,” and is now often called “interpretation assignment.” Mission co-workers are required to return to the United States every few years in order to share what they have learned, inviting Presbyterians into mission and building an ever-greater community of support and prayer. Hosting a mission co-worker is a great way to deepen your congregation’s mission involvement and



understanding. Are you ready to connect with PC(USA) mission co-workers around the world? Presbyterian World Mission wants to help. Below are some frequently asked questions around which to frame a visit:

What events should I arrange for the visiting mission co-worker?

Be creative. Think about what your congregation likes, but also think outside your congregation. Consider your presbytery, the ecumenical churches in your area, the civic community and the community-at-large. Then try to be strategic. The mission co-worker is there to share, educate and connect in as many ways as possible, but not to just be kept busy. Put the mission co-worker to use and use him or her wisely.

Some event ideas

- Sunday school and worship
- Prayer breakfast meeting or prayer groups
- Potluck supper
- Mission committee meeting
- Book club
- The Jaycees or Rotary Club
- Keynote speaker at a mission fair or presbytery meeting
- Speaker in a seminary class or a college religion class
- Interfaith dialogue group
- Clergy Bible study
- Interview with a local radio station or newspaper
- Bag lunch in a business area
- Presbyterian Women gathering
- Vacation Bible school

How do I invite a mission co-worker?

There are two ways to invite a mission speaker. Contact **Stephanie Caudill** (stephanie.caudill@pcusa.org; 800-728-7228 x5279) at the World Mission office, or contact mission co-workers directly. Find their emails on their Mission Connections profile page. Search by their name at **pcusa.org/missionconnections**.

How should my congregation/presbytery prepare for the visit?

Once you have the logistics settled, begin publicizing the event. Send an email blast to members and community friends. Invite other organizations or churches that might be interested in attending. Review the mission co-worker’s Mission Connections profile page to find biographical information, a description of her or his ministry, and links to blogs (if applicable) and recent letters. Consider using the most recent letter as part of your newsletter or e-news. Request prayer cards for the mission co-worker by contacting **Nicole Gerkins** (nicole.gerkins@pcusa.org; 800-728-7228 x5611). Do not wait until the visit to begin praying

for the mission co-worker and her or his ministry and partners. Immediately add them to your prayer group’s list. Lift them up in weekly pastoral prayers. Ask Sunday school classes to spend a few minutes each week prior to the visit (and after) in silent centering prayer, preparing their hearts to receive the message the mission co-worker will bring. Find a song in the language of the mission co-worker’s country or region of service and prepare the children’s choir to sing it as a worship introit or welcome to the mission co-worker. (“Jesus Loves Me” has been translated into almost every language.)

What do I do once the mission co-worker leaves?

Follow-up begins before the visit ends. Make sure to give the mission co-worker important email and/or mailing addresses. You will begin to receive quarterly mission letters from him or her. Ask for specific prayer requests. Consider adding the mission co-worker to your mission budget. Commit to pray for his or her work in worship at least monthly for the next year. Share your own prayer requests. Send birthday and holiday cards. Start early on

planning the next visit, or arrange a Skype follow-up conversation for six months later.

What funding is involved in hosting a mission co-worker?

The hosting presbytery or congregation typically absorbs the travel and hosting cost of a visiting mission co-worker (detailed below). Mission committees are encouraged to include funds to host mission co-workers in their yearly budgets. This allows for as many opportunities as possible to be together—learning, growing, praying and sharing.

My church cannot afford the cost. Are there scholarships available?

The short answer is “Yes!” Please review the following three situations in which World Mission may be able to assist with the travel cost involved in hosting a mission co-worker. The host is still responsible for all hosting costs.

Just a small church? We can help!

Presbyterian World Mission is able to offer some scholarships to cover all or part of the travel expenses for mission co-workers visiting small churches. While there is some flexibility, typically this scholarship is available for churches under 100 members that are unable to cover the travel cost.

Creating a cluster of support? We can help!

One way in which a congregation or presbytery can be part of a mission co-worker’s ministry is to introduce him or her to others. Share the good news! When four or more congregations join together to host a mission co-worker, Presbyterian World Mission may be able to finance half the travel costs. (When appropriate and available, the Small Church Scholarship can be used to cover the second half of the travel costs.)

Meeting new mission co-workers? We can help!

Once a year, Presbyterian World Mission orients and sends out new mission co-workers. Before leaving the United States, they are available to visit congregations. If a congregation or presbytery cannot afford to host one of these new mission co-workers, a scholarship may be available to assist with all or part of the travel costs.

For more information, contact:

Ellen Sherby
Coordinator, Equipping for Mission Involvement
800-728-7228 x5612
ellen.sherby@pcusa.org



Costs involved in hosting a mission co-worker

<p>Travel Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Airfare or mileage• Luggage fees• Parking fees or transportation to the airport	<p>Hosting Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food during travel and while with the host• Local transportation• Lodging (either with a host or in a hotel)
--	--

Please note that no honorarium is expected for current mission personnel, so if you usually pay a guest preacher, those funds might be available for the above costs.

