



Churchwide

Missions leaders serve a vital role in the church. They help fulfill the Great Commission as they promote

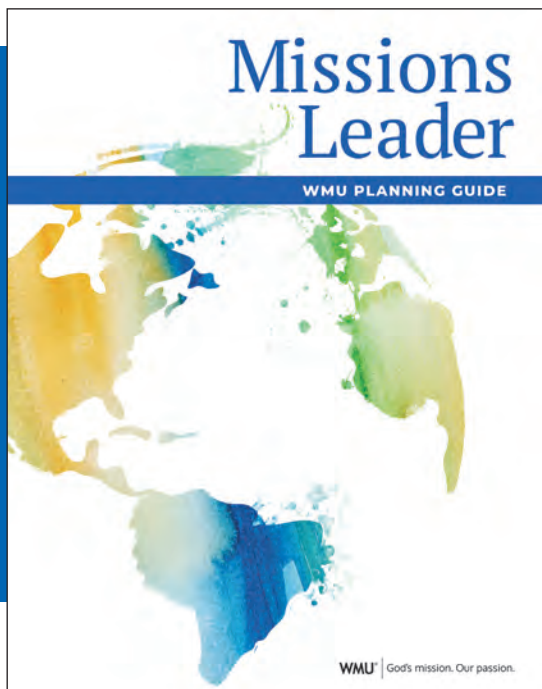
- missions involvement and giving in their churches;
- missions discipleship opportunities through churchwide awareness events and studies;
- age-level missions discipleship groups; and
- emerging leadership for the future of missions involvement.

The following WMU resources help churches by putting an easy-to-implement resource in the hands of a faithful member and immediately give your church a plan for fulfilling its role in the Great Commission.



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Find Out How You
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WMU[®]
God's mission.
Our passion.



Missions Leader: WMU Planning Guide

Missions Leader gives you what you need for annual and quarterly planning of missions discipleship and involvement, ideas and plans for growing and developing your leadership team, the big picture of WMU's missions discipleship curriculum study plan for the year, and ways to be involved in missions through compassion ministries.

This comprehensive guide provides practical ideas you can use and modify to fit the needs of your church and help everyone in your congregation grow in their understanding of and passion for missions.

- Print - \$21.99
- Digital - \$19.99

To purchase, visit wmustore.com or call Customer Service at (205) 995-4850 Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (CT).



How to Lead

Our website is loaded with information that will help leaders of preschoolers, children, students, and adults better relate to these various age-levels and understand ways they learn. See **wmu.com** for great teaching insight.

Leadership Courses

From online, on-demand courses, to print and web resources, to in-person training, WMU offers a variety of opportunities for discovering and expanding one's leadership skills and spiritual gifts. One of these approaches is leadership development through Christian Women's Leadership Center™ (CWLC™). CWLC courses are self-paced and on-demand.

In addition, WMU offers minicourses related to WMU Compassion Ministries and a church's response to ministry needs such as mental health, refugees, human trafficking, and poverty, as well as courses related to Christian Women's Job Corps®/Christian Men's Job Corps® training. See **ChristianLeaderLearning.com** for the full catalog of courses.



**Keep Reading to
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How do I get missions discipleship started at my church?

1

Read through a **sample** of Missions Leader below.



2

Check out wmu.com/howtoleadchurchwide if you have questions about getting started.

3

Schedule a free, no-strings-attached **video call** with a WMU consultant to make sure all your questions are answered.

For questions about starting or leading a group:
Contact us at churchwide@wmu.org.

4

Don't forget to connect with your state and associational WMU for events and training. Find links to state WMU websites at wmu.com/statecontacts.

New Customers: Save 20% Today!

Ready to get started and be on mission? **Enjoy 20% savings** on your **new curriculum order** by calling WMU Customer Service at (205) 995-4850, Monday–Thursday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. CT. Be sure to mention promo code **START20**. (Some restrictions apply. Discount not available at wmustore.com.)

WMU[®]
God's mission.
Our passion.



Welcome *from* the President

Welcome friends! I'm so excited to introduce you to this year's Missions Leader.

Have you ever been on vacation and had an amazing tour guide—one who shows you all the ins and outs of the area and who helps you learn so much more about the area than you ever could have on your own? Missions Leader is the ultimate tour guide and planning tool for all things missions in the 2024–25 church year!

Missions Leader gives you

- resources for annual and quarterly planning of missions discipleship and involvement;
- ideas and plans for growing and developing your leadership team;
- the big picture of WMU Missions Discipleship and the year's curriculum study plan; and
- ways to be involved in missions through WMU Compassion Ministries.

Missions Leader is your comprehensive WMU planning guide for the entire year. It will show you areas of missions focus, the overarching themes, and special projects for 2024–25. This guide provides practical ideas you can use and modify to fit the needs of your church, helping everyone grow in his or her understanding of and passion for missions.

WMU's mandate for making disciples of Jesus who live on mission, along with the WMU emphasis for 2024–26, What Joy!, will be the backdrop to help us reach the four objectives of our emphasis.

- We are passionate about the lost. What Joy it is to make disciples of Jesus who live on mission.
- We are compelled by love. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13:4, "Love is patient, love is kind." What Joy we have in showing that kind of love to the world.
- We are generous in sharing. What Joy it is to share your influence and encouragement, to teach, or to inspire others to share Jesus.
- We serve with great delight. What Joy we have in living out 1 Peter 4:10, which says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

WMU's watchword for 2024–26 is found in 1 Thessalonians 2:8, which says, "Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well."

