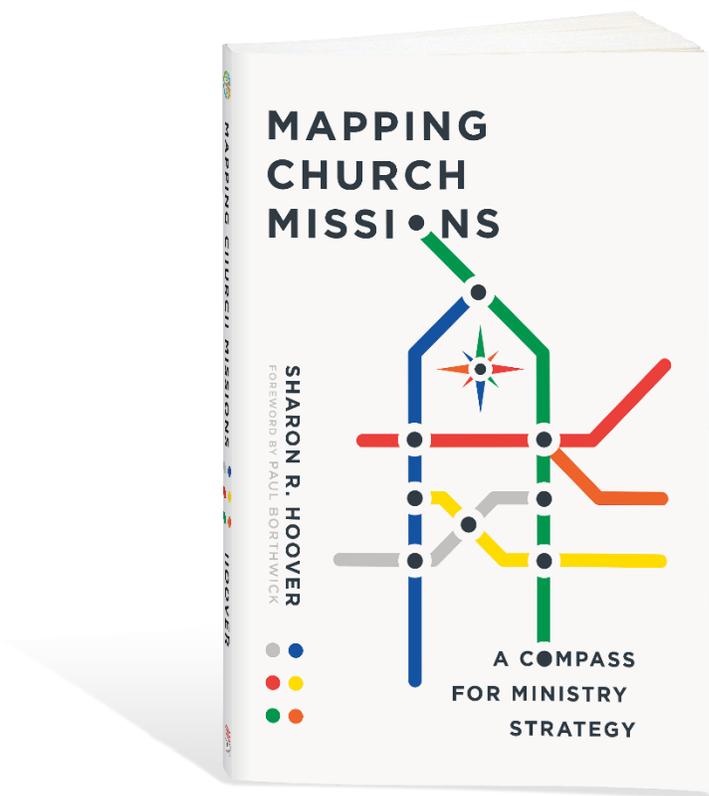


LEADER'S GUIDE

FOR

Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy



BY SHARON R. HOOVER
INTERVARSITY PRESS, 2018

Dear Missions Leader,

Greetings! Thank you for choosing *Mapping Church Missions* as a resource for your congregation. I am hopeful it will generate conversation as you explore the call to missional engagement. Every congregation and leadership team is different. Yet our call to be Christ's witness is the same.

This Leader's Guide offers several options for discussions on *Mapping Church Missions*. The book helps foster an informed process for joining God at work. With a new understanding of the issues, we can align the unique composition of our congregations with kingdom needs.

Option 1 provides a one-hour overview of the seven topics influencing missions decisions. It familiarizes your team with the terms, vocabulary, and ideas for missional engagement. A worksheet is included to help participants track their responses and preferences.

Option 2 provides eight 20-minute discussion starters, each focus on a different topic. This approach introduces your team to more of the nuances and complexities represented within the chapters. With Scripture and questions, they could be used as opening devotionals for missions meetings. Alternatively, they could be combined into one or two longer meetings for a concentrated effort to wrestle with all the topics.

The world of missions is bursting with possibilities. Globalization, entrepreneurship, and partnerships offer unprecedented opportunities but also present complexities we need to address. *Mapping Church Missions* lays the groundwork for the necessary reflection and discussion. As we examine the tensions swirling in the world of missions, we become more intentional in our decisions.

If I can be of any service as you work through this guide, do not hesitate to contact me (sharon.hoover@gmail.com). I would also be delighted to connect with you and your team via phone or video conference calling (Skype, Facetime, Zoom, etc.).

Thanks again for exploring your missions strategy through *Mapping Church Missions*. May it affirm and demystify our call to both glorify God and serve others!

Your Servant,

Sharon R. Hoover

Author, Speaker
Director of Missions
Centreville Presbyterian Church (Virginia)

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GOAL:

To gain an awareness of the wide range of opportunities for missional engagement as well as an increased understanding of personal passions and calling.

TIME:

One-hour meeting

PREPARE:

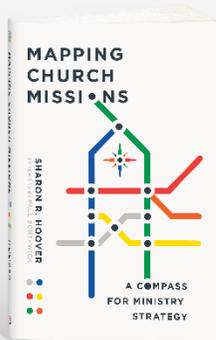
Before the meeting, make a copy of the *Mapping Church Missions* worksheet (*Leader's Guide*, page 9) for each participant.

NEED BOOKS?

If you are considering purchasing *Mapping Church Missions* for each team member, InterVarsity Press offers bulk order prices starting at 25% discount for orders over ten books.

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Option 1: Overview of Missions and Personal Calling

1. Focus (5 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting's purpose:

Today we will discuss seven topics that shape strategy for missional engagement.

Read Scripture passages:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:26-40 (NIV)

Using these passages as foundation, consider the wide range of options to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.

2. Learn & Engage (25 min) – Personal Reflection

Read summaries below. Pause after each to allow participants to choose which end of the continuum most closely represents their perspective and priority.

Good news-good deeds (Chapter 1, pages 17-33)

We begin the discussion with the good news-good deeds continuum. This conversation explores how we communicate the gospel message of Jesus Christ. One

end of the continuum focuses on the verbal communication of the gospel message. The other end focuses on the demonstration of the gospel through mercy, compassion, and acts of service.

Effective ministries exist on both ends of this continuum *and* throughout the many points in between. An in-between mission partner, for example, serves meals for homeless men and women while also sharing the gospel in counseling sessions. Where would you place yourself on this continuum? Toward the evangelism end or the benevolence end or somewhere in between?

Ask participants to indicate their preference on the worksheet: Place an “x” on the spot best representing your perspective and priority for Mission Question #1.

Local and Global (Chapter 2, pages 34-56)

The second topic focuses on geography. We recognize abundant physical and spiritual needs exist throughout the world. One end of this continuum represents the needs of our next-door neighbors. The other end of the continuum is the people on the other side of the planet.

Where does your missional engagement compass point – toward local or global needs? Or some combination of the two? This conversation has increased in complexity as we have become a more globalized society. For example, Local Outreach Committees are working together with Global Missions Committees to serve international refugees who have resettled into their neighborhood. The migratory flow of people offers new avenues for sharing the good news, locally for a global reach.

