

30 Ways to Awaken Your Congregation for the Cause of Global Engagement

In their 2010 year-end report, the Barna Group [identified](#) six major patterns emerging among Christians in America:

1. The Christian Church is becoming less theologically literate.
2. Christians are becoming more ingrown and less outreach-oriented.
3. Growing numbers of people are less interested in spiritual principles and more desirous of learning pragmatic solutions for life.
4. Among Christians, interest in participating in community action is escalating.
5. The postmodern insistence on tolerance is winning over the Christian Church.
6. The influence of Christianity on culture and individual lives is largely invisible.

Much could be said (and done!) about each of these. In response to the drift away from outreach and missions, as mentioned in the second point, we put together this list of 30 practical steps church leaders can take to see that their congregations stay alive and true to the global mission of God.

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- 1) Place a large laminated map in your church's lobby and ask every person to sign their name or initials on the nation for which they are burdened to pray regularly.
- 2) Host a visiting national pastor for a week or two of ministry and interaction with your church.
- 3) Budget for your pastors to make at least one cross-cultural ministry trip each year.
- 4) Identify a good book & study guide on global missions and lead your small groups through a church-wide study.
- 5) When your church sends out a short-term or long-term cross-cultural team, hang a national flag representing that country in your church lobby or sanctuary as a reminder to pray each week for the team or missionary.
- 6) Publish a list of recommended missions books and bios, and have the books available at the church.
- 7) Incorporate world-aware prayers into your worship services, and encourage the formation of an accessible, missions-focused prayer group in the church (perhaps based on the book [Operation World](#)).
- 8) Visit your missionaries. Have people help them move, and regularly send teams to minister to your missionaries and potentially aid in the work. Missionaries are usually more inclined to share needs with a visiting church member than their field supervisor.
- 9) Commission individuals and teams when they go, and set up an avenue for them to report on their work to the rest of the church.
- 10) Reach out to internationals in your own city. Invite them to dinner, ask them to come and fix a dinner for the congregation to share the foods of their nation, help them improve their English, teach them how to use public transportation in your area, etc.
- 11) Dedicate a week of the year to missions at your church, incorporating things such as special messages from guest speakers, ethnic dinners, documentaries on particular nations and people groups, missionary testimonies, and prayer meetings.
- 12) Send groups to local and national missions-focused conferences.

- 13) Take advantage of global events. When a crisis happens, address it in your services, pray, raise money, send a team. As a pastor, before church services always check websites like CNN, BBC, etc. to see if there is world news that the congregation should know and for which they should pray that very day.
- 14) Clearly [distinguish](#) between missions and evangelism, and continually preach the need for both. (The difference is also well-defined in the book, [Let the Nations Be Glad.](#))
- 15) Develop a succinct and memorable statement of your church's vision for missions, and post it in a visible place in your church. Have it printed weekly on the church bulletin until everyone can say it from memory.
- 16) Adopt a particular [people group](#) as a church, and direct specific prayer, giving, and service towards them. Set an annual goal of sponsoring at least one theological book in the heart-language of that people every year. ([Contact](#) Desiring God International Outreach for advice and plans for books.)
- 17) Set goals with your church on how to be involved in missions (this many people sent this year, this much money given, etc.).
- 18) Preserve (or establish!) the position of Missions Pastor at your church.
- 19) Hire an intern for your church from another country. While they may only be able to come on a student visa, your church could still offer an honorarium or stipend for expenses.
- 20) Attend or host the [Perspectives](#) course; or, as an alternative, direct your people towards the [Let the Nations Be Glad DVD](#). It presents most of topics in the Perspectives course in six sessions.
- 21) Incorporate books and activities into your youth program that foster a cross-cultural missions mindset.
- 22) Buy in bulk and sell at cost large world maps that members of your church can post on their walls at home.
- 23) Distribute guides for the “30 Days of Prayer” programs for people from other major world religions, such as this [one for Muslims](#).
- 24) Observe the [International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church](#), which happens every November and is sponsored by [Voice of the Martyrs](#) and [Open Doors](#).
- 25) Offer foreign language courses to your congregation that correspond to the people you desire to reach, whether locally or abroad.
- 26) Have a weekly missions focus in your church bulletin with famous missions quotes (like the ones in this [PDF](#)), statistics about nations and people groups, updates from your church's missionaries, etc.
- 27) Deliver a biographical message on the life of a great missionary (or lead your people in some other way of hearing their story). See, for example, John Piper's biographies of [Adoniram Judson](#) and [John Paton](#).
- 28) Feature links on your church's website to other missions-related websites.
- 29) Encourage your congregation to subscribe to a world news source (such as a magazine, newspaper, or podcast) or to make it their Internet browser homepage. Some recommended sources are [BBC](#), [World](#), and, for this year, the [White Horse Inn podcast](#), which is focusing their 2011 broadcasts on the Great Commission.
- 30) Attend, or perhaps even host, events and dinners put on by missions organizations in your area ([Wycliffe](#), [International Justice Mission](#), [World Vision](#), etc.).