



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

Becoming a missionary is not a matter of packing your bags and hopping on an airplane—much more is involved. Sometimes, the process may feel overwhelming. *Missions Pathway* is designed to reduce the complexity, charting the major parts of the process as a journey with steps to take, tasks to complete, and parties with roles to play.

The journey involves four steps that three parties must take. The four steps are **PREPARING**, **GOING**, **WORKING**, and **RETURNING**. The three parties are the prospective **MISSIONARY**, the **ELDERS** of the commending assembly, and the missionary service organization **CMML**. Each one plays an important role—from answering God’s call to the mission field and serving there, to identifying and equipping individuals and sending them to do God’s work, to caring for them on the field and supporting their ministry.

This journey requires several additional elements: The first is **PRAYER**. From the outset, prayer must be central to the pathway. The second is **PARTNERSHIP**. Although a missionary must take each step as the Lord leads, the commending assembly and CMML are also key players. All must work together for the process to function smoothly. The third is **COMMUNICATION**. It is essential for practical, productive support from the home assembly and service from CMML. Neither party can complete its responsibilities fully unless communication from the missionary is frequent and substantive.

When the parties involved have completed each step of the pathway, they can look back with joy because God led the way, with gratitude because He provided strong partnerships, and in amazement because He has accomplished much work for His kingdom. Whether you are an elder from a commending assembly, a friend to someone considering missions, or an individual or family praying about missions work, this tool is designed to help you practically assess and take the steps to entering the mission field.

DEFINITIONS

Missionary

Missionaries are people called by the Lord and sent out by their local church for cross-cultural ministry, which focuses on or facilitates evangelism, discipleship, or church planting. Missionaries are an extension of their assembly's ministry.

Assembly Elders

Assembly elders constitute the leadership of the local church. Their responsibilities include recognizing the Lord's call on the lives of believers within their fellowship, commending them to missionary service, and providing them with spiritual oversight and support while they serve on the mission field.

Commendation

The practice of commendation comes from the record of Paul's missionary journeys in Acts 13–15. Commendation may be defined as a public act of an assembly whereby called and qualified believers are set apart and sent out to fulfill their role in Christ's gospel mission. CMML defines *gospel mission work* as a ministry that focuses on or facilitates evangelism, discipleship, and church planting.

Commending Assembly

A commending assembly is the local, New Testament-patterned church where an individual or couple is in full, active fellowship and by whose leadership they are identified, set apart, and commended to a specific location for a specific gospel mission work.

Christian Missions in Many Lands (CMML)

CMML is a missionary service organization that advances the spread of the Gospel globally by providing strategic services to commending assemblies in the US, the missionaries they commend, and the believers who support the missionaries' work.

PREPARING



A. Missionary

1. Share your missions 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 mission 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 about your field of service and reach out to nearby immigrants with similar cultures.
10. If considering specialized ministry, such as aviation or translation, assess the services of missions agencies devoted to these areas.

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. Equip prospective missionaries at the Missionary Orientation Program (MOP).
3. Share short-term mission opportunities.
4. Offer advice on commendation and training.

KEEP PRAYING

Special Note:

Upon deciding to commend a missionary, the elders should write the missionary a letter of commendation. This letter is evidence of the local assembly's support of God's call upon the missionary to a specific gospel mission work. Once CMML receives the letter, the "Going" process begins.

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. Establish a system for updating your supporters through newsletters and ministry reports.
10. Attend to medical and dental needs.
11. Understand and plan how you will report federal and state taxes.

12. Begin language study.
13. Enroll in Assembly Care Ministries' Health Line service at ACMHealthLine.com.
14. 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. Formally and publicly commend the missionary.
3. 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.
4. Write a letter of commendation and ensure CMML receives a copy.
5. Designate one elder, or another reliable individual, as a person of contact and accountability. Share the person's contact information with CMML.
6. Assess assembly finances to determine a support plan for the new, full-time missionary.
7. Arrange a meeting with CMML to discuss missionary's commendation.
8. 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. Coordinate a face-to-face meeting with CMML, missionary, and commending elders to explain services, align expectations, and onboard missionary.
3. Gather necessary information for including missionary in the *Missionary Prayer Handbook*.
4. Supply each party with copies of CMML's Security and Child Protection Policies, Training Recommendations, and Security Planning Information.
5. Provide counsel and advice as needed.
6. Set up missionary's CMML account.
7. Publish a "May We Introduce" article in *Missions* magazine.

KEEP PRAYING

Special Note:

The commending assembly is required to complete and return to CMML an annual questionnaire reaffirming the missionary's active commendation and notifying CMML of any significant changes in the assembly, such as change of address, name, leadership, or missionary's person of contact. Every five years, CMML will request that the commending assembly send an updated letter of commendation to affirm its continued endorsement of the missionary and to reflect any location, family, or ministry changes.