Ask participants to indicate their preference on the worksheet: Place an “x” on the spot best representing your perspective and priority for Mission Question #2.

Crisis Response and Sustainability (Chapter 3, pages 57- 75)

The third topic centers on the question of presence. How much intervention and mentoring are needed? There will always be a need for immediate intervention – whether food and water in a disaster or rent assistance for a financially vulnerable family. Our challenge is recognizing when our response becomes enabling, or even normalizing toward crisis living.

Where does your passion emerge – in crisis response or building sustainable, long-term ministries? Or do ministries who combine their response best align with your passion? A mission organization in the middle of the continuum, for example, includes steps of required accountability as they meet the material needs of others.

Ask participants to indicate their preference on the worksheet: Place an “x” on the spot best representing your perspective and priority for Mission Question #3.

Time and Money (Chapter 4, pages 76-94)

The fourth topic brings expression of stewardship to the fore. It's about generosity and the use of our resources, including money, possessions, and ability. All are needed in God's kingdom. We know from Scripture, regardless of the amounts we have of each of these, we are to hold onto our resources loosely. We need to be prepared to give them away.

Which end of the continuum most closely aligns with your passion to serve – toward tangible financial investment or toward the gift of time? Or, maybe you prefer a mission that requests a combination of resource needs. Financially supporting an international missionary who welcomes short-term teams is an example of a partner at the mid-point in this continuum.

Ask participants to indicate their preference on the worksheet: Place an "x" on the spot best representing your perspective and priority for Mission Question #4.

Benefit and Hard of Short-term teams (Chapter 5, pages 95-114)

The fifth topic considers the function of short-term mission teams. Over the years, short-term teams have come alongside many missionaries to help extend their outreach. Unfortunately, some teams have also done more harm than good. Lack of training and ineffective cultural preparation harms the work of the on-site missionary. The team experience can also have an adverse effect on the short-term mission participant if follow-up debriefing is not included in the experience.

What is your position on short-term mission teams? Are you on the end of the continuum supportive of teams as effective ministry tools or are you on the end of the continuum denouncing teams as unnecessary? Positions between these endpoints recognize varying degrees of support for short-term teams.

Ask participants to indicate their preference on the worksheet: Place an "x" on the spot best representing your perspective and priority for Mission Question #5.

Servant focused (Chapter 6, pages 115-129)

The sixth topic puts into words an undercurrent that can derail discussions in a missions meeting. It centers on who primarily benefits from the church's missional focus. Should the church prioritize those who are sent to minister or those who receive that ministry? The differences influence budget decisions, church policies, ministry event planning, and more.

On one end of the continuum are churches whose primary objective is to meet the physical, emotion, and spiritual needs of others. On the other end of the continuum are churches whose missional engagement focuses on equipping their local congregation to be the carriers of the gospel. Which end aligns most with your vision for ministry: churches focused on recipients of the gospel message or churches focused on developing the people who carry the gospel message?

Ask participants to indicate their preference on the worksheet: Place an “x” on the spot best representing your perspective and priority for Mission Question #6.

The Role of Risk (Chapter 7, pages 130-145)

The final topic that shapes ministry strategy examines our approach to risk. The role of risk has tremendous repercussions in our Great Commission calling. As Christ-followers, we step out willingly despite potential danger and disease. We yearn for a total reliance on God. But we also labor over cross-cultural issues, political situations, weather, transportation, and more to determine acceptable and unacceptable risks for our churches.

Ministry moves forward on both ends of this continuum *and* throughout the many points in between. Where would you place yourself on this continuum? Toward the end favoring risk avoidance or the end willing to embrace dauntless risk or somewhere in between incorporating risk assessment and management?

Ask participants to indicate their preference on the worksheet: Place an “x” on the spot best representing your perspective and priority for Mission Question #7.

3. Discuss & Assess (20 min) – Group Discernment

Small Group Discussion. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads. Allow 10 minutes for participants to discuss the following questions:

- Which of the seven topics is the greatest priority for you?
- Which of our church’s mission partners best align with your combined locations on the continuums?

Large Group Discussion. In the remaining 10 minutes, ask participants to share insights from their small group discussions. Listen for trends, patterns, and new ideas.

4. Call to Action (10 min)

Worksheet Activity. Ask participants to respond to the final exercise:

- In the lower right corner of the worksheet, list mission partners who share the majority of your priorities.
- Circle one mission partner to pray regarding further involvement in their work.

Close in prayer. Commit your plans to the Lord, asking for guidance to serve through your unique giftedness and in alignment with kingdom needs.



Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy

By Sharon R. Hoover (InterVarsity Press, 2018)

Mission Question #1: Prioritize works of service or evangelism?

Good Deeds _____ Good News

Mission Question #2: Prioritize local ministries or overseas missions?

Local outreaches _____ Global outreaches

Mission Question #3: What's more important: Crisis response or building sustainable, long-term ministries?

Crisis Relief _____ Long-term development

Mission Question #4: Prioritize giving money or giving time?

Give money _____ Give time

Mission Question #5: What about short-term mission projects?

Support teams _____ No STM teams

Mission Question #6: Serve the undisciplined or disciple the servant?

Mission for recipient _____ Develop servant

Mission Question #7: What about risk?

Avoid risk _____ Dauntless risk

Ministries meeting these priorities:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Connect via sharonrhoover.com and [@SharonRHoover](https://www.facebook.com/SharonRHoover) on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram



Option 2: Discussion Starters

This section provides eight 20-minute discussions. Each outline focuses on a different chapter in *Mapping Church Missions*. They walk you and your team through the full scope of topics that influence mission strategy.

The outlines can be used as brief discussion starters for mission ministry meetings or combined to fill the agenda for a stand-alone meeting. To best facilitate conversation in either model, read the specific chapter(s) prior to each meeting.

