



CHRISTIAN MISSIONS IN MANY LANDS

Advancing the spread of the Gospel globally

# MISSIONS PATHWAY

*Practical Steps for New Missionaries  
and Commending Assemblies*



PREPARING



GOING



WORKING



RETURNING

# INTRODUCTION

Contrary to what some believe, entering the mission field is not a matter of packing your bags and hopping on an airplane—there's more involved. Sometimes, especially if an assembly has never commended a missionary, the process can feel overwhelming. This tool outlines four main steps for new missionaries to follow: **PREPARING**, **GOING**, **WORKING**, and **RETURNING**. However, several themes must accompany these steps.

The first is **PRAYER**. From the outset, prayer must be central to the whole missions pathway. You will see on almost every page of this booklet the phrase "KEEP PRAYING." The second is **UNITY**. Although a missionary must take each step with the Lord's leading, the commending assembly and CMML are also key players in the process. Each must work together for the process to function smoothly. The third factor is **COMMUNICATION**, which is essential for successful support from the home assembly and service from CMML. Neither party can fully carry out its responsibilities unless communication from the missionary is frequent and informative. When each step is completed, the result will be a work that brings glory to God.

Whether you are an elder from a commending assembly, a friend to someone considering missions, or an individual praying about missions work, this tool is designed to give you an overview of the practical steps for entering the missions field. Please contact CMML if you have any questions.

# DEFINITIONS

## ***Missionary and Assembly Elders***

Local assemblies commend missionaries to the Lord's work and are responsible for them while on the field. The missionary is an extension of the local assembly, and the assembly is an integral part of the ministry that the individual or family carries out. This booklet outlines steps prospective missionaries and local assembly elders should consider in the calling of an individual or a family to serve the Lord in a cross-cultural missions context. Both parties face important responsibilities as they follow the Lord's direction.

## ***Commendation***

The practice of "commendation" comes from the record of Paul's missionary journeys in Acts 13–15. Commendation can be defined as that act of an assembly whereby called and qualified believers are handed over to the grace of God, for the work of evangelism, discipleship, and, church planting.

## ***CMML's Role***

CMML partners with assemblies and their commended missionaries by providing missions-specific services that are difficult for a single assembly to manage effectively.

# PREPARING



## A. Missionary

1. Share your interests and desires with your elders.
2. Pursue all opportunities to learn about missions:
  - a. Study examples of missions in the Bible, especially in the book of Acts.
  - b. Connect with missionaries both online and in person.
  - c. Actively use the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*.
  - d. Subscribe to *Missions* magazine.
  - e. Read missions books and biographies.
  - f. Attend missions conferences.
  - g. Participate in short-term missions trips.
3. Remain actively involved in your local assembly.
4. Through prayer and inquiry, determine a field of service and communicate with missionaries working in that field.
5. Pursue appropriate education and training in:
  - a. Scripture, missions, and church-planting
  - b. Intercultural relations, language acquisition, and team/relationship-building skills.
  - c. Security, risk assessment, and field training.
  - d. CPR, first aid, and basic medical skills.
6. Attend the Missionary Orientation Program (MOP).
7. Support yourself by working in secular employment.
8. Eliminate debt.
9. Learn as much as you can about your field of service and reach out to nearby immigrants with similar cultures.

**KEEP PRAYING**



## B. Assembly Elders

1. Study biblical commendation.
2. Pray regularly with prospective missionary.
3. Help identify and cultivate his or her spiritual gifts.
4. Provide a wide variety of ministry opportunities.
5. Provide an environment that stimulates and encourages missions-minded thinking.
6. Provide one-on-one discipleship and mentoring.
7. Ask others' feedback on prospective missionary's fitness for mission service.
8. Identify and address any areas of concern.
9. Urge prospective missionary to pursue training opportunities (offer financial assistance, if possible).
10. Assess his or her readiness for foreign missions.
11. Encourage potential missionary as he or she seeks the Lord's leading.

### KEEP PRAYING

## C. CMML

1. Provide missions information through the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*, *Missions* magazine, conferences, CMML.us, and social media.
2. Host Missionary Orientation Program (MOP).
3. Share short-term missions opportunities.
4. Offer advice on commendation and training.

