

Being a Supportive Sending Church

In UFM, we believe the privilege and responsibility of sending and supporting workers for mission rests primarily with the local church.

The New Testament sets the bar very high for this precious task, with 3 John talking about workers being sent on their way 'in a manner worthy of the Lord'.

We want to do all we can to help you live this out, so here are some tried and tested ways to be a supportive sender.



Provide encouragement

Be a friend. Communicate. Discouragement can come, maybe all too soon, in those early months.

Working cross-culturally in another language is hard. Show your mission partners

they are not forgotten. Find the best ways to communicate in their particular context, whether by social media, email or video call.

Receiving cards and parcels is a great encouragement. Remember birthdays and special occasions. Send invitations, even if you know they won't be able to attend. Share your news and make sure they know what is happening in the life of the church.

Always try and acknowledge a prayer letter (especially if you are a church leader), even with just a few lines to show you have read it.



Provide pastoral care

Recognise needs and respond. Your mission partners are not super human. They are individuals with gifts and also vulnerabilities. Remember the needs of single mission workers are different from those who are married, and seek to support appropriately. Know them well before they go so you know their personalities and the things which give them joy or produce stress. Don't overlook husbands or wives or children, care for each as needed. Support the whole family. Ask about physical, emotional

and spiritual needs. Appoint a mission link, someone they know well with whom there is regular communication and who can provide appropriate news to the church and from the church too.



Pray

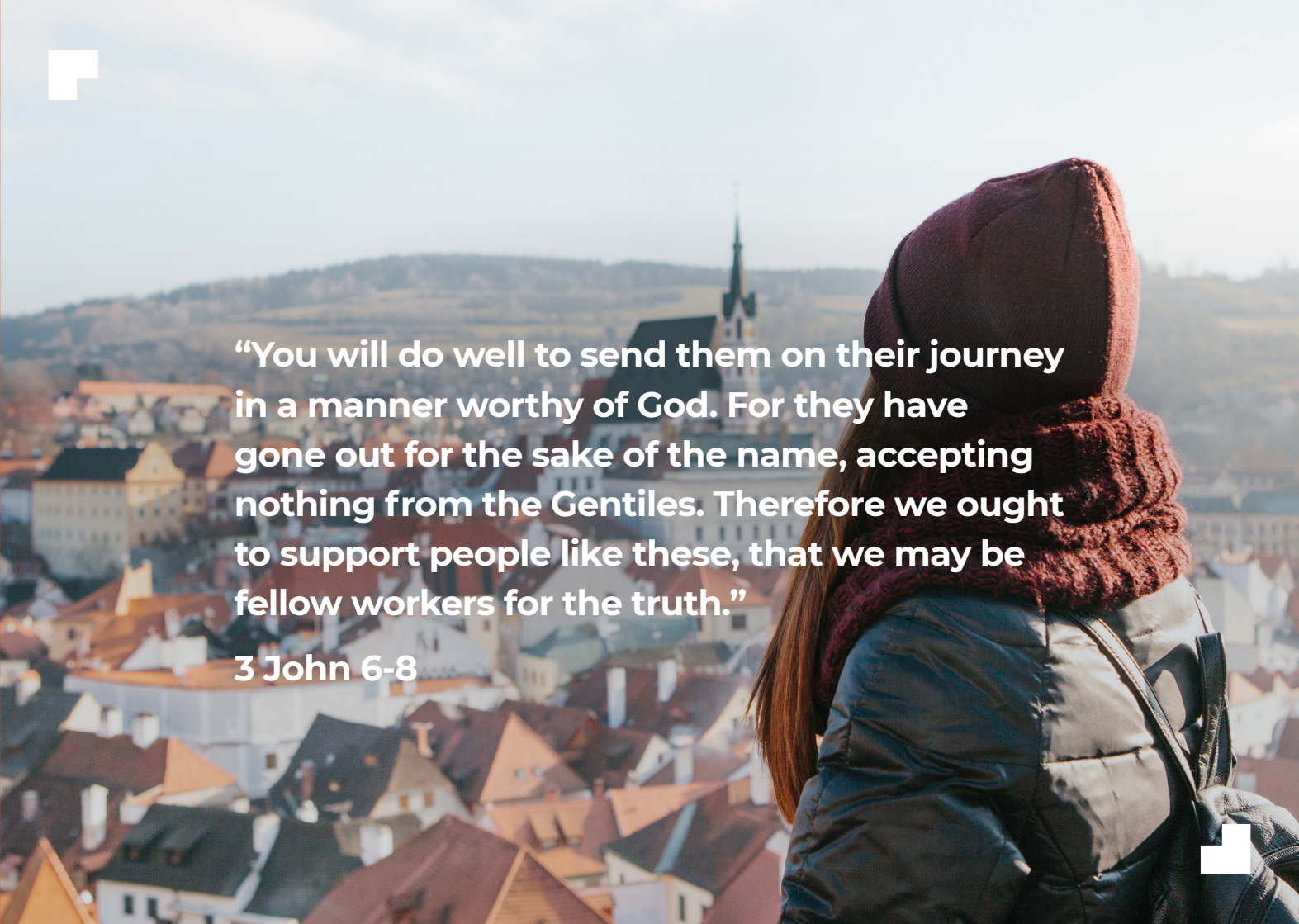
Perhaps the greatest thing you can do for those who go is to faithfully pray for them. Pray for their work and personal needs. Use their prayer letters to inform praying and find out if prayers have been answered. Pray on your own and with others, in small groups and large gatherings. Pray for them in prayer meetings and church

services. Foster links between ladies groups and women in mission. Committed consistent prayer will lead to effective support in other ways.



Provide finance

By faith, mission partners look to God to provide all they need for their personal and ministry expenses. Make sure they are supported adequately. Work with UFM to know what their support requirement is and whether it is being met. Consider one off gifts, monthly support or support for particular needs and other expenses including holidays.

A person wearing a red beanie and a dark jacket is seen from the back, looking over a European town with red-tiled roofs and a church spire in the distance. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

“You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.”

3 John 6-8



Provide practical support

Practical support is particularly important on home assignment or during re-entry. Think of the needs of children or elderly parents. You can offer to help with storing belongings, being a “home address” or a contact person in the UK. When back on leave, you could help to arrange housing, transport and toys for children to play with.



Visit

If you go and join your mission partner even for a short visit (with their agreement) you

will see and experience their life and ministry. You will be enriched, they will be blessed and your church will also have greater insight as you share what you have seen. This results in more encouragement, greater care, effective prayer and appropriate practical and financial support for your mission partner.

UFM recognises that churches are different in size and resources. Please don't feel overwhelmed. We partner with you to make sure that those who are serving as part of the UFM family are helped and equipped to serve the Lord effectively.



Resources

UFM provides numerous resources to help equip partner churches in cross-cultural mission sending. We regularly produce articles, and webinars, and offer internal tools like a resource and finance portal for learning and accountability. Please get in touch to find out more.

For further reading, we recommend the following books:
The Sending Church Defined
by Bradley Bell
Missions: How the Local Church Goes Global by Andy Johnson
Serving as Senders
by Neal Pirolo

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