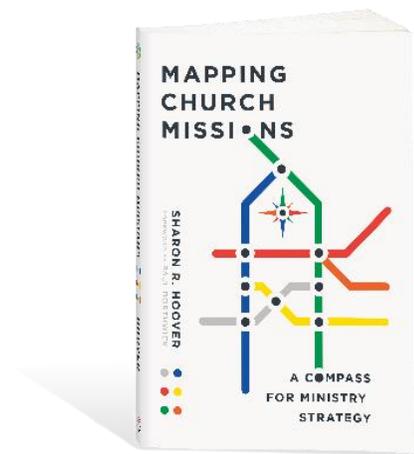
I am hopeful your conversations will spark curiosity and creativity. Use the stories in *Mapping Church Missions* to demonstrate unique ways people are connecting gifts, talents, and abilities with God's work. Unlikely partnerships between businesses and ministries illustrate new avenues to share the gospel. With unbound imagination, our churches can envision fresh possibilities to overcome obstacles blocking paths to reach the farthest corners of our planet with the gospel.

NEED BOOKS?

If you are considering purchasing *Mapping Church Missions* for each team member, InterVarsity Press offers bulk order prices starting at 25% discount for orders over ten books.

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GOALS:

To assess current missional engagement in the good news – good deeds continuum.

TIME:

20-minute discussion

PREPARE:

Before the meeting, read Chapter 1 (pages 17-33) in *Mapping Church Missions*.

Make a copy of the “Good News – Good Deeds Questions” (*Leader’s Guide*, pg 12) for each participant.

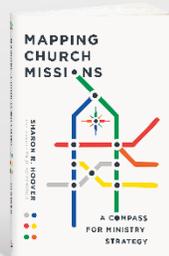
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Request participants research and locate your church’s mission partners on the continuum.
2. Read *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*.
3. What are consequences of the sacred-secular divide in your missions settings (p. 27)? What changes, if any, would you recommend to further the gospel message?

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Discussion Starter #1

Good News and Good Deeds

Focus (3 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting’s purpose:

Today we will review mission opportunities within the good news-good deeds continuum. With increased understanding of the options as well as our personal points of view, we will be able to discern the best path to serve.

Read Scripture passages (5 minutes)

Good deeds – John 21:17; James 1:27

Good news – Mark 16:15-16; 2 Corinthians 5:20

Engage the Topic (10 minutes)

Share: This conversation explores how we communicate the gospel message. One end of the continuum focuses on the verbal communication of the gospel message. The other end focuses on the demonstration of the gospel through mercy, compassion, and acts of service. Effective ministries exist on both ends of this continuum *and* throughout the many points in between.

Discuss & Assess the “Good News and Good Deeds Questions” handout. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads to work through the questions.

Large Group Discussion. If time permits, ask participants to share insights with the large group. Be attentive to:

- What patterns emerge in our mission partnerships?
- Which of the topics tends to be a priority for our church?

Close in Prayer (2 minutes)

Commit your findings to the Lord, asking for His guidance to continue discerning your call to serve.

Chapter 1 Good News and Good Deeds Questions

1. Which one of the following scenarios best describes your place on the good news–good deeds continuum? Choose the one that most closely represents the direction of your calling. From your perspective, what makes your choice the best option?

a) With heightened awareness of the poverty in his community, Andrew encourages his church to invest more resources in the physical needs of people. He is passionate about supporting emergency food or housing assistance needs that arise due to natural disasters or other crises. Andrew supports his church's work alongside agencies focused on longer term needs, such as home rehab or literacy education, as well. He intentionally chooses non-faith-based organizations in order to reach people reluctant to seek support from Christians.

b) Bonita seeks to serve with organizations whose primary objective is to meet the physical needs of people. The organizations may or may not have a Christian affiliation but willingly permit faith-based conversations with people receiving services.

c) Chan Ho desires to partner with faith-based organizations who approach needs from a holistic approach. Along with meeting physical needs, he expects their resource offerings to include spiritual direction and faith-based encouragement. Chan Ho also wants their vision statement to include Christian tenets of faith.

d) Daniella only serves with organizations who are intentional about sharing the gospel message while providing for people's physical needs. She wants her church to partner with ministries who maintain a heart for prayer and evangelism as core values.

e) Burdened by the large numbers of people who do not know Jesus, Enrique partners with ministries whose primary objective is to evangelize. They invest minimal resources in meeting the physical needs of people. He works closely with his church leadership to equip members to share the gospel and to work with organizations with similar goals.

2. Rank the scenarios regarding the direction of God's call for your church's role in missional engagement. Which ones most represent the majority of your church's mission partnerships? Give examples to support your ranking.

3. How would you improve your church's ability to fulfill its calling in the good news–good deeds continuum?

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GOALS:

To assess current missional engagement in the local-global continuum.

TIME:

20-minute discussion

PREPARE:

Before the meeting, read Chapter 2 (pages 34-56) in *Mapping Church Missions*.

Make a copy of the “Neighbors Near and Far Questions” (*Leader’s Guide*, pg 14) for each participant.

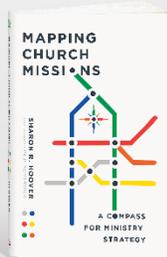
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Request participants research and locate your church’s mission partners on the continuum.
2. Read *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*.
3. How does increasing globalization impact your missional engagement (page 48)? What influences does it have on your church’s missions strategy?

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Discussion Starter #2

Neighbors Near and Far

Focus (3 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting’s purpose:

Today we will review mission opportunities within the local-global continuum. With increased understanding of the options as well as our personal points of view, we will be able to discern the best path to serve.

Read Scripture passages (5 minutes)

Local Outreach – Mark 12:30-31; John 15:13

Global Outreach – Genesis 12:3; Acts 1:8

Engage the Topic (10 minutes)

Share: This conversation focuses on geography. We recognize abundant physical and spiritual needs exist throughout the world. One end of the continuum represents the needs of our next-door neighbors. The other end of the continuum represents the people on the other side of the planet. Where does your missional engagement compass point – toward local or global needs? Or some combination of the two?

Discuss & Assess the “Neighbors Near and Far Questions” handout. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads to work through the questions.

Large Group Discussion. If time permits, ask participants to share insights with the large group. Be attentive to:

- What patterns emerge in our mission partnerships?
- Which of the topics tends to be a priority for our church?

Close in Prayer (2 minutes)

Commit your findings to the Lord, asking for His guidance to continue discerning your call to serve.

