

Missionary Comments

A few missionary comments when asked about these issues:

- + It's so helpful to be "invited in" by church members rather than always having to take the initiative. For instance, it's great when someone asks me if we can get together rather than always expecting me, the missionary, to issue the invitation.
- It's very disappointing when people don't seem very interested in hearing about the spiritual progress (or reversal) of our ministries on the field. It felt like they would rather talk about the food, the culture, the bugs and snakes, etc., rather than about lives changed by the grace and power of God.
- I love my sending church, but sometimes I struggle because the services now feel shallow. When I'm back home, I go on Sunday morning to see my church family, but I don't necessarily feel the same emotional high I felt at services before I left for the field.
- + The church might be able to receive and accept vulnerability better than we missionaries sometimes expect. We need to give the church a chance by first being transparent with a smaller group. If that goes well, we can open up more with a larger group at that church.
- Sometimes when we came on home assignment, we didn't know where the next place of ministry would be. To be continuously bombarded with "Where are you are going next?" was extremely difficult.
- + Good communication is a huge part of a good relationship. I called my pastor when there was a crisis on the field. He let me know that the church leaders saw it as involving the whole church, not just me. That was such a powerful encouragement.
- We wondered if churches had the same financial standard for their missionaries as for their staff. If they give a cost of living adjustment to staff, do they also give it to their missionaries? Sometimes it seemed like they thought we should just be thankful that we received anything.
- + My church sent several people out to visit me. That was huge.
- + Our sending church considered me an associate staff person while I was on home assignment. They gave me an office and included me in staff meetings. I felt affirmed and included in the church.
- + Prior to home assignment, our sending church sent pictures of the Sunday school class our daughters were going to join with the names of each person. Our first Sunday back, someone met us at the door, and a teen walked into the youth group with our girls. That was so beautiful for our kids.