This verse reminds us that we delight to share with the whole world not only the gospel of God but our lives as well out of *love*—not just pure obedience alone. What Joy we have in making disciples of Jesus who live on mission.

Connie Dixon is president of national WMU.



We Love Because the Father First Loved Us

By Ena Redding



Read 1 John 4:7–21.

“God is love. If you feel love, you feel God,” Tatyana said, as though love, and perhaps to her at the time, God, were more like a sensation. I had recently moved back to the United States after being a Journeyman in Eastern Europe, and Tatyana, also from Eastern Europe, was my next-door neighbor. Months later, Tatyana came to faith, and she eventually led several members back in her home country to faith in Christ. “God is love,” which we read in verses 8 and 16, takes on a different meaning for her now.

Love as the Command

First John 4:11 emphasizes that believers owe it to God to love others in His name. The greatest commandment, and the second one like it, is rooted in love—love for God and love for our neighbor (Matt. 22:37–39). This is not an easy command to follow, and as someone who serves overseas, I constantly find myself asking God to give me His love for the people and the fellow missionaries with whom I serve. This command is a process of allowing God’s love to be perfected in me so that my love reflects His love more and more.

Sometimes fear can unsettle our love, bringing about an uneasiness in us that keeps us from loving as we are called to do. But perfect love, which comes from a perfect God, casts out fear. When God’s Spirit is in us, He gives us power, love, and self-discipline (2 Tim. 1:7).

Love as the Source

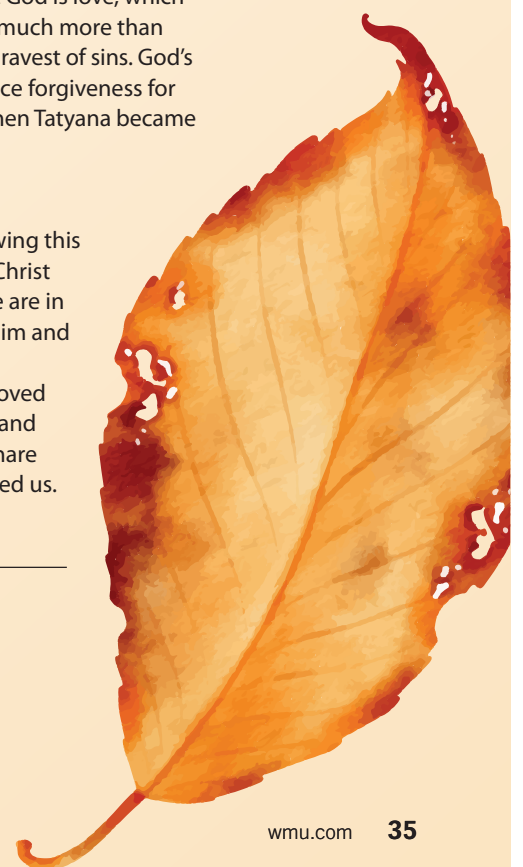
Tatyana’s statement that God is love had some truth to it. We are told twice in 1 John 4 that God is love, which helps us recognize God as the source from whom love comes and is supplied. This love is much more than a sensation we feel. It is an unfathomable grace we have been given that covers even the gravest of sins. God’s love for us was demonstrated by Jesus’ death and Resurrection so that we might experience forgiveness for our sins. And, because of that grace we have received, we can and ought to love others. When Tatyana became a believer, the change in her life was evident in the way she wanted to love others.

Love as the Fruit

Love is not always easy, but the good news is we are not left to fend for ourselves in following this command. God, through the Holy Spirit, abides in us. John 15 reminds us that abiding in Christ produces fruit to the glory of God, which we see as we bear the fruit of the Spirit. Once we are in Christ, we know His love through the forgiveness He has bestowed on us as we abide in Him and follow His example.

My friends and I shared the gospel with Tatyana out of love for her because Christ first loved us and changed our lives. The same is true for all believers, no matter where we are living and serving. The source of love, which was first poured into our hearts, flows out of us as we share the gospel with the lost. As we serve God, may we remember we love because He first loved us.

Ena Redding calls the Middle East home. She is passionate about seeing disciples grow in their faith.





Fall Leadership Team Meeting Plans

By Cindy Bradley

Fall is my favorite season. I love falling back into familiar routines, enjoying cooler weather, and anticipating upcoming holidays. Before the season begins, schedule a time for your leadership team to pray and plan for a new season of WMU. Gather resources for your leaders, and check your church calendar and with church staff as you plan.

Devotion: We Love Because the Father First Loved Us

Using the devotion on page 35, share how God's love for us should produce loving thoughts and actions from us toward others. Close the devotional time with prayer for missionaries using the missionary prayer calendar found in the Prayer Patterns article of *Missions Mosaic* or at wmu.com/prayercalendar.

Churchwide Kickoff Event

Plan a churchwide event that focuses on specific WMU missions and ministry opportunities. Promote missions offerings, projects, and missions trips, as well as your church's various missions groups. Provide a take-home flyer to remind participants of upcoming opportunities. See page 38 for event ideas.