Chapter 2 Neighbors Near and Far Questions

1. Which one of the following scenarios best describes your place on the local-global continuum? Choose the one that most closely represents the direction of your calling. From your perspective, what makes your choice the best option?

a) With growing concern for her community, Aya is passionate about the physical and spiritual needs of her immediate neighbors. She encourages her church to invest resources within their own zip code. She believes that as more believers invest time and money locally, less long-distance outreach requiring costly travel will be needed and more resources will be available for ministry.

b) Brad desires to partner with agencies who serve within his region of the country. Brad feels convicted to help meet needs in places that are less than a day's drive from home. He believes that as churches connect within regions, the resulting networks can address a variety of uses without extraordinary travel expenses.

c) Camila reaches out to international residents in her community. The increasing diversity represents nations from around the world, including places missionaries are not able to get visas to serve. She encourages her church to become more active with agencies who bridge the cultural differences and effectively share the gospel message.

d) Dan chooses to partner with missionaries who serve beyond the borders of his own country. They reach across geographic, cultural, and linguistic barriers to connect with people who do not know Jesus. Dan and his church family support mission partners through financial donations, letters, and occasional visits.

e) Eun Hae's concern for the most isolated communities draws her to missionaries and agencies who serve the THUMB (Tribal, Hindu, Unreligious, Muslim, Buddhist) people groups. They go into locations where people do not know—and may never have even heard of—Jesus Christ.

2. Rank the scenarios regarding your understanding of God's call for your church's missional engagement. Give examples to support your ranking.

3. What can we learn about the kingdom of God based on crosscultural experiences? What crosscultural outreach opportunities exist in your community?

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GOALS:

To assess current missional engagement in the crisis response and sustainable development continuum.

TIME:

20-minute discussion

PREPARE:

Before the meeting, read Chapter 3 (pages 57-75) in *Mapping Church Missions*.

Make a copy of the “Crisis Response and Sustainable Development Questions” (*Leader’s Guide*, pg 16) for each participant.

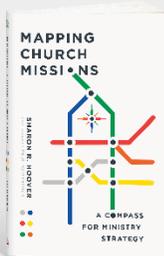
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Request participants research and locate your church’s mission partners on the continuum.
2. Read *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*.
3. What changes would you recommend for prayerful consideration in your church?

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Discussion Starter #3

Crisis Response and Sustainable Development

Focus (3 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting’s purpose:

Today we will review mission opportunities within the crisis response and sustainable development continuum. With increased understanding of the options as well as our personal points of view, we will be able to discern the best path to serve.

Read Scripture passages (5 minutes)

Crisis Response – Isaiah 25:4; 1 John 3:17

Sustainable Development – Proverbs 24:27; Luke 14:28-30

Engage the Topic (10 minutes)

Share: This conversation centers on the question of presence. How much intervention and mentoring are needed? There will always be a need for immediate intervention – whether food and water in a disaster or rent assistance for a financially vulnerable family. Our challenge is recognizing when our response becomes enabling, or even normalizing toward crisis living. Where does your passion emerge: in crisis response or building sustainable, long-term ministries? Or a combination?

Discuss & Assess the “Crisis Response and Sustainable Development Questions” handout. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads to work through the questions.

Large Group Discussion. If time permits, ask participants to share insights with the large group. Be attentive to:

- What patterns emerge in our mission partnerships?
- Which of the topics tends to be a priority for our church?

Close in Prayer (2 minutes)

Commit your findings to the Lord, asking for His guidance to continue discerning your call to serve.

Chapter 3 Crisis Response and Sustainable Development Questions

1. Which one of the following scenarios best describes your place on the crisis response–sustainability continuum? Choose the one that most closely represents the direction of your calling. From your perspective, what makes your choice the best option?

a) Aaron works alongside organizations who provide emergency relief for those in disaster situations. He serves as the point person for his church’s response to the urgent needs of victims of natural disasters (including earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, and forest fires) and displaced persons due to war, unrest, and famine.

b) Byung Moon’s heart lies with impoverished people in his community who struggle with daily needs. He willingly gives his hours every week to cook at the local homeless shelter, deliver food to shut-ins, and help raise money for urgent rent or utilities-assistance requests.

c) Caroline serves with a ministry that responds to crisis needs but also provides personal consultations with assistance recipients. She believes an immediate response to emergencies alongside follow-up guidelines will bring the most compassionate and responsible means to impact her community.

d) Deandra prefers to give her time and financial donations to ministries that prioritize accountability with crisis assistance recipients. She helped set up measurable standards at the food pantry, for example, by requiring that clients enroll in a budget class after their third month of seeking food assistance.

e) Ervin partners with ministries focused on sustainability. No funding or staff time is spent on crisis response. With discernment and perseverance, he and his church are development-minded and committed to the slow journey toward sustainability.

2. Rank the scenarios regarding your church’s response in the crisis response–sustainability conversation. Which ones most mirror your congregants’ actions? Give examples to support your ranking.

3. How do your church’s goals in this continuum align with the work of your mission partners? How can you be more involved with those most closely corresponding with your call?

4. What factors impact your decisions in meeting the physical needs of others? Is anything missing in your evaluation of ways to serve those in crisis?

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GOALS:

To assess current missional engagement in the time and money continuum.

TIME:

20-minute discussion

PREPARE:

Before the meeting, read Chapter 4 (pages 76-94) in *Mapping Church Missions*.

Make a copy of the “Time and Money Questions” (*Leader’s Guide*, page 18) for each participant.

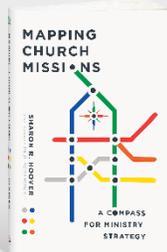
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Request participants research and locate your church’s mission partners on the continuum.
2. Read *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*.
3. In what ways could you increase generosity in your life (page 89)? How could your church create an environment that values generosity throughout the time-money continuum?

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Discussion Starter #4

Time and Money

Focus (3 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting’s purpose:

Today we will review mission opportunities within the time and money continuum. With increased understanding of the options as well as our personal points of view, we will be able to discern the best path to serve.

Read Scripture passages (5 minutes)

Donating Money – Psalm 24:1; Matthew 5:24; Romans 11:36

Giving Time – Mark 10:45; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Engage the Topic (10 minutes)

Share: This conversation brings expression of stewardship to the fore. It’s about generosity and the use of our resources, including money, possessions, and ability. All are needed in God’s kingdom. We know from Scripture, regardless of the amounts we have of each of these, we are to hold onto our resources loosely. Which end of the continuum most closely aligns with your passion to serve – toward tangible financial investment or toward the gift of time? Or a combination?