### KEEP PRAYING

### Special Note:

*Once it has been decided to commend a missionary, the elders should then write the missionary a letter of commendation and send it to CMML. This begins the "Going" process.*

## GOING



### A. Missionary

1. Maintain regular communication and planning with missionaries already on the field.
2. Provide CMML with all necessary documentation for opening a funds account and for inclusion in the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*.
3. Share with others how God is leading you.
4. Establish a team of faithful prayer and support partners.
5. Review and understand CMML's Security and Child Protection Policies.
6. Take recommended training courses.
7. Complete risk assessments and crisis planning.
8. Visit CMML to meet the staff, learn about its services, and share about your ministry call.
9. Set up a system for newsletters and ministry reports.
10. Attend to medical and dental needs.
11. Understand and plan how you will report federal and state taxes.

12. Enroll in Assembly Care Ministries' Health Line service at [ACMHealthLine.com](http://ACMHealthLine.com).
13. Contact Believers Stewardship Services for financial services and will preparation.

### KEEP PRAYING

## B. Assembly Elders

1. Meet regularly with missionary to pray and confirm that God is leading him or her in this decision.
2. Ensure CMML received missionary's letter of commendation.
3. Discuss and develop an accountability plan.
4. Designate one elder, or another reliable individual, as a person of contact and accountability.
5. Share the designated person's contact information with CMML.
6. Assess assembly finances to determine a support plan for the new, full-time missionary.
7. Engage the whole assembly in the commendation process:
  - a. Discuss how the Lord is leading the missionary.
  - b. Explain biblical commendation and the assembly's responsibilities.
  - c. Encourage constant prayer.
  - d. Invite the assembly to affirm the commendation.
  - e. Plan a "send-off" service.
8. Arrange a meeting with CMML to discuss missionary's commendation.
9. Consider informing nearby assemblies of missionary's commendation to encourage prayer and support.

### KEEP PRAYING

## C. CMML

1. Equip missionary with CMML's "New Missionary Packet."
2. Set up missionary's CMML account.
3. Coordinate a face-to-face meeting between CMML, missionary, and commending elders.
4. Gather necessary information for including missionary in the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*.
5. Supply each party with copies of CMML's Security and Child Protection Policies, Training Recommendations, and Security Planning Information.
6. Provide counsel and advice as needed.
7. Publish a "May We Introduce" article in *Missions* magazine.

### KEEP PRAYING

#### **Special Note:**

Please notify CMML of any changes in commendation. If the missionary's initial commendation was given for a specific period of time and later extended, be sure to send CMML a new, signed copy of the extended commendation letter. Also, if significant changes occur in the assembly, such as the assembly moves location, changes leadership, appoints a new missionary contact person, changes its name, or closes, please let CMML know.