State Missions Emphasis

Print and digital resources for this emphasis are available on your state convention or state WMU website. Encourage all age-level groups to include this emphasis, and provide prayer guides and resources for leaders. Find more suggestions on page 40.

Children's Missions Day (CMD)

Children love hands-on missions involvement. CMD is a great way to help children experience missions up close in their local community. Ministry ideas and promotional resources can be found at wmu.com/cmd and on page 41.

Cooperative Program Sunday

The Cooperative Program (CP) brings Southern Baptists together to provide funds for reaching every person for Jesus Christ locally and around the world. Find resources to share how the CP works and how your church can participate at sbc.net/cp and on page 42.

Day of Prayer for Associational Missions

Check your association's website to discover specific associational ministries and ways your church can pray and be involved. See ameresources.org and page 43 for more information.

Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer

Each November, Baptist women around the world unite in prayer during the Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer. Planning resources can be found at bwawomen.org/day-of-prayer and on page 44. Invite women from other Baptist churches in your area to participate.

Orphans and Widows Sunday

There are more than 140 million orphans worldwide. Share this information with your leaders, and make plans to promote awareness. Share ways your church can minister to orphans through Lifeline Children's Services and your state Baptist children's home as well as widows through GuideStone's Mission:Dignity. For suggested resources, see page 45.

Suggested Agenda

- Lead in prayer and devotion time.
- Listen to reports from leadership team members and church staff.
- Finalize plans for quarterly emphases:
 - Churchwide Kickoff
 - State Missions Emphasis
 - Children's Missions Day
 - Cooperative Program Sunday
 - Day of Prayer for Associational Missions
 - Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer
 - Orphans and Widows Sunday
- Set date for the next leadership team meeting.

Missions Growth Idea

As you begin a new church year, pray for the people who already regularly attend your church but do not yet participate in missions discipleship groups. Consider ways you can strengthen your relationship with them, one or two at a time. Invite them to coffee or lunch, get to know them better, and, when the timing is right, share your passion for living on mission and missions discipleship. Keep personally inviting them, but don't bug them. They may need to know you care about them as a person before they consider joining a group.

Cindy Bradley is the women's missions and ministries/missions education catalyst for the Florida Baptist Convention. She loves to take women out of their comfort zone on missions trips to tell others about the love of Jesus.

BECAUSE OF JOY

We Love One Another

The joy that stems from love

By Mandy Hewitt

My heart was racing, heat flooding my face. My hands were clammy with sweat. Anger coursed through my veins. I was caring for a child who had a difficult story, and he was testing my limits, defying me at every opportunity.

I found myself praying in frustration. *God, how do I love this child? I want to be kind and show him Your love, but how do I do that when he's making it so difficult, when he's resisting me so strongly? Can't he just trust that I know what's best for him and obey?*

John 13:34 says, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." Loving one another is one of the most basic aspects of the Christian faith. This commandment, along with loving God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30; Luke 10:27) is one of the first lessons we learn as Christians and teach to our children. Jesus even went so far as to say, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35). Loving one another is the mark of a true Christian.

But loving one another is not always as simple as a child's Sunday School lesson. Loving one another can be challenging. Sinners loving sinners is often a messy business.

Role Reversal

In the moments following my desperate prayer to love in a difficult circumstance, the Holy Spirit reminded me of a truth that washed over me like a wave of cold water: I am just like this child.

Defiance, resistance, and rebellion are exactly how I have behaved toward God. We are as hard to love as they come. And yet, "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). His love is steadfast; it never fails.

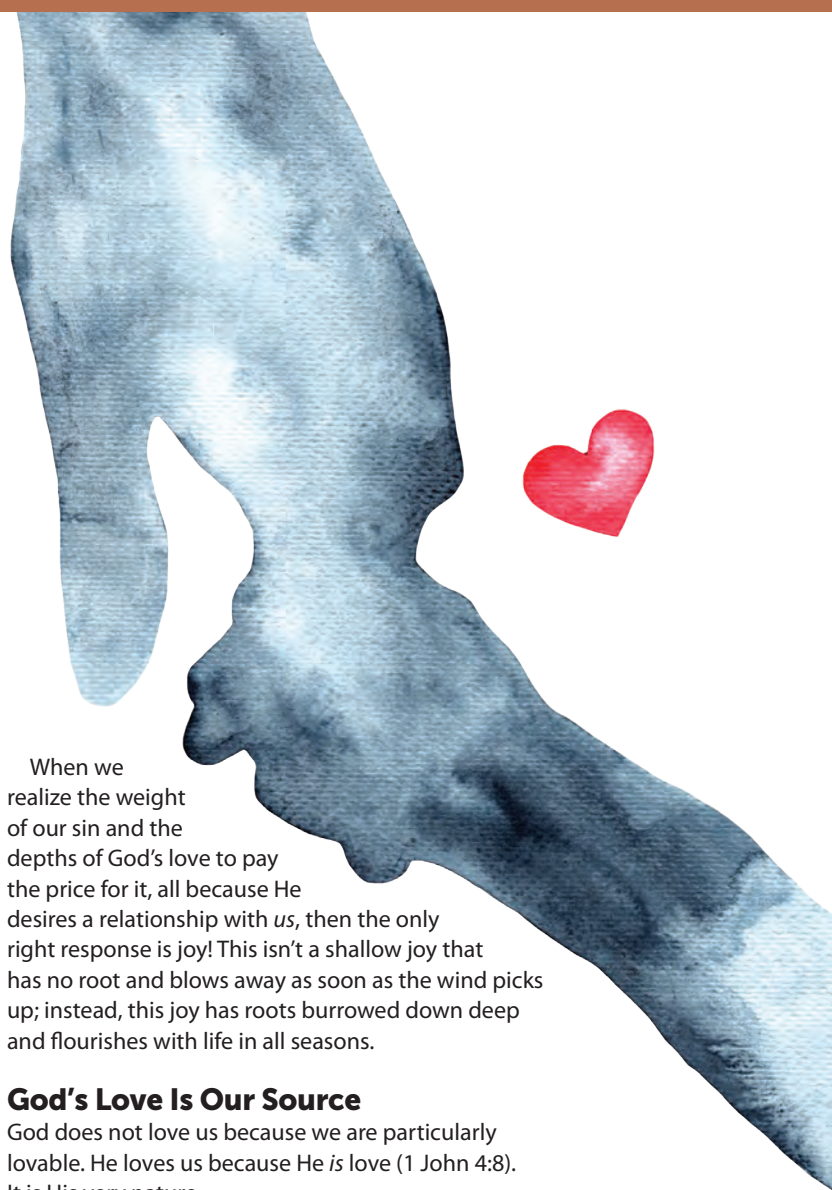
When we realize the weight of our sin and the depths of God's love to pay the price for it, all because He desires a relationship with *us*, then the only right response is joy! This isn't a shallow joy that has no root and blows away as soon as the wind picks up; instead, this joy has roots burrowed down deep and flourishes with life in all seasons.

