

BGC CARE Teams for Cross-Cultural Goers
(Revised 1/20/2020)

"You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. For they went out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support such ones, that we may be fellow workers with the truth" -3 John 6–8.

At Brandywine Grace Church (BGC), we want to be a sending church that sends our global workers or missionaries (aka goers) well – in a manner worthy of God – for their sake and the sake of the gospel. We desire to be a church that sends our goers well because they are going out for the sake of the Name. And if we love God's glory and His Name, then we will love to see the fame of His Name spread to every unreached people group and unreached place, and sending well as a church helps realize this vision.

One part of a much larger process of sending well is this: goers are sent being well cared for, prayed for, advocated for, encouraged, communicated with, and more while on the field. Therefore, every goer from BGC that we send in some capacity - regardless of where they fit into our financial sending tiers - that serves cross-culturally for a year or longer will be required to establish a CARE Team prior to going, and those going for a shorter period of time are also encouraged to do the same.

What is a CARE Team and what is its purpose?

Communicate/Coordinate:

- Communicate w/ the goer to learn of their resource, support, and misc other needs
- Coordinate meeting these needs w/ others based on what best serves the goer

Adopt/Advocate:

- Adopt a sense of responsibility for the welfare of the goer both on and off the field
- Advocate for the goer however needed as one might advocate for a family member

Receive/Request:

- Receive timely prayer requests from the goer in order to nurture prayer for them
- Request or petition God daily to meet their needs and give them fruitful ministry

Encourage/Exhort:

- Encourage the goer in their personal life and in the task that God has called them to
- Exhort the goer to discharge all the duties of their ministry in a faithful manner

What is the makeup of a CARE Team and how is it formed?

- A CARE Team is a group of approximately 8 to 10 people (w/ a maximum of 12) committed people who come together to care for the BGC goer in a variety of ways, striving to help meet their

physical, emotional and spiritual needs. They have the joy, privilege, and responsibility to pray for and provide care to the goer in a way that best serves them.

- The goer will recruit and build their CARE Team by first identifying a leader and then recruiting additional people to be part of the team as members. The team is formed by the goer based on their relationships, primarily made up of people within BGC but also potentially including some members from outside the church.
- The team's leader is responsible to communicate the vision and expectations to all team members based on this document and to rally the team as needed for either prayer or other care and advocacy initiatives. The leader will take the initiative and responsibility to lead the team and relieve the goer of this.
- The leader will communicate regularly (bi-monthly?) with the pastor overseeing BGC's global missions since the team is a ministry component of our work as a sending church.

What are the minimum commitments by all members of a CARE Team?

- Commit to serving on the team for an initial one year term. When the initial term is complete, the member will serve for consecutive one year terms upon mutual consent of the member, the CARE Team leader, and the BGC goer
- Meet together with your team on a regular basis or as special needs arise
- Pray for your goer every day for at least a short period of time, and for extended periods of time as often as possible every week
- Communicate regularly with your goer to encourage them and provide care
- Create an atmosphere where the goer feels comfortable sharing openly w/ the team
- Serve the goer however possible both when at home and while on the field
- Seek to cultivate concern for both the worker & the work (goer & people they are reaching)
- Make an effort to visit the goer at least once on the field if possible, especially as part of any BGC short term trip that is planned

What are helpful articles or documents to be read by all CARE Team members?

1615 Webinar | Churches Sending Direct - *"Part 1 Missionary Care Making It Practical"* **(plus several other related webinars on this same website related to missionary care)**

<https://1615.org/project/churches-sending-direct-part-1-missionary-care-making-it-practical/>

"Sending Does Not Mean Letting Go":

<https://www.theupstreamcollective.org/blog/sending-does-not-mean-letting-go>

"Establishing Advocacy Teams"

<https://www.theupstreamcollective.org/providing-ongoing-care/advocacy-teams>

"A Practical Way to Structure Your Church's Missionary Care":

<https://www.theupstreamcollective.org/blog/a-practical-way-to-structure-your-churchs-missionary-care>

“Sending Well: It Takes a Community”:

<https://www.theupstreamcollective.org/blog/sending-well-it-takes-a-community>

*****The following three docs should also be read by all team members:**

1. *BGC's Missions Convictions* (found on BGC website on Global Missions page)
2. *BGC's Financial Sending Tiers* (found on BGC website on Global Missions page)
3. Attached doc from Bethlehem Baptist Church about the needs of missionaries

ATTACHMENT:

“Practical Ideas for Caring for Missionaries” from Bethlehem Baptist Church

Before They Leave:

- Ask them what their needs are (materially and spiritually), and pray earnestly for them.
- Help them to find information about the country they are going to and the people they will be working among by going to the library, reading missions periodicals, keeping an eye out for articles in the daily paper.
- Be available for them. Encourage them as their emotions vary just before they go.
- Help them find information on needed equipment by reading Consumer Report articles, discussing with others, etc.
- Ask them about what they are learning as God takes them down the path that will lead them to a foreign country.
- Help them to get all the supplies that they need to take with them overseas. You can help them by running errands, or offering to take care of their children so that they can more easily run errands.
- Drop dinner off at their house their last few nights so that they can concentrate on accomplishing those last few tasks.
- Offer to have them stay with you if they need a place just before they leave.
- Help them pack the items they'll store here in the U.S., as well as the items they'll take with them or ship.
- Treat them to something special just before they go.
- Take them to the airport as a team and have a send-off there.
- Have an open house or “Informal Commissioning” service for them before they leave so they can pray with and say good-bye to many of their friends.
- Host a reception for them at Bethlehem after their Sunday morning church Commissioning

While They Are Gone:

- Pray earnestly for them.
- Write to your missionary often.
- Keep up-to-date with what your missionary is doing so that you can encourage them in the work and share their work with the Bethlehem family.
- Remember their birthdays, holidays, and other special days with a card, gift, email, or telephone call.
- Send emails, if possible, to them occasionally so that they have current, up-to-date

information on their team.