Discuss & Assess the “Time and Money Questions” handout. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads to work through the questions.

Large Group Discussion. If time permits, ask participants to share insights with the large group. Be attentive to:

- What patterns emerge in our mission partnerships?
- Which of the topics tends to be a priority for our church?

Close in Prayer (2 minutes)

Commit your findings to the Lord, asking for His guidance to continue discerning your call to serve.

Chapter 4 Time and Money Questions

1. Which one of the following scenarios best describes your place on the time-money continuum? Choose the one that most closely represents the direction of your calling. From your perspective, what makes your choice the best option?

a) Alice's financial generosity overflows. Her primary missional engagement is tangible investment—whether financial or material—for kingdom use. She willingly gives clothing and food and writes sizable checks as needs arise.

b) Basim prefers to support ministries through financial or in-kind donations along with occasional hands-on service. His church's local mission partners, for example, welcome people to assist with office needs, and their international partners host short-term teams.

c) Seeking balance in missional engagement, Cindy encourages her church to include a 50/50 blend of serving opportunities and financial support. She strives to have the same balance in her own commitment to missions. She spends many afternoons at an after-school program working with at-risk teens, while also being a monthly financial donor for the ministry's expenses.

d) Damien is committed to serving partner organizations with regular hands-on help. He willingly gives of himself, being flexible with hours and not being anxious about tomorrow's needs today. Occasionally he donates money to help with the ministries' financial needs as special requests arise.

e) The focus for Emma's contributions is the gift of time and abilities. She believes the utilization of gifts and talents plays an important role in the relational connections between churches, missionaries, and those in need.

2. Rank the scenarios regarding your church's expression of stewardship. Which ones best reflect the responses of your congregation? Give examples to support your ranking.

3. How do your church's goals in the time-money continuum align with the work of your mission partners? In what ways can you increase involvement with those most closely corresponding with your call?

GOALS:

To assess current missional engagement in the short-term missions continuum.

TIME:

20-minute discussion

PREPARE:

Before the meeting, read Chapter 5 (pages 95-114) in *Mapping Church Missions*.

Make a copy of the “Short-Term Mission Teams Questions” (*Leader’s Guide*, pg 20) for each participant.

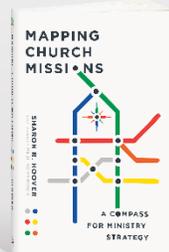
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Request participants research and locate your church’s mission partners on the continuum.
2. Read *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*.
3. What changes, if any, would you recommend for your church’s short-term mission teams? What criteria would you use to assess their value?

NEED BOOKS?

If you are considering purchasing *Mapping Church Missions* for each team member, InterVarsity Press offers bulk order prices starting at 25% discount for orders over ten books.

For more info, visit <https://www.ivpress.com/help/customer-and-bulk-discounts>



Discussion Starter #5

Benefits and Drawbacks of Short-Term Teams

Focus (3 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting’s purpose:

Today we will discuss benefits and drawbacks of short-term mission teams. With increased understanding of the options as well as our personal points of view, we will be able to discern the best path to serve.

Read Scripture passage (5 minutes)

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.

And what does the Lord require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)

Engage the Topic (10 minutes)

Share: This conversation considers the function of short-term mission teams. Over the years, short-term teams have come alongside many missionaries to help extend their outreach. Unfortunately, some teams have also done more harm than good. Lack of training and ineffective cultural preparation harms the work of the on-site missionary. What is your position on short-term mission teams? Are you on the end of the continuum supportive of teams as effective ministry tools or are you on the end of the continuum denouncing teams as unnecessary? Positions between these endpoints recognize varying degrees of support for short-term teams.

Discuss & Assess the “Benefits and Drawbacks of Short-Term Teams Questions” handout. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads to work through the questions.

Large Group Discussion. If time permits, ask participants to share insights with the large group. Be attentive to:

- What ideas emerged for our mission partnerships?
- Are teams a priority for our church family?

Close in Prayer (2 min). Commit your findings to the Lord, asking for His guidance to continue discerning your call to serve.

Chapter 5 Benefits and Drawbacks of Short-Term Teams

1. Which one of the following scenarios best describes your place on the short-term mission continuum? Choose the one that most closely represents the direction of your calling. From your perspective, what makes your choice the best option?

a) Adam looks for opportunities to participate in short-term mission projects. He assists his church to discover trusted agencies who host teams in locations throughout the world. Developing friendships and experiencing new cultures deepen his understanding of God's kingdom and the church's work worldwide.

b) Beatriz supports short-term teams to respond to specific needs of her church's mission partners. Special requests to bring children's ministry programming and a medical clinic to their South American partner are her next projects to organize.

c) Chris supports mission teams but only those with a dual purpose: to fulfill need on the mission field and to meet discipling goals for mission team participants. Experienced team leaders—both on the field and from the sending church—are critical to the success of the projects.

d) Dani recognizes value in short-term teams but believes they need to be infrequent. She ensures that her church's mission teams are financially self-supporting and will place minimal demands on missionaries.

e) Eli is not supportive of short-term mission teams, especially not in international locations. He believes the church should expend no resources (funding, staff time, in-kind contributions) toward organizing teams.

2. Rank the scenarios according to your understanding of your church's approach to short-term mission teams. Does the missional engagement compass point toward or away from sending teams?

3. How does the short-term mission direction of your church align with the needs of your mission partners?

4. How has your missions ministry engaged partners in conversation about your church members' abilities and their potential for use in the field?

GOALS:

To assess current missional engagement in the servant-recipient continuum.

TIME:

20-minute discussion

PREPARE:

Before the meeting, read Chapter 6 (pages 115-129) in *Mapping Church Missions*.

Make a copy of the “Serving the Undisciplined and Discipling the Servant Questions” (*Leader’s Guide*, pg 22) for each participant.

