

# LCMS World Mission

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## How to help missionaries on home service

Everyone needs time to relax, think and be renewed. Missionaries also need time away from their ministries to gather renewed strength and to take care of necessary tasks “at home.” Your congregation can help care for missionaries during this special time called “home service.” Through your understanding and acts of care, you can make home service a time of refreshment and renewal for missionary families.

### What does home service include?

LCMS career missionaries usually serve for two or three years before taking home service, which may last from two to six months. Occasionally medical, family, field or personal needs will change this schedule.

Missionaries use home service to meet many needs, including:

- rest and relaxation, both physical and spiritual;
- having medical checkups and, when needed, treatment;
- reflecting upon their service so far and setting new goals for the future;
- visiting family and friends;
- visiting supporting congregations and getting to know those who pray for them;
- helping congregations learn more about God’s mission and how their members can be involved;
- talking with people interested in missionary service;
- continuing their education and sharpening skills they need for field service;
- learning more about mission research and new developments.

### Here are some ideas for your congregation to consider:

- Care for missionaries on home service by giving them time to relax and readjust before involving them heavily in ministry.
- Show hospitality by offering missionaries a house to live in while they are with you. You also might offer them a car to drive, pay their long-distance phone bill, or provide a meal for them.
- Provide missionary families with a chance to spend time alone together as a normal family. If you have a time share or vacation home, make it available for them to use. Or your congregation might pay the costs of renting such a place.

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- Support missionaries by publicly affirming them and expressing your enthusiasm for their ministries.
- Involve missionary children in the life of your church. Introduce them to children their own age. Provide them with toys or opportunities other children their age enjoy—for example, swimming lessons or a chance to participate in the junior-high youth retreat.
- Help your missionaries with home-service expenses. These might include dental bills or visits to the doctor, as well as travel expenses.
- Become a support team that missionaries can count on when they return to the field. Support them with prayer, love and counsel. Let them know you are behind them!