God's Love Is Our Source

God does not love us because we are particularly lovable. He loves us because He *is* love (1 John 4:8). It is His very nature.

The reason we associate joy with the Christmas season is because Jesus' coming was "good news that will cause *great joy* for all the people" (Luke 2:10, emphasis added). When we love one another biblically, we imitate Christ—the subject of good news and source of great joy. That's why Jesus' command to love one another is not a burden. Love is an action and not merely a passive feeling we experience from others; it is a behavior. What greater joy do we, as Christians, have than to love others the way God loves us?

Mandy Hewitt works in communications for a ministry focused on serving and equipping the church to make disciples around the world. She loves reading, writing, and thinking deeply about God and His Word. Mandy lives in Birmingham, Alabama, and is a member of Christ Fellowship Church.



KICKOFF EVENT

What *Joy* in Christ!

A day to delight in sharing joy through service

By Lanell Downs Smith



Before the Event

- Meet with representatives from all age-level missions groups and also key ministry leaders. Describe the focus and goal of the kickoff event, and invite them to join you in praying for an event that will appeal to and meet needs in your community.
- Gather again to share ideas, create an event outline, and develop a plan that includes critical steps for implementing the event. This event can be as large (or small) and as elaborate (or simple) as your group can support.
- Select a date and location (parking lot with tents, green field, activity center, fellowship hall, or nearby community center). If an outdoor area is selected, plan an alternative indoor location in case of rain.
- Determine technology needs. Consult with sound and technology teams to ensure equipment is available or can be procured. If needed technology is not available, consider partnering with other churches or community organizations for the event.
- Consult with food preparation crews, children's ministry leaders, and nursery workers to engage their support for the event.
- Invite age-level groups to help with staffing/managing specific portions of the event, and help them gather what is needed.
- Publicize the event with local media. Create flyers, and distribute around the community and in surrounding areas. Visit (or call) families to invite them. Utilize social media to promote the event. Consider creating a social media "event," and share it in local community groups online.
- If necessary, train volunteers to have gospel conversations.
- Ask prayer warriors to pray for the event and specifically for volunteers, weather conditions, resources, attendance, and outcomes after the event.
- Announce the event during the month leading up to the date chosen.
- Gather and distribute last-minute supplies and equipment.
- Confirm each group has what it needs and is prepared for the day.
- Explain the purpose and rules of the event, and train volunteers in safety precautions.
- Plan to set up and place several large trash cans around the event site or facility the day before the event. Ensure bathrooms are clean and well stocked.
- Invite volunteers whose only function is to greet guests and build relationships.

During the Event

Station 1: Babies Are Blessings


Providing a nursery and preschool area for this event allows families with infants and young children to enjoy activities for children and adults while knowing their littlest members are safe and loved.

1. Invite experienced workers to serve, following your church's guidelines for background checks and the number of adults needed.
2. Ensure the area is clean and in good repair with age-appropriate toys.
3. Provide snacks for toddlers. Consider options for children with food sensitivities.
4. Consider using a Mission Friends activity for preschoolers.
5. Advertise that a nursery is available.

Station 2: Jesus Loves Children

Plan one activity for children or an area with several activities. This should be a fun-filled section focusing on joy and engaging guests in gospel conversations.

1. Invite volunteers to interact with the children and to play or create alongside them.
2. Decorate with bright, cheerful colors and balloons the children can take home.
3. Consider some of the following activities:
 - ✦ A face-painting table
 - ✦ A craft table—coloring, painting; noodle, sand, or yarn art; making and sculpting homemade clay; interconnecting building bricks; or simple doll making (fabric and glue). Plan a craft that gives children something to take home.
 - ✦ Puppet show—Help children make a sock puppet and participate in a show.
 - ✦ Table games like Jenga, chess, checkers, Sorry!, etc. (normal or large sized)
 - ✦ Inflatables play area



Salvation through Jesus Christ delivers an unspeakable joy found only in Him. Because of God's indescribable love for us, we are saved when we confess our sins and accept His free gift. The believer's natural response to God's love is to love and serve others. As Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:8, "We were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well."