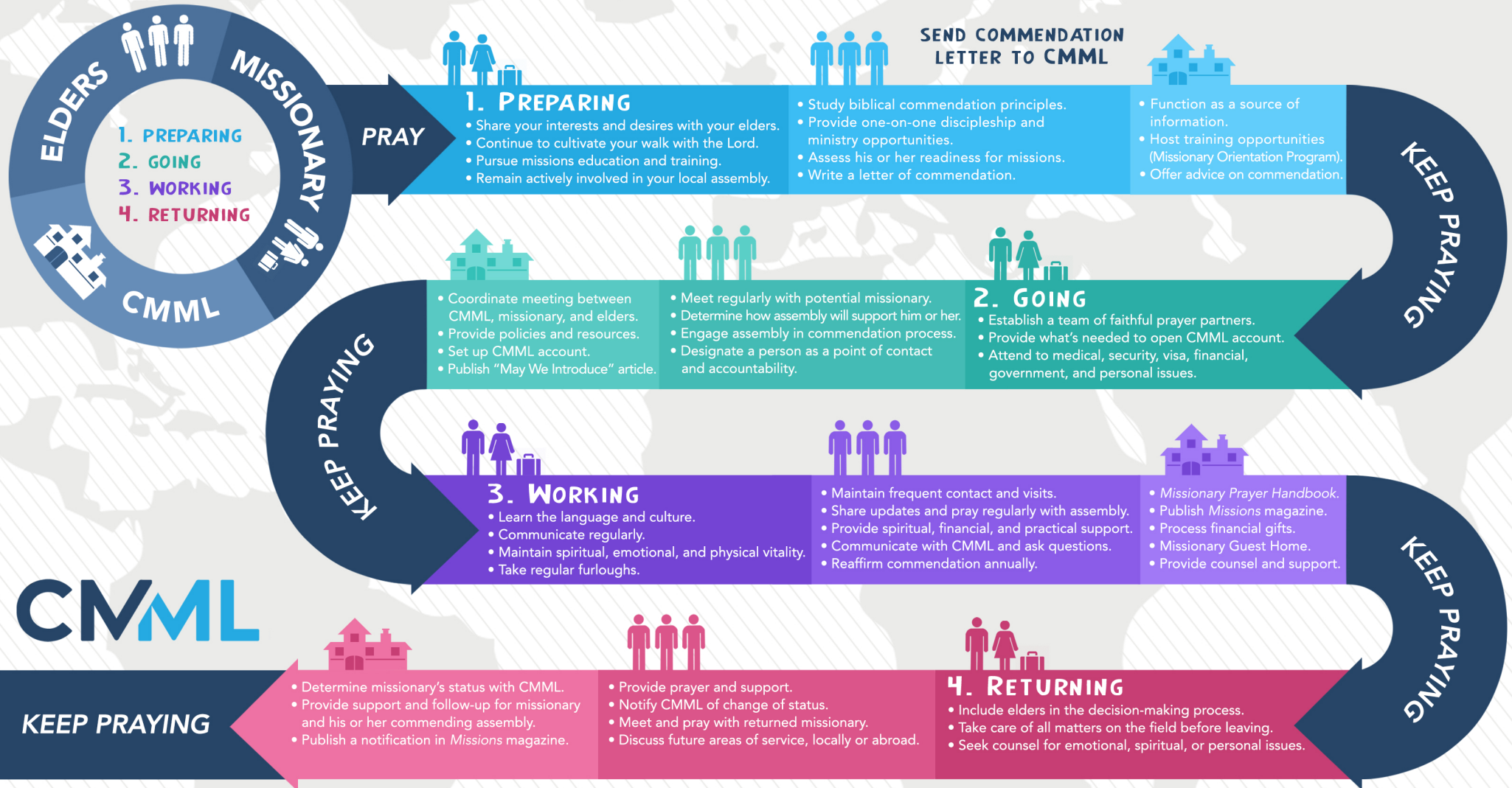


A. Missionary

1. Learn the language and the culture of your country of service.
2. Understand the ministry context of your new mission field.
3. Develop relationships with other workers in your area (nationals and missionaries).
4. Communicate regularly with your commending assembly, prayer partners, donors, and CMML.
5. Acknowledge donors' gifts in a timely manner.
6. Maintain involvement in local national assembly (where one exists).
7. Spend time ensuring your spiritual and physical well-being.
8. Review and update your risk assessments and contingency plans regularly.
9. Create a plan to keep ministry skills current and relevant.
10. Take refresher courses every two to three years in:
 - a. First aid, CPR, and medical training.
 - b. Security training and crisis planning.
11. Use CMML resources effectively:
 - a. Understand how to utilize CMML's online presence, including its website and social media.
 - 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.
 - c. Notify CMML of your furlough plans in advance.

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, counsel, and accountability.
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.
12. Reaffirm commendation annually and renew the letter of commendation every five years.

