



Fund Raising Ideas

You are about to embark on a Great Adventure!

Most all adventures have a cost attached. Yet, once the adventure is over, the memories are invaluable and remain with you forever. And so it is with this adventure! It is costly. However, your entire church can participate and it is guaranteed to produce wonderful memories for all. And better yet, this experience will produce changed lives that will last into eternity!

You will begin to build “Forever Relationships”!

One of the best ways to put life and understanding into your missions program is to invite your Sister Church Pastor and his wife to visit you and your congregation. Every North American sister church that has done this has found it extremely beneficial for their entire church body. North American Christians experience ministry into their own lives from a third world person that is often unexpected. The universality of the gospel is then more clearly understood, sometimes for the first time. The oneness of the Body of Christ is experienced in a new and fresh way. All this is happening for the your Sister Church pastor and his wife as well.

It is an experience that RMI highly recommends for your church!

The presence of the pastor and his wife will provide a strong impetus for your mission program. Their involvement with the men, women, youth and young children will be amazing, even across the language barrier. It is very special if both husband and wife enjoy the experience in North America together.

Now, just how do you go about inviting your sister church pastor and his wife to visit you and what is involved? The following is a general guideline to enable you to have a successful and meaningful experience together.

Things you need to know as you host your SCP Pastor.

When should the visit take place?

First you must decide when you want your pastor to visit. Generally, do not invite them during a cold time of the year. Even cool weather in the 60's is very cold for Haitians. Therefore, we recommend a visit during the time frame of May to September if your church is in a cold climate.

Your first step is to call RMI: (239) 368-8390, and let them know your intentions. RMI will then communicate with the field and see if the proposed time frame will be possible for your SCP pastor. You must begin planning this trip at least 9 months in advance to enable everything to run smoothly. (The communications back and forth, scheduling the times, setting up the dates with the translator, getting the travel visa, etc. makes this necessary)

How long should the visit last?

Generally we recommend the pastor and his wife arrive in the US on a Thursday and spend 8 days at their sister church, arriving on Friday and departing Friday of the next week. Any longer becomes a burden to everyone. The pastor and his wife may take this opportunity, following their time at your church, to visit family or friends in another area of the US. In this case, their family or friends take all responsibility, including planning, hosting and finances, for this leg of the trip. This would take place

immediately after the visit with their sister church.

Your Sister Church Pastor will not be able to afford the cost of such a trip, so before you decide to invite him, and hopefully his wife, be sure your church is willing to foot the bill! This is to be a "church to church" visit, therefore, it is the responsibility of the North American church to financially cover the visit.

Cost of airfare and North American travel

- Round-trip tickets for the pastor and his wife from their home country to your church and back.
- Round trip tickets for the translators from their home and back.
- Funds to cover porter fees, snacks and meals, especially for layovers and connecting flights.

Cost overseas

- **Please contact the RMI Office for current costs.** This will cover all travel, meals, visa charges and overnights required on the foreign field.
 - In the foreign country, there may be multiple trips in-country to make travel arrangements.
 - There may be two to three trips to get the visa, one trip to the airport for departure, one trip for the return.
 - It costs \$100.00 US per Haitian to apply for a visa. It is possible that the Pastor might have to apply more than once for the visa. If this is the case, we might need to request an additional \$100.

Cost at your church

All room and board for the team - pastor, wife and translators. Make sure the host families are offered reimbursement for meals - especially when they take the team to restaurants or have fast food carry-in as so often happens in a hectic schedule. Remember that the team is visiting the church, not the hosts.

Make sure that on ALL outings it is clear who will pay for meals, snacks, drinks, tickets and transportation for the team and how the host will be reimbursed. Do not assume that a family can handle all the expenses of hosting. The church should insist on covering expenses.

Members can receive a tax receipt from your church if individuals wish to contribute, as it is a church event.

Optional Costs

- RMI encourages you to take pictures - both video and prints of everything they do! This way they can share all their experiences with the church back home. There should be someone taking pictures and someone taking video of them throughout the visit. Then, when they are ready to leave, they can be presented with an album, a wonderful treasure and remembrance for years to come.
- Souvenirs: maps, picture books of area, etc.
- Funds for the pastor/wife to buy some personal items, etc., which, if done, should be given at the beginning of the visit. We do encourage this, if possible. When they return, everyone will expect some little gift. It could be as little as a \$1.00 item, but in their culture some gift is expected from one returning from a visit abroad.

How do you entertain these special visitors?

Anything and everything is interesting to your Sister Church Pastor just as it is to your teams when they visit the field! Remember, your way of life is extremely different from theirs. The pastor and his wife probably have not seen anything like what you will share with them, even if they have visited their friends and family in the USA before. The goal is to give them a peek at your overall life in the US.

They often have so little understanding of what makes up a developed country. Therefore, a wide range of activities is essential for a well-rounded experience.

The key is to get as many of the church members involved as possible in different activities - in suggesting them, in preparing for them, in leading them, and in participating in them.

Suggested activities:

The following is simply a list of possible things to do. Take into account all the fun and interesting attractions available in your specific area. Do NOT feel you have to do everything on this list! In fact, it would be impossible!