This kickoff event, based on 1 Thessalonians 2:8, is aimed at launching a year of missions discipleship with a fun and festive event to give people in the community a view into the joy-filled church and invite them to explore the joy found only in Jesus. This event will show community members these key features about their local faith family.

- **We are passionate about the lost.**
- **We are generous in sharing.**
- **We are compelled by love.**
- **We serve with great delight (joy).**

- ✦ Sidewalk chalk
- ✦ Sing-along with Christian children's songs
- ✦ Carnival-style games

Station 3: Students Find Joy in Serving

Help students experience the joy of serving.

- Invite students to help with other age-level stations.
- Incorporate students in adult activities from Station 4, and encourage adults to work alongside them.
- Incorporate *Missions Journey: Students* activities, allowing students their own avenue of service.

Station 4: Time for Fun and Fellowship

Plan a section for all adults.

- Host a cooking lesson to prepare dinner or desserts. Make recipe cards for participants to take home.
- Invite adults to help prepare the meal or enjoy coffee and conversation.
- Offer a scavenger hunt for adults to complete with their children.
- Include musicians, singers, comedians, or other performers to create a fun and entertaining show.

Station 5: Serving and Loving Together

Invite guests to serve alongside your congregation. Plan for needed transportation if the event is off-site, and request guests register in advance for the projects.

- Provide maintenance work at the church or a local home.
- Fill gently used purses with hygiene items, cosmetics, and pens. Gather items beforehand, or ask guests to bring items. Donate to a women's shelter.
- Take groups to sing, visit, or pray with local shut-ins.
- Ask guests to donate and help bag food for a local ministry.
- Invite guests to help prepare frozen or canned meals or baked treats for local families. Consider a field trip to deliver these.
- Write encouraging notes to shut-ins, foster parents, the incarcerated, or others needing encouragement.

Wrap Up

- Clean the area. Leave it just as you found it.
- Thank volunteers for their efforts, and encourage them to continue serving.
- Follow up with visitors, and build relationships for discipleship.
- Pray together for God's continued work in the church and community.
- Evaluate and plan future events.

Lanell Downs Smith is a freelance writer living in Lapine, Alabama. She is managing editor for Greenville Newspapers Inc. and serves as vice president for the Alabama WMU board of trustees.

Tips for Gathering Supplies

1. **Host a supply drive. Consider a friendly competition between small groups or age-level missions groups, and host a party for the winning group.**
2. **Ask members to donate specific items each month.**
3. **Provide collection bins throughout the church. Publish needed items in announcements.**
4. **Plan service activities (like a car wash or bake sale), and invite community members to donate for ministry projects.**



Whatever It Takes

By Amanda Martinsen

Missions is not a one-time project but an opportunity to have a relationship with the people and the community around us. Missions can unite us and be an action step that creates change. It changes our relationship with God, and it changes the way we serve and love other people.

We encounter people every day who are hurting, grieving, hungry, hopeless, and even lost. We can impact their lives by pointing them to Jesus and showing them they are not alone. Missions gives us a way to share the love and hope of Jesus.

*May the God of hope fill you
with all joy and peace
as you trust in him,
so that you may overflow with hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

—Romans 15:13

What a wonderful opportunity we have to do this each September as we observe and take part in the week of prayer for state missions and the state missions offering. This emphasis can be an exciting time to celebrate hope and share about the ways God is working through missions in your state.

Believers often have the mindset that missions takes place in foreign countries and far-off places. Our state emphasis is a time to show your church the impact missions has right where you are. Below are ideas to help you prepare, promote, and participate in your state missions offering. Use this time to highlight ways hope is overflowing through the work of missions in your state.

Two Months Prior

- Contact your state WMU or convention office to review and request promotional materials.
- Familiarize yourself with the various ministries that are supported by your state missions offering, and plan ways you can highlight those within your church during the emphasis.

- Consider planning a kickoff event or special church service to get people excited about the offering.
- Invite any guest speakers or state missionaries you want to speak.
- Discuss with your leadership team how you will promote the offering over the coming months (social media posts, bulletin inserts, ministry videos, etc.).

One Month Prior

- Distribute promotional resources and materials to age-level leaders.
- Encourage leaders to focus their group on a ministry that is supported by the offering and to brainstorm a missions project to complete as a group for that ministry.
- If you are planning a kickoff or churchwide event, promote it in the month leading up to the emphasis.

Month of Emphasis

- Use promotional materials to emphasize the offering throughout the month (distribute prayer guides, share videos, etc.).
- Hold a special time of prayer each day throughout the week of prayer to encourage church members to pray for state missions.
- Host the kickoff event to highlight the ministries the offering supports and connect church members with ways to pray, give, and be involved.
- Invite the guest speaker or state missionary to share about the offering's impact during a church service or other churchwide event. If age-level groups participated in a missions project for the offering, allow those groups time to share as well.
- Continue emphasizing the offering on your church social media pages or website by sharing resources and ways church members can give and be involved in state missions throughout the year.