KEEP PRAYING

C. CMML

1. **Connect, engage, and equip the local church, its missionaries, and supporters.**
2. **Promote communication, prayer, and engagement through:**
 - a. The *Missionary Prayer Handbook* and *Missions* magazine.
 - b. CMML's website (CMML.us), social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube), videos, online prayer meetings, and update emails.
 - c. Missions conferences, including 26 Below, Annual Fall Conference, Reaching Higher, and Missionary Orientation Program.
3. **Enable missionary's ministry through financial services:**
 - a. Forward donations from supporters to missionary.
 - b. Answer financial questions.
 - c. Manage donations suggested for special funds.
4. **Provide missionary care by encouraging missionary's spiritual, mental, and physical health:**
 - a. Advise missionaries.
 - b. Visit missionaries on the field.
 - c. Supply risk assessment and management resources.
 - d. Share training and resource recommendations.
 - e. Provide medical and emotional support in partnership with ACM Health Line.
 - f. Offer financial and retirement advice in partnership with Believers Stewardship Services.
5. **Maintain the CMML Missionary Guest Home as a place for refreshment and connection to CMML:**
 - a. Arrange missionary visits.
 - b. Assist with transportation needs.
 - c. Organize Clothing Center for missionary use.
 - d. Help schedule local ministry opportunities.
 - e. Provide information about area attractions.
6. **Promote assembly relations, including missionary engagement and connection to CMML:**
 - a. Provide resources and networking to missionaries and assemblies.
 - b. Offer missions-related counsel to assemblies and believers in the USA.
 - c. Share missions information and prayer needs.

RETURNING



A. Missionary

1. Include commending assembly elders in the decision-making and transition process.
2. Plan for an orderly transfer 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.
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 he or she is adjusting to this new phase of life.

KEEP PRAYING

Final Thoughts:

We hope that this booklet will help clarify the pathway to missionary service for those who are called. However, we recognize the Lord calls His servants in many ways and variables will 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 for more information.

SUGGESTED READING

- *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility*
by Duane Elmer
- *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
- *Messiology*
by George Verwer
- *MissionSmart: 14 Critical Questions to Ask Before Launching Overseas*
by David Frazier
- *Mission Strategies Then and Now*
by Robin Daniel
- *On Being a Missionary*
by Thomas Hale
- *Serving with Eyes Wide Open: Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence*
by David A. Livermore
- *Stepping into Missions: A Guided Tour into What Could Be the Rest of Your Life*
by Jesse Mattix and Peggy Covert
- *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Yourself*
by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert

TRAINING AND RESOURCES

Mission Training/Skill-Building:

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

Ministry Training:

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

Security Training:

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

Medical Training:

- Equip International–Missionary Medicine Intensive: EquipInternational.org
- CPR and first-aid training (source locally)

Resiliency-Building:

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

Missionary Resources:

- Assembly Care Ministries: AssemblyCare.org
- Believers Stewardship Services: BelieverStewardship.org
- Biblical Eldership Resources: BiblicalEldership.com
- Everyday Publications: EverydayPublications.org
- Emmaus Worldwide: EmmausWorldwide.org
- OPAL Trust: OpalTrust.org

ABOUT CMML

Mission:

To advance the spread of the Gospel globally by serving US assemblies and their missionaries.

Vision:

To advance the spread of the Gospel globally through:

1. **Engaged Senders:** CMML supports local New Testament assemblies in the US as they assess, prepare, commend, support, and oversee their missionaries.
2. **Enabled Servants:** CMML provides strategic and practical services that enable missionaries to fulfill the work to which they are commended.
3. **Enthusiastic Supporters:** CMML encourages informed and enthusiastic participation of all generations in global missions.

For information, visit our website, CMML.us. Or contact us by phone at 732-449-8880 or by email at cmml@cmml.us.

CMML RESOURCES

Print:

- *Missionary Prayer Handbook*: A daily prayer guide that helps you pray for more than 700 missionaries in more than 80 countries.
- *Missions*: A monthly magazine featuring articles, reports, and letters from the mission field to encourage prayer and involvement.

Digital:

- CMML.us: A one-stop source for assembly missions information.
- CMML Updates: Email updates from CMML containing news, announcements, and resources.
- Mission Prayer Items: A weekly prayer list published jointly by MSC Canada and CMML and distributed via email.
- Social Media: CMML's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube accounts containing news, updates, and announcements.
- CMML Videos: Monthly "Missions Updates" videos, sermons, panel discussions, and more located on CMML's YouTube channel and website.

Conferences:

- Annual Fall Conference: An event, held virtually and in person in New Jersey, featuring keynote speakers, missionary reports, and assembly missions information.
- 26 Below: A missions-focused retreat for young people, from high school to about age 26, hosted in regions across the US.
- Missionary Orientation Program: A week-long training program designed to prepare those considering missions to be effective on the mission field.
- Reaching Higher: A conference held at the CMML Missionary Guest Home for young adults ages 20–39.
- Regional Conferences: CMML missions events at local assemblies across the US. (Contact CMML about hosting a conference at your assembly or joining an existing conference.)



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