

WNAC Seminar “My Name is More”

Heather Goodman and Ashley Bennett, along with their husbands, Jeff Goodman and Josh Bennett, make up the Marana Team, church planters in Arizona serving with FWBHM. This team has been in Marana for three years now, and The Springs Church has held public services for two years. Heather and Ashley offer these suggestions for helping them and other missionaries in ways above and beyond dollars and cents.

Come & See

Be a part of a missions group that comes

- Bring a youth group
- Initiate fundraising
- Lead a group
- Come on your own to visit and experience the ministry

Send & Care

- Care packages
- Kids' birthdays —cards, dollars, stickers,
- Marriages—gift cards for dates
- From home church and home state - means more - special items from home area regional favorites

Connect & Engage

- “Like” the Marana Project page
- Follow updates on Facebook and like them or comment
- Rejoice in salvations and baptisms

Gift & Minister

- Hospitality gifts —gifts for giving when meeting new people and for fellowship with church people
- gift cards for restaurants, grocery stores for hosting people
- when sending gift cards, check to see what stores or restaurants are in their area or send a Visa giftcard

Sponsor & Bless

- Sponsor a specific project with your local or state WAC
- Request information through Facebook

Missionary Lea Edgmon, serving with FWBIM in Spain, offers these three principles: **Pray, Share and Love.**

PRAY—no, really, PRAY!

"Prayer and mission are as inseparable as faith and works. In fact prayer and mission are faith and works." John Mott, 1902, Nobel peace prize in 1946 for establishing international protestant Christian student organizations that worked to promote peace. (YMCA and World Student Christian Federation)

The late Ken McGreavy, a dear friend of 24-7 Prayer, once told us that for every history that is seen, every testimony that is told, there is a secret history, a history that no one knows about. Souls saved, towns changed, families transformed, cultures redeemed, revivals that break out are all born out of the secret place of prayer, they all have a secret history. Are we willing to be involved in the secret history of our friends, families, communities and nations, to prayer without reward, relentlessly and unceasingly until we see change? And even if that change never comes in our lifetime to keep praying?

Prayer support can be given in many ways. On the negative side, many missionaries experience people saying very easily: *"You're doing great work. I'll pray for you,"* without really realizing what the work entails. My feeling at these times are that the people are actually saying: *"I don't want to get too deeply involved with your work and the quickest way to get rid of you is to tell you that I'll pray for you."* The message I want to get across is that we have to be **sincere** when we say to someone that we will pray for them. Missionaries **rely** on people praying for them and their ministry. I'm trying to get myself in the habit, when someone asks for my prayers, to **immediately** pray for whatever they asked for, merely because I tend to forget afterwards. When a friend sends me an email asking for prayer support, I often **write my prayer** on a return email.

As FWB women we are surrounded with information about our missionaries. We can check www.fwbgo.com and www.homemissions.net in order to get the latest news on our missionaries. We can sign up for their email newsletters or even receive the snail-mail ones if we prefer. The Hotline is sent out weekly and prayer requests are found on the Home Missions site. We can not hide behind the excuse of not having information. In fact, we may have so much we don't know what to do with it all. Here are some suggestions of practical ways to pray for your missionary:

DAY 1 - RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Too often we assume that missionaries don't struggle like we do in their relationship with God. But this is the missionary's primary need. Pray that your missionary will:

- Love and study God's Word.
- Have a strong prayer life.
- Be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Be maturing spiritually.
- Make progress over personal sin.

DAY 2 - PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS

Satan often discourages us through our physical and emotional lives. Many missionaries live in difficult climates filled with disease. Pray for good health. With busy and hectic schedules, missionaries travel often. Pray for safety, stamina and a sense of priority. Remember that preventive prayer helps. When we hear that a missionary is hospitalized for a heart attack, disease or has been injured in an accident, we pray up a storm. The wise thing is to cover your

missionary's health continually. Pray against discouragement, loneliness and depression.

DAY 3 - FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Pray for family relationships—husband/ wife, parent/child. Pray for the children, their salvation and spiritual growth, their health and education. Pray too that their family life will provide an excellent model for local Christians and the unsaved. And pray against the temptations that destroy families. If your missionary is single, pray that God will meet his or her needs in this area. Pray for strong, healthy friendships and contentment in singleness.

