

POSTINGS

articles for missions mobilizers



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Get Your Pastor's Perspective

Questions to celebrate and improve collaboration

It's summer for those in the Northern Hemisphere, and while many regular programs are paused, church leaders are looking ahead and beginning to plan for the coming ministry year. This makes it a great time for your global outreach (GO) team to invite your pastor to engage in a discussion around your congregation's missions impact.

A relaxed backyard barbecue might be a good setting for this wide-ranging conversation. If your church has multiple pastors and/or a separate local outreach team, consider including them as well in this dialog.

Below are some questions to help stimulate honest, productive interaction. The entire list is probably too much for one evening, so choose the questions most relevant to your context and/or revise with discussion starters of your own. Provide your customized list to all participants in advance.

Determine who will be the moderator—it does not have to be the pastor or missions chair; choose a person who is skilled at getting everyone to talk, keeping the conversation on track, and making sure communication is clear and gracious. Assign someone else to take detailed notes.

QUESTIONS FOR PRODUCTIVE INTERACTION

1. **What would you identify as the most exciting evidence that God has been at work in our church this past year?** Here is a wonderful opportunity for the GO team to voice appreciation for your pastor and together rejoice in what God has been doing. Your pastor needs to know that you are grateful for their hard work and godly leadership, and your GO team can rejoice not only in the fruit of their own work but what God is doing across all church ministries.
2. **What recent missions involvements of our whole church or smaller groups/ individuals do you think have had the greatest impact? Why?** Your GO team needs to listen carefully to understand what has been most important to your pastor. Include both global and local impact. Ask follow-up questions to make sure you grasp what your pastor values and why, and also how they define “missions.” Clarify the rationale behind your team’s answers, too. This may not be the time for an in-depth discussion of what your church considers “missions,” but if your definitions vary, set a goal to define a common vocabulary during the coming year.
3. **Do you think missions interest is increasing or decreasing in our church?** Regardless of the responses, probe deeper to determine if shifts differ for various generations as well as whether overall interest in both local and global involvement is changing. Are there are other discernible patterns? If time allows, share perspectives about what has precipitated these changes.
4. **Do you feel a “holy dissatisfaction” with aspects of our missions program?** Encourage gracious but honest evaluation, reminding everyone that identifying ways ministry could be improved should not be taken as criticism of leaders or past programs but rather serve as a way to stimulate God-honoring vision for expanding future impact. Focus on one or two areas that you agree need to be strengthened.
5. **What God-given giftings, expertise, and resources are largely untapped in our church?** Post-covid, many churches feel less prepared to answer this question than previously. You may want to discuss means of identifying the latent resources in your congregation today. Does your pastor or GO team have ideas for better engaging your people’s gifts, especially for

reaching beyond your church walls to your community and the world? The "**Take Inventory**" *Postings* can provide help.

6. **Is there a way that we could better utilize the gifting of our pastor in global ministry in order to bless both our pastor and our global workers?** Hands-on involvement strengthens a pastor's global vision and can utilize their preaching/teaching, administration, or pastoral-care gifts. If your pastor has not been ministering overseas, can the GO team make it easier for them to do so? Will you budget for them and their spouse to make a trip, and advocate that the church consider it part of their ministry, not personal vacation? Sometimes pastors are hesitant to ask for this for themselves. If such travel is not feasible, can you schedule times for them to meet with

your global workers online or during home assignment?

7. **How could our GO team better support our pastor(s) and their ministry?** Your pastor needs to know that you are committed to the health and overall ministry of your church as well as to the expansion of global impact. And knowing that the team cares for them personally will be a great encouragement.
8. **How could we all work better together in the coming year?** You may want to discuss whether communication systems or frequency needs to improve, and if so, what is a realistic way to see that happen. Perhaps there are ways that you can collaborate better on scheduling and conducting missions events or improve how budgeting and special projects are handled. If multiple suggestions surface, it would be wise to identify one or two priorities.

9. **What would be the #1 overall goal you would like to see our GO team pursue in the coming year to advance missions in our church?** While your discussion may have surfaced multiple ways to grow and improve, every church's capacity has limits. Identify your most important shared goal and how you could collaborate to achieve it.

At the end of the session, list a few key action steps and how you will begin to take them. The discussion may have pointed out additional tasks for your GO team that a new member could address. Your pastor may be able to recommend potential volunteers.

Make sure to close your session on a positive note and take time to pray for both your pastor and the GO team. Anticipate together how God will "do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us" (Eph. 3:20 ESV) in using your people to help fulfill His Great Commission in the coming year.

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