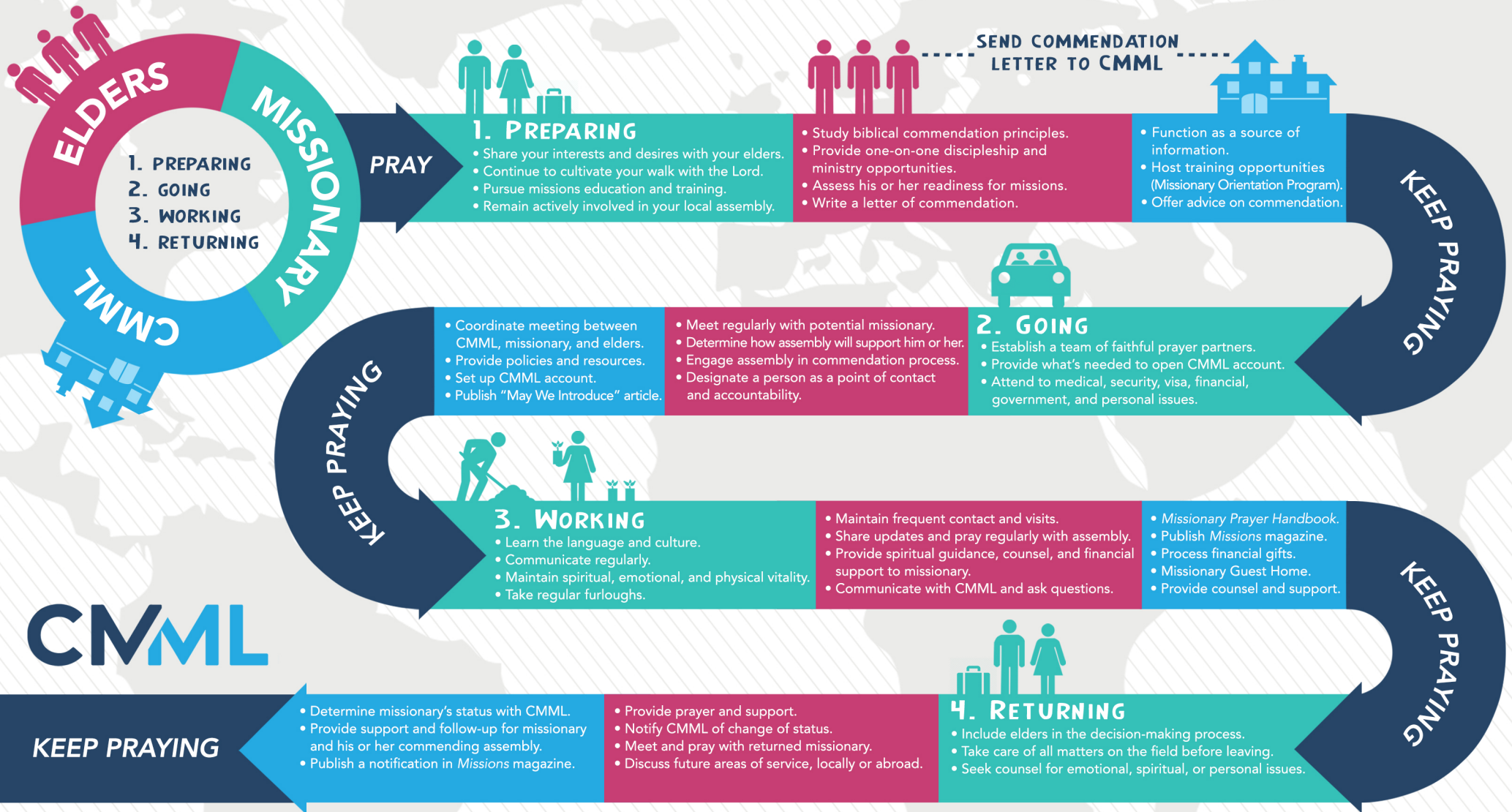


## A. Missionary

1. Learn the language and the culture of your country of service.
2. Develop relationships with other workers in your area (nationals and missionaries).
3. Communicate regularly with your commending assembly, prayer partners, donors, and CMML.
4. Acknowledge donors' gifts in a timely manner.
5. Maintain involvement in local national assembly (where one exists).
6. Spend time ensuring your spiritual and physical wellbeing.
7. Update and review risk assessments and contingency plans regularly.
8. Create a plan to keep ministry skills current and relevant.
9. Take refresher courses every two to three years in:
  - a. First aid, CPR, and medical training.
  - b. Security training and crisis planning.
10. Use CMML resources effectively:
  - a. Understand how to access and share information using CMML's website, Facebook, and other social media platforms.
  - b. Use CMML's Security Planning Information when making decisions, and contact CMML security personnel with questions.
  - c. Provide CMML with up-to-date records.
  - d. Complete the annual *Missionary Prayer Handbook* questionnaire.
  - e. Talk to *Missions* editor about potential magazine articles.

# MISSIONS PATHWAY

## PRACTICAL STEPS FOR NEW MISSIONARIES AND COMMENDING ASSEMBLIES





11. Plan to take breaks and vacations in-country.
12. Schedule furloughs to the US in advance:
  - a. Visit commending and supporting assemblies, family and friends, and CMML's Missionary Guest Home.
  - b. Plan time to pause from ministry-related responsibilities.