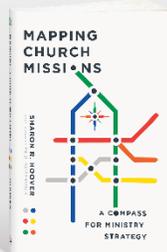
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Request participants research and locate your church’s mission partners on the continuum.
2. Read *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*.
3. How does your church’s role in discipleship and evangelism align with the philosophy of ministry of your mission partners?

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Discussion Starter #6

Serving the Undisciplined and Discipling the Servant

Focus (3 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting’s purpose:

Today we will review the servant-recipient continuum of our churches’ missional focus. With increased understanding of the options as well as our personal points of view, we will be able to discern the best path to serve.

Read Scripture passages (5 minutes)

Mission for the Recipient – Luke 15:4-7; Colossians 3:17

Develop the Servant – Matthew 18:15-17; Hebrews 10:24

Engage the Topic (10 min)

Share: This conversation centers on who primarily benefits from the church’s missional focus. Should the church prioritize those who are sent to minister or those who receive that ministry? The differences influence budget decisions, church policies, ministry event planning, and more. On one end of the continuum are churches whose primary objective is to meet the physical, emotion, and spiritual needs of others. On the other are churches whose missional engagement focuses on equipping their local congregation to be the carriers of the gospel. Which end aligns most with your vision: churches focused on recipients of the gospel message or churches focused on developing the people who serve?

Discuss & Assess the “Serving the Undisciplined and Discipling the Servant Questions” handout. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads to work through the questions.

Large Group Discussion. If time permits, ask participants to share insights with the large group. Be attentive to:

- What patterns emerged in our mission partnerships?
- Which of the topics tends to be a priority for our church?

Close in Prayer (2 min). Commit your findings to the Lord, asking for His guidance to continue discerning your call to serve.

Chapter 6 Serving the Undisciplined & Discipling the Servant Questions

1. Which one of the following scenarios best describes your place on the server-recipient continuum? Choose the one that most closely represents the direction of your calling. From your perspective, what makes your choice the best option?

- a) Andre views missions as a tool for discipleship of believers. He and his church plan missional engagement primarily for congregants to explore their gifts and talents. They empower members to then go and be Christ's ambassadors where the Lord calls them.
- b) Brigitte desires to work with mission agencies who include spiritual growth of participants as one of their goals, although not the primary goal. Training and debriefing are important aspects of her ministry model.
- c) Craig views the role of the church as equally invested in discipling members and in evangelizing the lost. He most desires to partner with mission agencies and missionaries who balance their ministry toward both the not-yet-believers on the mission field and the volunteers from their church.
- d) Donnella prefers to work with mission agencies who include evangelism as a primary goal. Her motivation for missions is to share the gospel message but also to equip others to give their testimonies and to tell the good news.
- e) Eric views evangelism as the church's primary role in missions. Time and resources should focus on welcoming not-yet-believers into the family of God. Church members can pursue Bible study, webinars, and discipleship conferences outside the scope of church activities. These resources are readily available throughout the country.

2. Rank the scenarios according to your faith community's understanding of the church's role in missional engagement. Give examples to support your ranking.

3. Do the expectations of the church leadership and the missions ministry align? If not, how would you describe the differences? How might a conversation begin to consider alternative options?

GOALS:

To assess current missional engagement in the continuum on the role of risk.

TIME:

20-minute discussion

PREPARE:

Before the meeting, read Chapter 7 (pages 130-145) in *Mapping Church Missions*.

Make a copy of the “Minimizing and Embracing Risk Questions” (*Leader’s Guide*, page 24) for each participant.

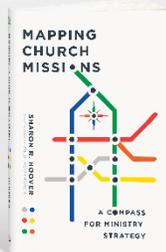
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Request participants research and locate your church’s mission partners on the continuum.
2. Read *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*.
3. What assessments would you need in order to consider higher risk missions initiatives for yourself? For your church?

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Discussion Starter #7

Minimizing and Embracing Risk

Focus (3 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting’s purpose:

Today we will review the role of risk in our missional engagement. With increased understanding of the options as well as our personal points of view, we will be able to discern the best path to serve.

Read Scripture passages (5 minutes)

Minimizing Risk – Psalm 91:1-16; Matthew 10:16; John 17:15

Embracing Risk – Mark 8:34-36; Acts 20:24; Hebrews 13:6

Engage the Topic (10 min)

Share: The final topic that shapes ministry strategy examines our approach to risk. The role of risk has tremendous repercussions in our Great Commission calling. As Christ-followers, we step out willingly despite potential danger and disease. We yearn for a total reliance on God. But we also labor over cross-cultural issues, political situations, weather, transportation, and more to determine acceptable and unacceptable risks for our churches. Where would you place yourself on this continuum? Toward the end favoring risk avoidance or the end willing to embrace dauntless risk or somewhere in between incorporating risk assessments and management?

Discuss & Assess the “Minimizing and Embracing Risk Questions” handout. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads to work through the questions.

Large Group Discussion. If time permits, ask participants to share insights with the large group. Be attentive to:

- How does risk impact our mission partnerships?
- What is the role of risk in our church’s decision process?

Close in Prayer (2 min)

Commit your findings to the Lord, asking for His guidance to continue discerning your call to serve.

Chapter 7 Minimizing and Embracing Risk Questions

1. Which one of the following scenarios best describes your place on the risk continuum? Choose the one that most closely represents your risk tolerance. From your perspective, what makes your choice the best option?

a) Aisha agrees with her church's goal of minimizing risk for church members in missional engagement. She believes ministry thrives in high confidence and minimal anxiety. The environment provides reliability and stability to benefit both the believer and the not-yet believer.

b) With input of risk assessments and wise counsel, Bill is willing to undertake somewhat risky missional engagements. He and his church begin to nudge people out of their comfort zone while also maintaining a cautious, responsible posture.

c) Catalina desires to count the cost for missional engagements. Risk is one of the factors but not the decisive one when considering a commitment to serve. When called, she is willing to consider moving forward in ministry despite some potential risk.

d) Through prayer and in the context of community, Dong Hwa is willing to consider partnerships with medium-risk ministries. Longevity of relationships and competence in ministry weigh heavily in his decision making.

e) Elise and her church have a high tolerance for risk. They partner with ministries in hazardous locations, pursuing a risk-filled calling. She supports members participating in high-risk missional engagements who recognize the difficulties of the calling but choose to go nonetheless.