- Pass on any special prayer requests to the church office so that the pastoral staff knows how to pray and so that it can be shared during the regularly scheduled Bethlehem prayer meeting times.
- Send fun "care packages" occasionally to encourage your missionary or to help meet some of their needs.
- Send your missionary articles of special interest out of the newspaper or magazines.
- Consider visiting your missionary on the field.
- Send them a good book you've especially appreciated.
- Mail out their prayer letters for them.
- Help to take care of your missionaries' home while they are away.

When They Return:

- Pray earnestly for them.
- Be at the airport to welcome them back home.
- Host an open house so that they can see many of their friends and update them.
- Help them to organize a time at Bethlehem where they can show their photos and update the body.
- Praise the Lord with them for how God used them overseas.
- Mail out their prayer letters.
- Be available to help them readjust to life in the U.S.
- Have housing ready for them when they arrive home.
- Have a few groceries for them in their refrigerator and cupboards so that they don't have to go shopping right away.
- Help them to find a car to borrow during their furlough time.
- Help them to catch up with what is current, what's in, and what's out. Provide them with a cultural update on trends, U.S. & local news, and fashions.
- Bring dinner by their house for the first few days.
- Introduce them to new people at Bethlehem.
- Help them to get caught up on the latest happenings here at Bethlehem.
- Listen to them, be available. Show interest in their ministry and overseas life.
- A month before they come back, begin keeping a calendar for them, setting up times when people can see them so that they aren't so overwhelmed when they return.
- Include them in social activities
- Offer vacation possibilities.
- Care for family needs like babysitting, loaning a car, providing car maintenance, and communication support.
- Introduce the children to other children their age.
- Give them space.

How to Help During Times of Political Upheaval or Natural Disaster:

- Stay informed.
- Volunteer to help if the need arises.
- Pray and develop a team who will pray.
- Be generous in your giving.
- Don't insist on regular contact with your missionary.
- If missionaries have had to be evacuated from crisis situations, provide a healing

community.

- If re-deployment is necessary, provide financial support, prayer support, encouragement, and input.

How to Help a Missionary During a Time of Personal Crisis:

- Provide a safe place to debrief and to seek prayer and emotional support.
- Be concerned and pray, but don't pry.
- Give the missionary emotional and physical space if needed.
- Offer pastoral and member care when requested.
- Continue to contribute financially or provide for emergencies with one time gifts.
- Write notes of encouragement.

15 Things Every Missionary Needs:

Do you sometimes seem to "get stuck" when praying for missionaries? Are you frustrated because your prayers seem general or shallow? If so, here are some specific things you can pray for when you are interceding for missionaries.

- ***Love for God***

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

- ***Love for Others***

Yes, missionaries are human, and just like you, sometimes they have trouble showing love and respect to those "difficult to love" people—either their missionary coworkers or nationals. Pray that the Lord will make your missionaries' love "increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else" (1 Thessalonians 3:12).

- ***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 Jesus' example.

- ***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 all of your missionaries' actions will be under the control of, and by the power of, the Holy Spirit.

- ***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.

- ***Wisdom and Knowledge***

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 (James 3:17).

- ***Courage***

Imagine your missionaries making the same prayer request 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."

- ***Receptive Hearts***

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

- ***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).

- ***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.

- ***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).

- ***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.

- ***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).

- ***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).

- ***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 Care of Missionary Kids (MKs):

MKs are kids whose dads and moms serve as cross cultural missionaries. They are normal kids who are neither growing up strictly in their parents' culture nor growing up exclusively in the culture of the country where they live. As a result, their lives are being shaped by both their parents' culture and their host culture; this forms a different, third culture. That's why MKs are often called TCKs (Third Culture Kids). Are they normal? Certainly! MKs grow up in extraordinary environments that impact their lives—and we trust that they, too, will impact others for Christ.

- ***Build a Relationship***

MKs are kids with a lot of adults in their lives. It's unrealistic to expect them to know you when your involvement in their lives is limited to once every five years. Be consistent in communicating with them and their families. Visit them overseas when you have a chance, exchange pictures, send the Sunday comics, be involved.

- ***Be Informed***

Communicating with someone who makes an effort to know basic facts about your life and your country is much more enjoyable than talking with someone who merely makes assumptions. The more informed you are, the better your questions and comments will be. Learn more about TCKs and their world; they have a unique set of experiences, skills and worldview. For more information, see www.tckinteract.net and www.tckworld.com.

- ***Meet Felt Needs***

Getting to know MKs will help you know how best to help them in ways that are meaningful to them. International calling cards, a home away from home, a gift card, or a subscription to a magazine especially for TCKs such as "Among Worlds" (write to amongworlds@tckinteract.net) all make great gifts for MKs.

- ***Help Them Transition***

MK life is filled with transition. You can help make the transitions easier. Remember that coming to the U.S. is probably not coming home for them. They are "constant immigrants" with the ability to make unique contributions. As immigrants, they often find the "normal" overwhelming and the "extraordinary" usual. Introduce them to peers and mentors, serve as a liaison between the MK and their new school. Give the MK room to observe and make decisions before jumping in to an activity or a group.

- ***Pray***

Pray for their health; their part in their parents' ministries; their adjustments to new places, schools, and ideas; their spiritual and emotional