- **Special greeting at the airport, church or home upon arrival.** Present them with flowers, songs, etc. much like they do when teams visit them!
- **Meeting with the church committee** either in a formal session or informally
- **Meeting with the missions committee and former team members**
- Shower for the pastor's wife by the women of the church. In lieu of gifts, monetary gifts would be preferred so she can purchase items according to her needs. Maybe monetary gifts could come in a card with a picture of the gift giver to make it more personal. These folks love pictures!
- Men take the pastor to get an outfit - suit, shirt, tie, shoes, or perhaps something special like a radio, etc.
- Have \$100 in hosts' hands to help them get some items they like or need as they come across it in the stores. Take them on trips to visit one or two large stores in the area; K-Mart, Wal-Mart, Sam's, Circuit City, Best Buy, Home Depot, Builder's Square, large supermarkets, etc.. They want to see what's out there. They are most often amazed at the size of the stores and variety available to us.
- Trips to several of the large Malls in the area. Great outing for several families together.
- Church picnic together at a park, lake, etc.
- Take them on a boat ride, train ride, commuter train ride, or small airplane or helicopter ride around the area.
- Visit factories - they enjoy seeing how things are made.
- Visit an elementary school and a high school - perhaps even get them into a class or two to tell about their home country - especially in a Christian school.
- Visit other types of schools in your area.
- Visit downtown! Go up in a high building that has an observation deck.
- Visit police station, fire station, town hall, banks, hospital, etc.
- Show how an ATM works - very interesting to them.
- Visit museums of science and industry, natural history.
- Visit large amusement park in area.
- Go miniature golfing, or bowling with them and the youth group!
- Visit famous places in your area.
- Take them to eat food your area is famous for.
- Take them to various interesting or ethnic restaurants: Mexican, Greek, Chinese, Italian, Big Steaks, Pizza, Mc D's etc.
- Take them to visit the zoo. They absolutely love this!

Remember, just getting your people to be with them during fun activities will be a ministry of encouragement!

Have Fun!!!!

These are just some suggestions to get your ideas flowing! **Obviously, no one can do all of these activities in 8 or 9 days.** Don't even try it! Pick and choose according to your area. Again, enlist the participation of various groups of people such as the North American pastor and his family, retired folk, the youth group, etc. Encourage these groups to engage in the various activities.

Ministry

Involve them in the small group activities of the church, such as mini-churches and Bible studies. They can share a devotional, their testimony, and answer questions.

Invite the pastor to preach Sunday morning with a question and answer time in the evening.

Don't forget your children that are home schooled! You could choose an activity to do with them.

How should we host them?

Because there are bound to be many activities going on every day, it is **necessary** that the team sleep in the same house all week! We have found that moving from place to place is just too exhausting and makes it often impossible to be on time for planned activities. The ideal situation, if at all possible, is for the pastor and his wife, as well as the translators, to stay together in the same house.

- We suggest that one person be designated as **the coordinator of the committee** responsible for the trip. He/she would be the one who makes sure solid plans are made and all the details are covered.
- It is nice if the pastor and wife have a bathroom adjacent to their room, as well as a TV. They get to see TV so seldom, and it is very interesting to them.
- If both hosts will be working during the day, make sure the RMI staff member has a car available to go to activities or that plans are made to have the team picked up.
- Normally the team would eat breakfast at the host home.
- Make it clear if the host or RMI staff member will be responsible to prepare breakfast. The home should have a living room or rec. room available for relaxing, resting, and watching TV.
- There should be a variety of things to drink available, as well as snacks. Haitians usually love fruit juices and are delighted with ice cream!

The host should only be responsible for providing lodging. Others could provide items for breakfast, as well as snacks. The committee should plan for all other meals.

These are some ideas and suggestions that we have garnered from past experience. As we have said and as you see, the trip is not cheap, but it will greatly reward both your church and through your sister church pastor, your sister church. All the churches that have experienced this wonderful in-depth fellowship and interaction highly value this experience and recommend it enthusiastically to other churches! We trust you will be able to invite your sister church pastor to be with you soon.

Prayer challenges

- Granting of the visa - not always easy to get!
- Finding a date suitable to your church, RMI staff, and your Sister Church Pastor.
- Funding the trip.
- Finding someone from your church to coordinate the trip and all details.
- Finding a good host and living situation.

Remember, the Sister Church Program is a church-to-church relationship. Make sure the church takes its proper role in all these activities, especially in the area of the expenses. Also, see to it that one or two people do not dominate the pastor's time, or that of his wife. They are visiting their sister church and need to get to know as many of their brothers and sisters as possible.

Seminars

One church brought the pastor and several leaders from their sister church in Guatemala up to visit. Along with some recreational activities, they provided these men with all sorts of training seminars, bringing key men into the church to present them. These learning opportunities proved invaluable and life changing to these men!

One ministry that is often under-estimated as to its value in the life of a servant of God is: **The ministry of encouragement.**

Barnabas was applauded as a great encourager! It is a ministry of importance to the Lord. As a Christian worker, I remember with delight the times of encouragement offered to my family and me, sometimes in the midst of much distress and heavy burdens. We returned to our field of service renewed!

Some might wonder if seeing all the affluence and opportunities in the US would cause your Sister Church Pastor who is coming from so much poverty, to want to leave his ministry and move here. They wonder if they might not be doing more harm than good?

If that were to happen, you can be assured that pastor was never called of God in the first place! If He truly is a man called of God to pastor a church in their his country, he will remain there with joy, and stay there as long as God so leads, no matter how difficult it might be.

Seeing the affluence of many of our friends when we returned from time to time never once dimmed our call overseas or our delight in the privilege of serving Him there. We see this same attitude in the lives of national pastors who have the call of God on their lives.

These men and their families suffer great deprivation for the sake of the Gospel. Seize this opportunity to encourage these dear ones in the name of the Lord. Send them back into the battle refreshed and renewed in body and spirit and strengthened by the knowledge of your fellowship in Him and your promised prayer support.

May God bless your every effort to minister to His choice servants!