Amanda Martinsen is the leadership development consultant for WMU of North Carolina.



Children's Missions Day 2024: Neighbors

By Heather Keller

No matter where you live—the big city, the suburbs, a small town, or down a dirt road—we all have neighbors! This fall, the children of your church can share God's love with your community as they realize who their neighbors are, invite them to church, and share a special treat or gift with them. Check out these ideas for getting your entire church involved in Children's Missions Day, September 21, 2024!

Sweet Treats for Sweet Neighbors

Assemble treat bags to deliver to the families who live within walking distance of your church. Use prepackaged treats, pack them in a simple canvas bag, and include a note about meeting times for children's activities. As children deliver the bags to the neighbors in your immediate area, remind them to be friendly and invite everyone they meet to come to church. Afterward, discuss what each child can do when someone from the neighborhood shows up for an upcoming event or worship service.

Who Is My Neighbor?

Draw a map of your neighborhood or community, and help children identify where church members live, where important services are located (police and fire departments), and where grocery stores or other landmarks may be found. Help children determine needed services they could offer to one of your neighbors who may not attend church. As children serve, remind them to tell everyone they meet about how much God loves them. (Services could include raking yards, delivering a meal to a senior adult,

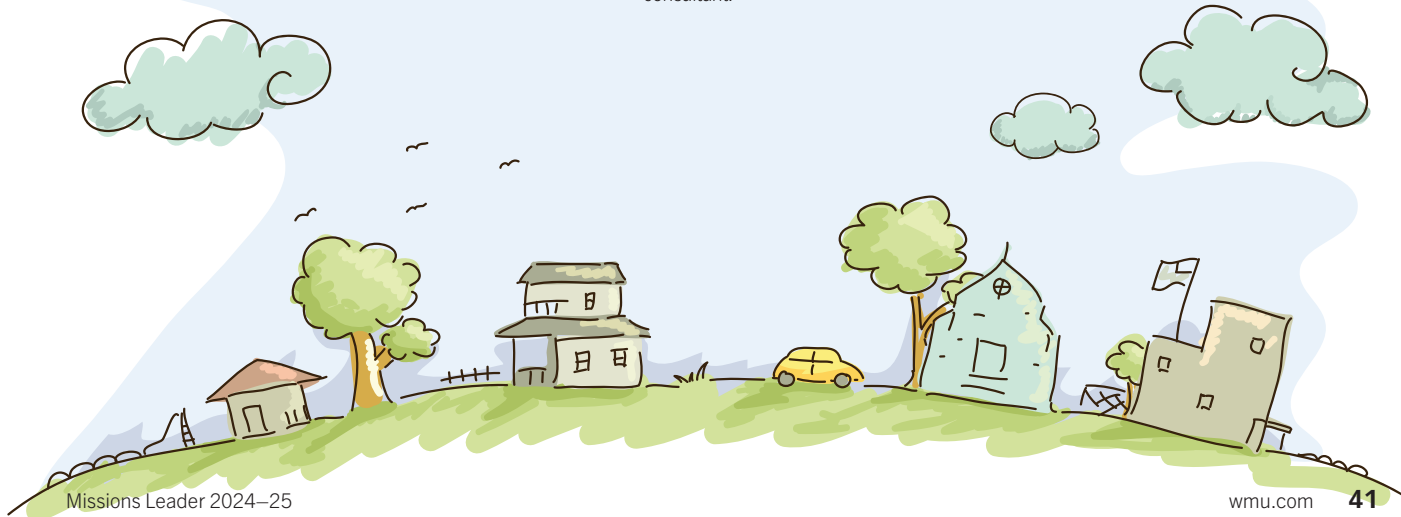
providing snacks for first responders, or cleaning storefront windows.)

Neighborhood Photo Scavenger Hunt

The children in your church can create a neighborhood photo scavenger hunt and invite others to participate. Children (supported by adults in your church) can choose a few items in your immediate community to include in the photo scavenger hunt. Once all of the places have been visited or the items have been determined, help children create a master list to share with your community. Families can give the list to their friends to find the locations or items, or the list can be shared on social media. Predetermine a time and place for the scavenger hunt to end and for families to submit their pictures to receive a prize. (One neat idea might be to host a barbecue or ice cream social for the neighborhood around your church.) Make sure your congregation is ready to meet and greet everyone who participated in the photo scavenger hunt during your special event.

No matter how the children of your church decide to love their neighbors, make sure they lead the way in planning and carrying out this year's Children's Missions Day event. When adults take a supporting role, children are equipped to share God's love in a powerful way. Visit wmu.com/cmd for more information.

Heather Keller is the WMU Girls in Action and Children in Action consultant.





Cooperation: We Are Better Together

By Jeanette Cloyd



Picture two brothers, little boys, each too short to reach the cookie jar on the countertop. Though they stretch their hands high, they just can't reach it. One brother lowers his body to the floor, as if to crawl on his hands and knees, while the other brother carefully stands on his back. Successfully reaching the cookie jar, the boy grabs two cookies, and the brothers enjoy the outcome of their combined effort.

This scenario is a simplified picture of the Cooperative Program (CP). You and I, two Southern Baptists, can't reach the desired outcome alone, but when we work together, our resources combine to make Christ's name known around the world. We are better together.