DAY 4 - ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE

In world evangelization communication is crucial. Your missionary is in ministry to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Whether your missionary is communicating with his life or lips, he must be understood. Learning a new language and adapting to a new culture are frustrating, difficult and essential to good communication. Languages in the Far East are among the most difficult for a Westerner to master. Even an elementary knowledge of a language takes years of study and practice. And a superficial understanding is insufficient for communicating spiritual truths and defending the faith. Would you listen to a speaker who wasn't fluent in English? But to really communicate, the missionary must adapt culturally to identify with those he is trying to reach. Getting close to the local people and understanding them means adjusting lifestyle and cultural preferences. Pray that your missionary will have the stamina and understanding to demonstrate Christ cross-culturally.

DAY 5 - EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

Sometimes you can forget why your missionary is overseas, and why you are praying for him. Remember to pray for what your missionary is actually doing: witnessing, visiting, teaching, preaching, counseling, nursing—and pray for the people he is ministering to. Prayer letters will teach you how to specifically pray for these things. But include requests for boldness, open doors, open hearts and excellence in the effort. Most of all, ask the Holy Spirit to empower your missionary for productivity. (See John 15:16.)

DAY 6 - TEAM RELATIONSHIPS

Your missionary is probably not completely on his own. Normally, missionaries team up with other missionaries, local believers, pastors and evangelists. Unfortunately, this mix of personalities designed to strengthen the ministry can sometimes be used of Satan to weaken it. Poor team relationships can spoil the work. Pray for all the fellow workers your missionary mentions in his letters. Pray they appreciate and sharpen one another in good and healthy ways.

DAY 7 - COUNTRY OF SERVICE

Expand your praying to include the entire country where your missionary is located. The political situation, the government and its leaders, visas, freedom to preach the gospel—all of these are important factors in world evangelization.

You can also pray that the whole country will open up in responsiveness to the gospel.

The point is--PRAY and keep on praying until you hear an answer. Write us and let us know you are praying. Remind us if we have not followed up letting you know about answers to prayer.

SHARE—you have more resources than you know

What can we share with a missionary? Don't they already have tons of great ideas? You have more to share than you know:

—VBS ideas--your church may be doing the exact same theme that mine is doing across the ocean. Send pictures of your sets, great snacks, etc. We love to learn and recycle great ideas.

—Your special banquet/program ideas...The women in Spain are floored when they see a special program that follows a theme and has all the little details. We tend to take that for granted in the States, but it can make a big impact in another country. Again, send us your ideas...some may not work, but many can be adjusted to fit the culture where we serve.

—Your great project initiatives. Just before returning to the States I shared with a lady named Monica about the Provision Closet. She kept saying over and over, "What a great idea!" Maybe your group has sponsored a 5-K or given out water bottles at your county fair. What are some ways you work to impact your community? We would love to hear about them.

—Simple things. It shouldn't take only huge projects like building a hospital to get us involved. Jesus had a real talent for taking the "little" things and multiplying them so that He would receive all the glory

I remember one point in the early stages of our ministry when we wanted to let local children play with American board games during our outreach events. After sending out a quick email to our supporters, many of them immediately offered to send us games. Having these supporter gifts on hand eventually helped us launch several children's ministries that led families to seek Christ.

"How did you get these games over here?" one curious local asked while watching her children play with the games.

"They're from Christians around the world who believe in the Good News so much that they sent us here to share it," I replied.

She smiled. "That's really moving."

Sometimes, little acts of support and commitment can go a long way.

—Be a critic! Huh?? Did I just say that? :) Be a good literary critic for your missionary. Many times we have a hard time discerning from across the ocean what makes for good reading and will be a good source of edification. Have you done a great study as a group? Have you read a book that left you encouraged and refreshed? We need to know about it.

LOVE—make a love connection

Make a connection with the human beings behind the prayer card photo. Get to know what makes us tick and what we are passionate about. How can you do that?

—REALLY talk to a missionary. I mean, really, really talk to one. More than just, "Hey is it hot down there where you guys work?" or "Bet you eat some funny food over there." Maybe you haven't ever talked too much with a missionary and aren't sure what to say. Here are some ideas to get you started. (LIST of 30 questions)

—Love on your missionary when they return to the States. Stateside assignment can be a time of lots of mixed emotions for a missionary. Encourage them with your notes, reminders of God's faithfulness and your prayers. Many of the things Ashley and Heather mentioned are great for your missionary on SA as well.

—Extend your arms of love to the families of your missionaries. Our parents and siblings sacrifice time with children, grandchildren, siblings, cousins, etc. that many take for granted. Some days it is easier to handle than others. When you pray for your missionary remember their family in the States as well. If you get a chance, drop them a note to say you care.