2. Rank the scenarios with regard to your church's philosophy of risk in missional engagement. Give examples to support your ranking.

3. Do you think reduction of liability is good or bad? Explain. What is the relationship between risk aversion and faith?

GOALS:

To assess current missional engagement in order to mobilize our congregation.

TIME:

20-minute discussion

PREPARE:

Before the meeting, read Chapter 8 (pages 147-161) in *Mapping Church Missions*.

Make a copy of the “Mobilizing Our Congregation Questions” (*Leader’s Guide*, page 26) for each participant.

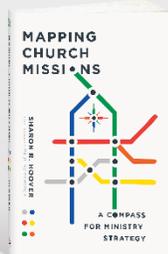
FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Assign a question from the handout to each pair/triad. Request their suggestions and additional research for next steps.
2. Read *Mapping Church Missions: A Compass for Ministry Strategy*.
3. Read and answer the questions in the Case Study in Appendix A (*Leader’s Guide*, page 27).

NEED BOOKS?

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Discussion Starter #8

Mobilizing Our Congregation

Focus (3 minutes)

Open with prayer.

Share the meeting’s purpose:

Having worked through the seven conversations, today we will take next steps in the strategic planning process.

Read Scripture passages (5 minutes)

Matthew 22:26-40; Matthew 28:18-20; and,

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

Engage the Topic (10 min)

Share: This discussion starter explores ways to better understand our community, our church family, and our combined call to serve. As Christ’s ambassadors, we bear the responsibility to be faithful witnesses according to His calling. Discerning our church’s unique course requires intentional conversation, exploration of new perspectives, and dedicated prayer.

Discuss & Assess the “Mobilizing Our Congregation Questions” handout. Depending on the size of your team, divide into pairs or triads to work through the questions.

Large Group Discussion. Come back together as a large group to discuss questions on the handout. Record comments and suggestions as participants share insights from their pairs/triad groups. As you plan your route to serve, incorporate these findings.

Choose at least one next step before concluding your meeting (for example, a community assessment, congregational Time & Talent survey, prayer vigil, mission partner evaluations, pursue a new partnership, etc.)

Close in Prayer (2 min)

Commit your findings to the Lord, asking for His guidance to continue discerning your call to serve.

Chapter 8 Mobilizing Our Congregation Questions

1. How would you assess the needs in your community? What government offices, agencies, or nonprofit organizations would offer insights? What online sources would you consult to assist your research?

2. How would you create a snapshot of the gifts and abilities of your congregation? Brainstorm the possibilities. (For instance, would you design an online survey and/or distribute a questionnaire at the end of a worship service? Would you gather focus groups for discussion?)

3. With your gifts, passions, and calling, how would you take the gospel message to the nations if you had access to all resources? Imagine the possibilities without constraints.

4. Compare your compass bearing in each of the seven conversations with your ministry partners. How effective are your current missional engagements in fulfilling God's call in your life? In the life of your congregation?

5. Given the complexity of missional engagement, what benefits do you think a missions strategy would provide for your congregation?

APPENDIX A

SCENARIO: The Missions Committee Meeting

They sat in a beige classroom in the church building. The air, still and sterile, felt warm.

“If we reduce our funding to the Ozark Building Project, we would be able to support Luis Rivera’s work with the Honduran children living in the garbage dump.” The green-cushion on Brenda’s padded metal chair did little to reduce her discomfort with the meeting, now moving into its second hour. As the chairperson, she helped guide the missions committee to coordinate outreaches and provide oversight for the church’s ministry partners.

“Our long-term partnership and support of the OBP is not something we can reduce.” Ken tapped his pen and leafed through the proposals again. “But I do believe we need to consider how to further support the Harvest Reach agency. Demands on their food pantry continue to increase.”

“OBP is doing fine, Ken. According to their Annual Report, they are well funded. It’s time to consider how we can impact the desperately poor slums in these Central American countries.” Brenda struggled with Ken’s goal of increased involvement with the local community at the expense of global outreach.

Lucy cleared her throat. “But I also believe our presence here in town is important. I’m interested in everyone’s thoughts on the Harvest Reach food pantry. What do you think of their new name and branding? They are transitioning to the name “H & R” and are moving away from their Christian roots. Because they no longer share the gospel with clients, I actually want to propose a reduction in our funding for them.”

“But H & R continues to include a declaration of Christian faith in their mission and vision statements,” Brenda offered.

“Many of our members are able to volunteer with H & R because they are local. How many people would actually fly to Honduras to work with Luis Rivera’s ministry?” Ken pushed back in his chair. “Also, how safe is it over there?”

“I agree that the Honduran outreach has risks.” Brenda felt the heat creeping up her neck. She wondered if she was visibly red. “But don’t you think Jesus cares about these children?”

“Yes, so maybe we could just take up a one-time, special offering?”

“We could show a video that explains the issue. Congregation members can make personal donations also, if they want.”

“Let’s add a display in the lobby for people who miss the video on Sunday.” One committee member picked up the conversation as soon as another concluded.

Brenda struggled to keep up with the rapid-fire brainstorming shooting across the table.

“I’d be fine with that approach,” Ken relented.

“No wait,” Brenda interrupted. “Last year we decided we would only partner with missionaries in long-term, meaningful relationships.”

“Yes, but a special offering would be the perfect compromise.” Lucy’s calm voice drew nods around the table. “Then we could use more of our budget to supplement the expenses so more of our members can go overseas to serve our international partners.”

“I disagree.” It was the first time Terry had spoken the entire evening. “I am not a fan of mission trips. They are impractical, a waste of money, and are merely sanctified vacations.”

“Actually, Terry, when my wife and I were missionaries in Miami, short-term teams served as a critical piece in our summer outreaches. We were able to connect with more new families after teams hosted camps than any other times of the year.” Due to his years in missionary service, Brandon’s voice always carried great weight.

“Hmm . . . maybe I could support more funding to send a team to a location within driving distance,” Terry conceded.

And so it went for the church committee that evening. After the meeting the conversation continued.

“I had really hoped we would begin to support Rivera’s work in the Honduran slums.” LaVonda held the door as she and Brenda walked outside the building.

“Why didn’t you say something?”