## **KEEP PRAYING**

### **B. Assembly Elders**

1. Maintain frequent communication.
2. Remind assembly to pray for and communicate with missionary.
3. Share updates regularly with assembly.
4. Seek ways to include missionary in assembly life and fellowship.
5. Send financial support.
6. Visit missionary to encourage him or her.
7. Continue to provide spiritual guidance and counsel.
8. Remember missionary children's needs.
9. Encourage missionary to take regular breaks and vacations in-country.
10. Communicate with CMML and ask questions about finances, security, or other areas of concern.
11. Help plan furloughs by arranging:
  - a. Visits to home and nearby assemblies to give reports.
  - b. Meetings with commending leadership.
  - c. Time to rest and be with family and friends.
  - d. A stay at the CMML Guest Home.

## **KEEP PRAYING**

## C. CMML

1. **Provide prayer and information support:**
  - a. Update *Missionary Prayer Handbook*, *Missions* magazine, CMML's website, and social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube).
  - b. Host missions conferences.
2. **Receive, process, and forward funds.**
3. **Answer financial questions.**
4. **Visit missionary on the field.**
5. **Advise and counsel missionary and assembly leadership.**
6. **Act as a source of connection for missionary to assembly resources, networks, and opportunities.**
7. **Offer security support:**
  - a. Issue training recommendations.
  - b. Send yearly Security Planning Information reports to help with risk assessment.
  - c. Update and counsel missionary on security protocols as problems arise in the country of service.
  - d. Supply a list of professional assembly counselors to help with emotional needs.
8. **Manage Missionary Guest Home:**
  - a. Assist with transportation needs.
  - b. Arrange accommodations and cooking facilities.
  - c. Organize Clothing Center.
  - d. Help schedule local ministry opportunities.
  - e. Provide information about area attractions.

## KEEP PRAYING

# RETURNING



## A. Missionary

1. Include commending assembly elders in the decision-making and transition process.
2. Plan for an orderly transferal of the work.
3. Ensure that all overseas financial, legal, and personal issues are cared for before leaving.
4. Seek counsel for dealing with the emotional issues of returning from the field.
5. Plan living arrangements back home.
6. Learn about health-care options and requirements and plan accordingly. Consult [ACMHealthLine.com](http://ACMHealthLine.com).
7. Identify work and ministry options back home.

### **KEEP PRAYING**

## B. Assembly Elders

1. Provide prayer and support.
2. Notify CMML of change, whether return is permanent or temporary.
3. Meet and pray with returned missionary.
4. Assist in the transition process by helping with:
  - a. Living arrangements.
  - b. Transportation needs.
  - c. Children's needs (including education).
  - d. Financial needs.
  - e. Debriefing.

- f. Counsel and support from other missionaries, fellow believers, or professionals.
  - g. Other practical, emotional, or spiritual needs.
5. Follow up with missionary after a period of time to see how he or she is adjusting and to discuss future areas of service, local or abroad.

### KEEP PRAYING

## C. CMML

1. Provide counsel and support for missionary and commending assembly.
2. Debrief the missionary.
3. Determine missionary's status with CMML:
  - a. Keep account active during an extended furlough.
  - b. Close account if there is no plan to return to field.
  - c. Keep account active upon return if missionary is "Refocused" (65+ years of age and has served full-time on the field for at least 10 years).
4. Publish a notification of return in *Missions* magazine.
5. Follow up with missionary to see how they are adjusting to this new phase of life.

