

18.26 Network

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Vocational Missions FAQs for CHURCHES AND PASTORS

Your basic questions about vocational missions may be some of the *frequently-asked-questions* (FAQs) that we are often asked:

Why are vocational missions needed?

As people respond to Christ's Great Commission, some wonder, "how can I use my profession in my desire to serve?" They may not see how their vocation is part of God's missional plans. Others are hesitant to become full-time missionaries because of the support raising aspect involved. The 18.26 Network helps Christians use their God given professional gifts and talents by connecting them with mission teams, especially with Mission to the World (MTW), or with global partners. The vocational missionary will partner with missionaries while using their vocations as their mission's platform.

How would this work? Are your missionaries also MTW missionaries?

Vocational missionaries are not MTW missionaries but serve in partnership with the team at their invitation. Vocational missionaries' first ministry is to be faithful workers and excellent members to their community. US State Department estimates are that over 9 million Americans live and work internationally. We want to see more of them serving intentionally with mission works in the place they live and work. So, the 18.26 Network connects people with current reformed mission works by helping them develop a memorandum of understanding between the vocational missionary and the mission work.

What role does the church play in supporting vocational missionaries?

The church is the equipping and sending part of Christ's kingdom on earth. In that regard, the church prepares people to serve wherever they are. People serve best when they are biblically trained and equipped and the church is responsible that vital role of preparation. When someone applies to go out as a vocational missionary we look to pastors and missions team members as their first point of reference and the voice of agreement that they should go. Once approved, we want the church to continue to be engaged with them in their spiritual journey. That would mean monthly contacting them about how they are doing. The church will continue to provide literature and resources for them spiritually.

How does this affect the church?

For the church global it means more people intentionally involved in kingdom work globally. For the local church it will mean people thinking that missions is not just for those who raise support, it is for each person as they use their occupation for God's kingdom. It could mean that as someone takes their job to another country and works alongside a mission team that — that they should be doing the same with their local church when they return.

What can the church do to promote vocational missionary calling?

The easiest is to inform the congregation about the idea of being a vocational missionary. It could be making 18.26 Network promotional material available to members. The church could also have someone speak about vocational missions at a mission's conference.

Promoting books like *Visions of Grace* by Steve Garber, or *Every Good Endeavor* by Tim Keller, or *Kingdom Calling* by Amy L. Sherman is also helpful for church members. A good theology of vocation for the entire church is foundational to sending out vocational missionaries.

Someone from the 18.26 Network is willing to visit your church to speak. Also, for the 18.26 Network to operate, it needs financial support if the church is interested in supporting this new, vital, and needed mission endeavor.