“Brenda, it was my first meeting. I was just trying to get the lay of the land. We have a lot of people with passions for different ministries.”

“Yes, we do. That includes you as well.” Brenda turned toward her friend. “Your heart for children reflects the concerns of many people in our congregation. Please know that I value your opinions.”

“I don’t know how much influence I can have.” LaVonda held up the stack of papers from the meeting. “We already have so many mission partners. I have no idea who half of these people are. But apparently, we have supported some for more than a decade. How is that a partnership?”

“Exactly. Help me work with our committee to develop a strategy that reflects the unique contribution our church brings to the needs around us and around the world.” Brenda’s voice carried anticipation for greater things.

“I’ll be back next month. I am committed to this committee for the full year. But can we meet for lunch before the next meeting? I’d appreciate some insight into each ministry partner.”

QUESTIONS

1. List the continuums represented in this scenario. Describe where each committee member’s (Ken, Brenda, Lucy, Terry, Brandon, LaVonda) compass bearing points on the continuums.
2. With whom do you most identify in this scenario? Share similarities and differences with your compass bearing for missional engagement.
3. How would you counsel the committee for their next meeting? What additional information would assist their decision making?
4. How would you develop strategies to help the committee clarify their direction in missional engagement?

APPENDIX B

Agencies and Ministries

Many types of resources exist to connect you and your church with the physical and spiritual needs around the world. A sampling of the ministries is listed here. Below are the names and URLs of mission agencies, missionaries, and other organizations referenced throughout the book. When viewing the *Leader's Guide* online, use *Ctrl + Click* to follow the link to the ministry's website.

INTRODUCTION

Billy Graham Evangelical Association (<https://billygraham.org/>)

Operation Mobilization (www.omusa.org/)

Pioneers (www.pioneers.org/)

CHAPTER 1 GOOD NEWS AND GOOD DEEDS

Advancing Native Missions (<https://advancingnativemissions.com/>)

Afghan Christian Media (<http://andaryas.com/>)

Billy Graham Evangelical Association (<https://billygraham.org/>)

Child Evangelism Fellowship (www.cefonline.com/)

Cru (formerly Campus Crusade) (www.cru.org/)

Frontier Fellowship (<https://frontierfellowship.com/>)

International Justice Mission (www.ijm.org/)

InterVarsity Fellowship (<https://intervarsity.org/>)

Lawyers Without Borders (www.lwob.org/)

Living Bread Ministries (<https://livingbread.org/>)

Luis Palau Association (www.palau.org/)

Red Cross (www.redcross.org/)

Samaritan's Purse (<https://www.samaritanspurse.org/>)

Young Life (www.younglife.org/)

CHAPTER 2 NEIGHBORS NEAR AND FAR

InterVarsity Fellowship (<https://intervarsity.org/>)

Joshua Project (<https://joshuaproject.net/>)

Living Bread Ministries (<https://livingbread.org/>)

Marketplace & Development Enterprises (<https://buildmde.com/>)

New Wilmington Mission Conference (<http://nwmcmmission.org/>)

Operation Mobilization (www.omusa.org/)

Operation World (www.operationworld.org/)

The Antioch Partners (www.theantiochpartners.org/)

Urbana Missions Conference (<https://urbana.org/>)

CHAPTER 3 CRISIS RESPONSE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Every Orphan's Hope (<https://www.everyorphan.org/>)

Good Grocer (<https://goodgrocer.org/>)

International Justice Mission (www.ijm.org/)

Jobs for Life (<http://jobsforlife.org/>)

Red Cross (www.redcross.org/)

Salvation Army (<https://www.salvationarmyusa.org/usn/>)

Samaritan's Purse (www.samaritanspurse.org/)

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (<https://www.nvoad.org/>)

World Renew (<https://worldrenew.net/>)

World Vision (www.worldvision.org/)

CHAPTER 4 TIME AND MONEY

Barnabas Aid (<https://barnabasaid.org/>)

Child Evangelism Fellowship (www.cefonline.com/)

Christian Legal Society (<https://clsnet.org/>)

Compassion International (www.compassion.com/)

Evangelical Council of Financial Accountability (ECFA) (www.ecfa.org/)

Every Orphan's Hope (<https://www.everyorphan.org/>)

IDEAS (<https://www.ideasworld.org/>)

International Christian Concern (www.persecution.org/)

International Justice Mission (www.ijm.org/)

MAP International (www.map.org/)

Open Doors (www.opendoorsusa.org/)

Operation Blessing International (<https://www.ob.org/>)

The Antioch Partners (<https://www.theantiochpartners.org/>)

Voice of the Martyrs (<https://www.persecution.com/>)

Wycliffe Bible Translators (www.wycliffe.org/)

World Vision (www.worldvision.org/)

CHAPTER 5 BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF SHORT-TERM TEAMS

The Bowery Mission (<https://www.bowery.org/>)

Center for Student Missions (www.csm.org/)

Farthest Corners (<http://farthestcorners.org/>)

Forward Edge International (<https://www.forwardedge.org/>)

Group Mission Projects (<https://groupmissiontrips.com/>)

The Jesus People (<http://ipusa.org/>)

The Pittsburgh Project (<https://www.pittsburghproject.org/>)

Son Servants (<https://ycmhome.org/program/ss/>)

Standards of Excellence in Short-Term Missions (<https://soe.org/>)

CHAPTER 7 MINIMIZING AND EMBRACING RISK

Center for Disease Control Travelers' Health (<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list/>)

United States Department of State - Travel (<https://www.state.gov/travel/>)

CHAPTER 8 MOBILIZING OUR CONGREGATION

Church World Services Kits (<https://cwskits.org/>)

Habitat for Humanity (www.habitat.org/)

Meals On Wheels (<https://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/>)

Mid-Atlantic Gleaning Network (www.midatlanticgleaningnetwork.org/)

Missio Nexus (<http://missionexus.org/>)

Outreach Foundation (<https://www.theoutreachfoundation.org/>)

Perspectives Course (<https://www.perspectives.org/>)

Sixteen:Fifteen Missions (<http://1615.org/>)

VERGE Network (<https://www.vergenetwork.org/>)

Vision Synergy (<http://visionsynergy.net/>)

World Factbook (www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/)