### KEEP PRAYING

#### **Final Thoughts:**

*We desire that this booklet would help clarify the pathway to missionary service for those who are called. However, we recognize the Lord has many ways to call His servants and that there will be variables that change the ways assemblies shape their cross-cultural missions ministries. CMML stands ready to assist as you seek the Lord's guidance in missionary service. Please visit [CMML.us](http://CMML.us) for more information.*

# SUGGESTED READING

- *The Challenge of Change in Assembly Missions*  
by Ken Fleming
- *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*  
by David A. Livermore and Chap Clark
- *Essentials of Missionary Service*  
by Ken Fleming
- *Father of Faith Missions: The Life and Times of Anthony Norris Groves*  
by Robert Bernard Dann
- *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures*  
by Sarah A. Lanier
- *Global Strategy: The Biblical Plan of Mission*  
by CMMML
- *Mission Strategies Then and Now*  
by Robin Daniel
- *Out of the Comfort Zone*  
by George Verwer
- *Serving with Eyes Wide Open: Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence*  
by David A. Livermore
- *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself*  
by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert
- *MissionSmart: 14 Critical Questions to Ask Before Launching Overseas*  
by David Frazier

# TRAINING AND RESOURCES

## **Mission Training/Skill-Building:**

- Missionary Orientation Program (MOP): [CMML.us/mop](http://CMML.us/mop)
- Missionary Training International (MTI)–Compass Program: [MTI.org/compass](http://MTI.org/compass)
- Perspectives classes: [Perspectives.org](http://Perspectives.org)

## **Ministry Training:**

- Emmaus Bible College–Intercultural Studies: [Emmaus.edu](http://Emmaus.edu)
- Discipleship Intern Training Program (DITP): [TheDITP.com](http://TheDITP.com)
- The Ezekiel Project School of Evangelism (TEPSE): [TEPSE.org](http://TEPSE.org)

## **Security Training:**

- Crisis Consulting International (CCI): [CriCon.org](http://CriCon.org)
- Concilium: [ConciliumOnline.org](http://ConciliumOnline.org)
- Fort Sherman Academy (FSA): [FortSherman.org](http://FortSherman.org)

## **Medical Training:**

- Equip International–Missionary Medicine Intensive: [EquipInternational.org](http://EquipInternational.org)
- CPR and first aid courses

## **Resiliency-Building:**

- Missionary Training International (MTI)–Debrief and Renewal Program: [MTI.org/dar](http://MTI.org/dar)
- Alongside Ministries: [AlongsideCares.net](http://AlongsideCares.net)

## **Missionary Resources:**

- Biblical Eldership Resources: [BiblicalEldership.com](http://BiblicalEldership.com)
- Everyday Publications: [EverydayPublications.org](http://EverydayPublications.org)
- Believers Stewardship Services: [BelieverStewardship.org](http://BelieverStewardship.org)
- The Opal Trust: [OpalTrust.org](http://OpalTrust.org)
- Assembly Care Ministries: [AssemblyCare.org](http://AssemblyCare.org)
- Emmaus Worldwide: [EmmausWorldwide.org](http://EmmausWorldwide.org)



# CMML SERVICES

## **Missionaries Services:**

- Processing donations
- Clothing Center
- Website where missionary can share updated information
- Missionary care and visitation
- Guest Home in New Jersey
- Missionary Orientation Program
- Risk management assistance
- Counseling and emotional support (partnership with ACM Healthline)
- Medical advice (partnership with ACM Healthline)
- Financial and Retirement advice (partnership with Believers Stewardship Services)
- Missionary Kids Education Assistance Fund
- Widows and Refocused Missionary Fund

## **Assembly Services:**

- Support for commendation process
- Distribution of gifts to missionaries
- Inform of mission field prayer needs
- Disaster relief fund processing

## **General Services:**

- Conferences
- Publications
- Charitable annuity and trust gift processing

For information or assistance with any of these services please contact us at 732-449-8880 or [cmml@cmml.us](mailto:cmml@cmml.us).

# CMML RESOURCES

- ***Missionary Prayer Handbook***  
A daily prayer guide that helps you pray for more than 700 missionaries, serving in over 80 countries, in 30 days.
- ***Missions magazine***  
A free monthly magazine subscription containing articles and letters direct from the mission field.
- **Missionary Orientation Program**  
A weeklong training program designed to prepare those considering missions to be effective on the mission field.
- **Missions conferences and youth retreats**  
CMML conferences share the exciting things God is doing around the world and encourage everyone to get involved.
- **Social Media**  
Follow CMML on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube for news, updates, announcements, and monthly missions update videos.

Visit [CMML.us](http://CMML.us) for more information.



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