Since its inception in 1925, the Cooperative Program has funded Southern Baptist missions and ministries, including North American and international missions and theological education, as well as ethics and religious liberty initiatives.

Cooperative Program Sunday is October 6, 2024, a day set aside to promote and share about the Cooperative Program. Information regarding the Cooperative Program can be found at sbc.net/missions/the-cooperative-program.

How will your church recognize Cooperative Program Sunday? Consider ways to celebrate what the Cooperative Program has accomplished, educate church members about the Cooperative Program, pray for its beneficiaries, and provide opportunities to support the Cooperative Program through giving.

Two Months Prior

- Meet with your pastor to discuss ways your church can creatively observe Cooperative Program Sunday:
 - ✦ **Cooperative Program Pie Fellowship**—Serve pie, and present information about the various entities that benefit from a portion of the Cooperative Program “pie” (see CP Heart Chart under “Promotional Resources” on the CP web page).
 - ✦ **Guest Speaker**—Possible speakers include a Cooperative Program ambassador (information regarding these ambassadors can be found on the CP web page), a missionary, or a pastor

whose education was partially funded through the Cooperative Program.

- ✦ **Which Is Older? Presentation**—Someone with a CP sandwich board stands on stage as a teenager playing with a yo-yo enters and says, “I was trademarked in 1929.” CP replies, “I’m older than that.” Repeat the process with a man pretending to use an electric razor (patented in 1928); a woman with an aerosol spray can (patented in 1927), such as hairspray; and a child blowing bubble gum (created in 1928). Each time CP says, “I’m older than that.” Conclude with the person representing the Cooperative Program saying, “I was created in 1925,” and then present information about the Cooperative Program.
- Invite volunteers to present.

One Month Prior

- Promote the emphasis through church announcements, bulletin inserts, newsletter articles, and social media. Graphics can be found in the Cooperative Program Digital Kit, which you can sign up to receive on the CP web page.
- Visit vimeo.com/sbccp and sbc.net/resource-library/52-sundays to access CP videos and stories. Use these each week to educate the congregation about the far-reaching benefits of the Cooperative Program.
- Contact the presenters to finalize plans.

Month of Emphasis

- Implement the plans you have made to enthusiastically promote the Cooperative Program.
- Send thank-you notes to those who helped make the emphasis a success.
- Praise God that we are better together!

Jeanette Cloyd is thankful for the Cooperative Program and gladly writes about it from her home in Illinois.

Your Association Can Have a Generational Impact

By JoAnn Mann

In 1969, a local Texas association organized a missions trip to Ciudad Acuña in Coahuila, Mexico. My grandmother saw a group of people visit and lovingly share God's Word in her community, and she sent her children to their Vacation Bible School. Through that interaction, my mother became active in that church. Eventually, my grandmother came to know the Lord and guided my mother and six uncles as they grew in their faith.

Associational missions planted a seed that led to a legacy of faith in Christ for generations in my family. As a grown-up member of Girls in Action, I am grateful for the impact associational missions continues to have on churches and individuals across the world.

Two Months Prior

This year, the Day of Prayer for Associational Missions is October 20. Start preparing for the 2024 emphasis by engaging with your local associational mission strategist. Besides having information unique to your association, your associational mission strategist can answer an integral question: How can I pray for you? Additionally, plan ahead, and visit ameresources.org to find free, quality resources to help with the emphasis.

Beauty is found in the diversity of our churches. Have fun tailoring this experience for your church. Ask for help! This is a great opportunity to partner with your pastor and leaders and to invest in growing leadership.

Here are a few ideas to kick off your brainstorming:

- Organize a field trip to your local association's office to meet your associational mission strategist. Bring a representative from each age level. Ask, "How can I pray for you?" and share prayer requests with your church.
- Invite associational leaders to visit your church for a special time of prayer.

- Reach out to other churches in your association, and offer to help organize a collaborative worship and prayer rally.

One Month Prior

- Work with your association to start The Prayer Project. Find a church to partner with, and invite each age-level group to swap prayer requests weekly leading up to a worship and prayer rally where groups can meet their prayer partners.
- Hold a planning meeting to work out details for the worship and prayer rally. Consider a collaborative worship and prayer leadership team.
- Create secret prayer partnerships. Ask small groups from your church to select a church or church leader in your association or a staff member at your association's office to pray for. This can be done from home for those unable to travel or on-site for those able to gather.
- Invite church members to use their strengths to help with the emphasis. Ask volunteers to create telephone chains, write postcards, design flyers, and coordinate social media campaigns to promote your activities.

Month of Emphasis

- Host the planned worship and prayer rally.
- Offer an activity where small groups can connect with their secret prayer partners. Set up a pop-up prayer stand in your church foyer. Invite church members to write a note to the church, church leader, or associational leader they have been secretly praying for during the past month.
- Include a special time of prayer over associational leaders and their families in a Sunday service.

JoAnn Mann is a missionary serving as children's director with Graffiti 2 Community Ministries in the South Bronx in New York City.





Equipping Baptist Women to Pray

By Taryn Slott

When my family lived overseas, I had the joy of being a part of multicultural worship services and hearing people pray in various languages simultaneously. I felt humility, awe, and unity from hearing people praying and praising God and from knowing He hears, understands, and responds to each person.

God hears the prayers of the saints. I am amazed at the reminder that the God of the universe, who spoke the world into motion, hears and responds to our prayers.

