

Partnering With Your Pastor to Expand Mission Vision For Local NMI Presidents

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What will help to make missions effective in your church? The pastor is the key! Because the pastor is the key to missions and because you, the NMI president, are the mission executive in the pastor's core team, how can you most effectively support him or her? How can you bring out the best in your pastor?

I. Study your pastor's needs. "Successful leaders are great askers, and they do pay attention." (Warren Bennis)

- A. Make an appointment to brainstorm with your pastor.
Take your yellow pad and pencil—or laptop.
- B. Find out what your pastor thinks and feels about missions. Ask some questions. Thomas Aquinas said, "To motivate someone, start where he is...take him by the hand and guide him."
 1. What first compelled you to become involved in missions?
 2. If you had a free ticket to any mission field, where would you go?
- C. What are the pastor's expectations of you? Learn what the pastor perceives your parameters are.
 1.
 - a. What does the pastor expect of you?
 - b. Work out a job description for you, the local church NMI president
 2. Set important church calendar dates
 - a. February and September Alabaster offerings
 - b. Set date for Thanksgiving and Easter offerings; decide when offering envelopes should be ordered and distributed.
 - c. Dates of local NMI council meetings
 - d. Next year's district NMI convention date
 3. Discuss the amount that needs to be raised for missions for the coming year. Include the World Evangelism Fund (5.5% of current income), special offerings, local NMI council expenses, missionary speakers—both care and offerings
 4. Set the date and plan a Faith Promise emphasis

Discuss your specific responsibilities for the Faith Promise emphasis.
 - a. Who will be the speaker? Who will book the speaker?
 - b. Length of Faith Promise emphasis?: Saturday? Sunday morning only? Sunday morning & evening?
 - c. Plan for special gatherings? Friday evening rally, Saturday men's breakfast, women's lunch, teen pizza party Saturday night?
 5. Ask about a mission bulletin board, the church calendar, and how and when the deadlines are for submitting mission information for the Sunday morning church worship folder, church newsletter, or Web site.
 6. Take notes during your brainstorming conference
 - a. Make a copy—send it to your pastor.
 - b. Communicate regularly with your pastor. Stay on the same wavelength.

II. Recognize and affirm your pastor's successes.

"Encouragement is like oxygen to the soul." (Unknown)

A. Bless and commend your pastor

1. One of the meanings of “bless” is to speak well of someone in the presence of others. To illustrate: Jesus “blessed” Nathanael in the presence of others when He said, “Behold an Israelite in whom is no guile!”
2. One way to do this is to speak well of the pastor during the church board meeting—“I appreciate the way you keep us informed of church finances.”

B. Write your pastor a note of appreciation.

1. Be specific, such as: “Your missions illustration was heartwarming.”
2. Appreciation can warm a pastor’s heart for many weeks.

C. Pray for your pastor when he/she steps into the pulpit

During the message, your body language can bring out the best in a pastor. Anne Ortlund, in *Up With Worship*, wrote, “You can set the mood for fifteen people situated around you with your body language during worship.”

D. Welcome your pastor home from vacation

1. Balloons at the front door
2. Notes of welcome in the worship folder

E. Feature a “We Love Pastor” mission service. “Applause is the spur for noble minds.” (C.C. Colton)

1. Decorate with banners
2. Give the pastor a T-shirt or a big Hershey’s Kiss
3. Write a song about your pastor
4. Interview the pastor about his/her love for missions

III. Expect the best from your pastor. “We see what we are prepared to see.” (a psychology principle)

A. Keep your attitude positive

Alan Loy McGinnis, psychologist, asked why a certain church succeeded so well when the pastor had a glaring fault. How could this be? A member said, “We specialize in our pastor’s strengths and forget his weak point.” They see what they are prepared to see. McGinnis added: “Without a doubt, their positive spirit motivated the pastor to do everything in his power to produce at full capacity!”

B. Be a top-notch board member. The late Tom Landry of Dallas Cowboys fame said, “I’ve never seen a one-person team, but I’ve seen a team where one person made a difference.”

1. How do you rate as a board member?
 - a. Do you smile when you enter?
 - b. Do you keep a perspective and try to see the whole picture?
 - c. Are you a catalyst?
 - d. Do you keep alert and in touch with all discussion and decisions?
 - e. Are you positive?
 - f. Do you keep a good attitude even when your thoughts or opinions don’t prevail?
 - g. Do you pour on oil, making the church machine run smoothly?

2. Expect the best with your attitude

A woman, age 102, was asked on TV, “Do you have any children?” She said, “Not yet!” Attitude!

IV. Conclusion

A. You are the mission executive on your pastor’s core team.

B. You have more influence than you realize to motivate your pastor to an even higher level of mission interest.

C. You have more influence than you realize to bring out the best in him and other colleagues by:

1. Studying your pastor’s needs
2. Recognizing your pastor’s accomplishments
3. Expecting the best from your pastor