

Take Time to Refresh Your Missions Team



A dozen ideas to reinvigorate your leaders

By Ellen Livingood

Summer may be a busy time for your church missions leadership team. But summer is also a crucial time to refresh your team for the coming year. Here are 12 ideas to reenergize the hearts and minds of your leaders.

Your team probably invests lots of energy to refresh your missionaries. But who refreshes your missions team? Use one or more of these suggestions to combat burnout and head into another busy ministry year with renewed vision and joy.

1. Senior Pastor Thanks

Share with your senior pastor some of the work your missions leadership team has done in the past year. Ask your pastor to either write a personal note of thanks to each member of your team, or come and thank the team in person at the beginning of one of your meetings.

2. Congregational Appreciation and Rededication

If you have Moment-for-Missions segments in your worship services, use one of them to highlight the work of your missions team. Call them to the front and offer a prayer of recommissioning. If your church is large and platform time is not available, take a picture of your team and create a PowerPoint slide for your announcement time. Include a "Thanks to a great missions team!" headline.

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3. Time to Celebrate What God's Done

Have a backyard barbeque or other fun activity to celebrate your team's hard work over the past year. Reserve part of your time to make a list of things that God has done through your service as well as via the work of the missionaries and projects you supported for the past 12 months. Give praise to God and celebrate these victories. Celebration is an amazing motivator as you look ahead!

4. Fun Retreat

Plan a one-day or weekend retreat to have fun together as a missions leadership team. This is a great way to integrate new members into your team. Dedicate time to having each person share their personal story of how God stimulated their vision for missions. You could also incorporate ideas # 3, 6, or 10 into your activities, but make sure you have plenty of time to just enjoy fun together.

5. Ethnic Worship

As a team, go worship with believers from another culture. It will be a good reminder of why you do what you do. Rejoice that someday you will worship before God's throne with people of many languages who are there partially because of your dedicated service. All your hard work is worth it!

6. Personal-Growth Goals

Ask team members to pray and reflect on what would help them serve better in the coming year. Options could include attending a training conference, reading books, visiting a missionary on the field, taking an online missions course, etc. Consider creating a line item in your annual budget to fund ongoing learning for team members.

7. Turn-the-tables event

Your missions team constantly serves your missionaries, but how about holding an event where the opposite happens, where missionaries serve your missions team? If several of

your global workers are currently in the area, recruit them to prepare and serve dinner for your team. During the meal, ask each missionary to express what the work of the missions team means to them. Conclude by having your missionaries pray for even greater missions fruitfulness from the life and work of each team member.

8. Volunteering Together

Working together is a great team-building exercise and allows your missions team to serve together in a completely different context. Tackle a project at a local ministry or work together to serve your missionaries in some different way. Conclude the day by asking each person to describe how they appreciate the perspective and work of one of the other team members.

9. Vision-Renewing Reading

Encourage each of your missions team to read one or two missions books on vacation or sometime during the summer. Check out our Best Missions Mobilization Books lists from [2014](#) and [2015](#) for good reads.

10. Attending to God's Vision

Set aside one whole team meeting just to share what each person longs to see God do in missions through your church. Ahead of time, encourage each team member to pray for Spirit-guided sensitivity to His purposes for your congregation in the coming 12 months. After each person has shared, make a combined list for further prayer. How is God directing you to shift or expand your missions focus in the next year? Do these ideas create a new sense of anticipation for what is ahead?

11. A Sharpening-Your-Skills Day

Invite a missions-mobilization specialist to conduct a one-day workshop on a topic your team would like to learn about. However, don't keep the benefits just for yourselves. Invite missions leadership teams from area churches to join you for the day. [Catalyst](#) provides such workshops and/or can point you to other trainers in your area.

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12. Your Own Renewal

Make sure that you do something to refresh your own global vision and passion. What would reinvigorate your heart and mind this summer? Here are some possibilities:

- A. Meet with the missions team leader of a nearby church, someone with whom you can be transparent. Talk about what makes your job difficult and what makes it a delight. Pray for each other. Choose at least one thing you will do to be refreshed in the coming month and hold each other accountable for doing it.
- B. Go to the [Desiring God website](#) and listen to one or more of John Piper's challenges. Many of these podcasts are missions oriented.
- C. Meet with your senior pastor. Pray together for the missions program. Look for ways you can be mutually encouraging.
- D. Visit an area of the world where particularly exciting things are happening in ministry. You will come home with a renewed vision for your church's partnership with the global church. ([Contact Catalyst](#) if you would like to consider an exciting partnership where God is at work in the Middle East.)



Ellen Livingood launched and leads Catalyst Services to help engage the untapped potential of the local church. She coaches and assists churches, mission agencies, and networks.

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