What Is It?

Baptists have a long history of praying together. The Baptist Women's Day of Prayer began in 1948 as a postwar, multicultural prayer meeting focusing on building unity after unimaginable pain and suffering. Many languages were spoken as women poured out their requests to God. Join the women of your church on November 4, 2024, to support through prayer the work God is doing in your community.

Two Months Prior

- Before you plan your event, check with your associational mission strategist to see whether your association is planning an event you could support.
- If there is no existing event, create a team of women to help promote and plan your day of prayer event.
 - ✦ Ensure your team is large enough to cover all the main tasks for the event. This could include someone to lead in promotion by preparing event materials, someone to lead in registration and keeping track of the details, someone to lead in planning the program, and someone to lead in decorating and hospitality.
 - ✦ Consider the following ideas for the type of event: a prayerwalk, a prayer breakfast, a prayer meeting in a coffee shop, etc.
 - ✦ Meet with the leaders in your church or association to discuss and explain the event.
- Decide on the type of event you will hold and the day and time. Consider ways to include women of different ages and stages of life in the event.
- Plan the event content—Decide how you will promote the event, such as sending out RSVP invitations or posting on social media, and encourage each woman to invite a friend.
- Promotion—Print any resources needed to promote the day of prayer.

- Pray with the leadership team for the day of prayer. Ask God to use this event to encourage and equip the women in your community.
- Plan activities for the event to encourage women of all ages and stages of life to pray together.

One Month Prior

- Meet with the leadership team to finalize details.
- Print the program for each participant from bwawomen.org/day-of-prayer.
- Challenge each person on the leadership team to tell one person about the history of the Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer and invite her to the event via email, phone call, or text message.
- Continue praying for the event with the leadership team.
- Gather any other materials necessary for the event—a prayer journal for each participant, supplies to make prayer bracelets together, etc.
- Choose a Baptist woman to encourage as part of your prayer event. Plan to write her a note or email, or call her at the event.

Month of Emphasis

- Pray for the details of the event. Ask the Lord to use this event to encourage and equip women to work together in advancing the gospel around the world.
- Praise God for the way He has worked and is working through the day of prayer.
- Distribute materials to the women at the event.
- Include any women who could not attend the event by mailing them copies of the materials.
- Obtain current prayer requests from bwawomen.org/day-of-prayer.
- Host the event, and collect the offering. Find information about giving to Baptist World Alliance Women at bwawomen.org/day-of-prayer.
- Continue praying for Baptist women around the world.
- Write an encouraging note to members of the leadership team.

Taryn Slott spent more than a decade as a career missionary with the International Mission Board in Asia. A mom of three and a pastor's wife, she now lives with her family in Louisville, Kentucky, where she works at Kentucky WMU as a mission strategist for students and women. She loves coffee and spending time with her family.

Sharing God's Love with Orphans and Widows

By Pat Ingram

On Sunday, November 10, 2024, Southern Baptists will observe Orphans and Widows Sunday. God's Word clearly shows us He cares deeply for widows and orphans. He also calls us to share in that care. James 1:27 says, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." Caring for orphans and widows is an expression of our love for God and a witness to others of that love. Orphans and Widows Sunday is a time to focus on how we can meet needs and share love in Jesus' name to those in need within and outside of our church family.

What will that look like this year for you and your church? Take time to make plans. No matter what you decide to do, this emphasis is an important aspect of living out our love for the Lord—as individuals and as a church. This observance is a wonderful time to encourage church members to learn about, pray for, and support orphans and widows, as well as tell them about Jesus and help them feel His love.

Two Months Prior

Research needs and opportunities in your church, community, state, and across the Convention. Consider these questions and ideas:

- How are the widows in your church cared for? Are they contacted frequently? Do they have the help they need? Are there adoptive or foster families in your church? How are you ministering to them?
- Collect information about local foster and adoption ministries. Think of ways to communicate that information, especially to younger families in your church.
- Learn more about Baptist Children and Family Ministries and its state children's homes. See whether there is a Baptist state children's home near you. Also learn about Lifeline Children's Services and ways to be involved at lifelinechild.org.
- Research Guidestone's Mission:Dignity. Find information and ways to be involved at guidestone.org/Mission-Dignity.
- Consider ways to communicate with church members about this emphasis and ways to be involved. Talk with your pastor or other

church leaders about your ideas.

One Month Prior

- Compile and share a list of ways church members can be involved with serving orphans and widows. Include ideas for individual involvement, such as bringing a meal to a widow or foster family, doing yard work or housework for a widow, or taking a widow, foster parent, or adoptive parent to lunch. Encourage creativity and prayerfulness in planning.
- Publicize any events you have planned to teach about and collect offerings for ministries you have chosen that serve widows and orphans.
- Use every available opportunity to share information and facilitate involvement in the activities you have planned. Give information to every age-level group with appropriate suggestions.

Month of Emphasis

- Host the events or activities planned.
- Celebrate and report activities and outcomes to your group and your church family.
- Encourage participants to continue to be involved, to minister, and to pray.
- Share information churchwide about how to be actively involved in adoption and fostering.

God can use us to make a life-changing difference—what a witness that is to the world!

Pat Ingram serves as a missions and ministry consultant with Alabama WMU. She loves having opportunities to share God's love with others!

