



DestiNations
INTERNATIONAL

CHURCH PARTNERSHIP MANUAL



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DestiNations INTERNATIONAL **CHURCH PARTNERSHIP MANUAL**

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Pastor and Sending Church,

We count it a privilege to be able to partner together with you and the Lord Jesus Christ in making His name known among nations. Jesus said, "I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He invites us to participate in that vision by obeying His last command - proclaiming the Gospel, making disciples, gathering them together, baptizing them, and teaching them to obey everything He commanded. This task of discipling the nations was given to the church as his official representatives 2,000 years ago, and there is still much work to be done. Over 3 billion people in the world today still have little or no access to the Gospel. DNI exists to assist the church in carrying out the mission of Christ.

God has given DNI a vision to reach the unreached with the Gospel, but we cannot fulfill this work without sending churches like you who share that vision. In order for the Great Commission to be accomplished, missionaries must be identified, called, equipped, sent, supported, and cared for. We view this as a shared responsibility between the sending church and DNI. The involvement of the sending churches is essential for the ongoing emotional and spiritual health of our workers, and it is vital for the success of the mission. Pooling our resources enables us to accomplish much more together than we could individually.

Thank you for allowing us to partner with you in this work. We are humbled and grateful that you are willing to entrust us with your people and your resources. By God's grace and with your help, we will strive to be faithful stewards of His resources.

In Your Service,
President
DestiNations International

About DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL (DNI)

Origins

DNI was formed in February 1999 as the Mission Agency of the newly formed Biblical Mennonite Alliance (BMA).

Vision Statement

"To make Christ known, His name worshipped, and His word obeyed by every nation, people, and tongue."

Mission Statement

"Proclaiming the gospel, and planting reproducing, mission-minded Anabaptist churches among unreached peoples."

Prayer

We place a strong emphasis on prayer knowing that God desires for His children to be blessed through worship and supplication.

DNI's Financial Model

We operate under the faith missions support model. We understand the faith missions support model as an approach to ministry that encourages its workers to trust God to provide all the necessary resources for the work He has called them to do. Workers are not paid a salary by DNI, but cover their living expenses and ministry expenses through the gifts of churches, business professionals, and individuals. DNI acts as a channel for donors to give to its workers and ministry projects.

For greater detail see page 11.

Accountability

DNI is accountable to the Biblical Mennonite Alliance Ministerial Body.

www.biblicalmennonite.com

Partnering

We partner with Anabaptist churches to recruit, train, send, and support teams to proclaim the gospel and plant reproducing, mission-minded Anabaptist churches among unreached peoples.

Training

DNI seeks to equip our workers doctrinally, theologically, and culturally to share the gospel, make disciples, and plant churches.

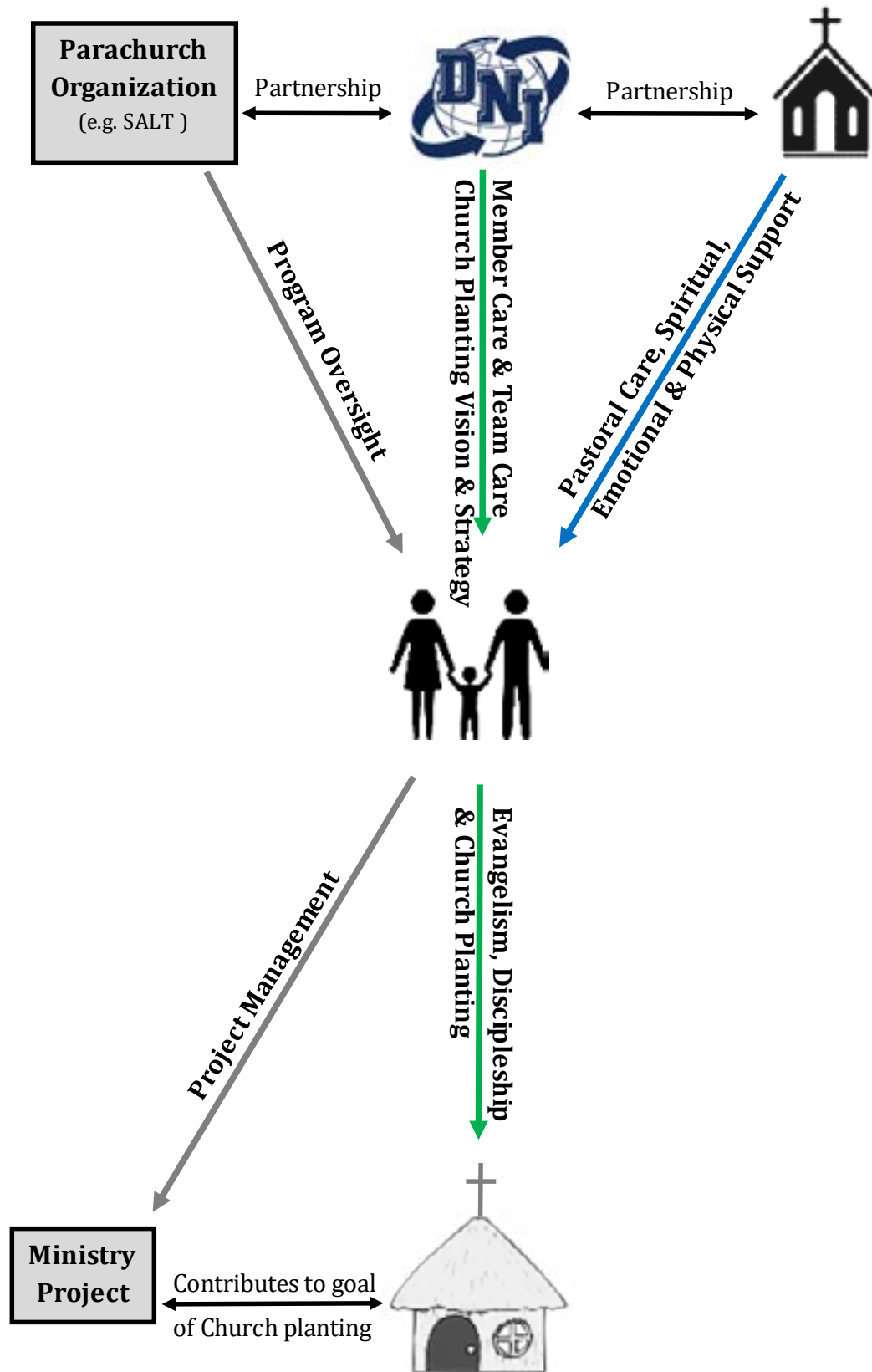
We operate the Ministry Training Center (MTC) in New York City that provides long-term ministry training for all our workers.

www.mtcinnyc.com

DNI's Restore Training is a trauma-based training empowering woman with Christ-centered training to facilitate restoration.

www.restore.training

DNI and Sending Church PARTNERSHIP



DNI and Sending Church Partnership

| Item | DNI Responsibility | Sending Church Responsibility |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Member Care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary member care, counseling, and team care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual pastoral care: spiritual, emotional, and financial. |
| Prayer | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish monthly Intercessors Bulletin | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate prayer needs and recruit prayer warriors |
| Team Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build and develop team Team mediation in case of conflict | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prayer and individual worker counsel and support |
| Oversight of Church Plant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary responsibility for vision and strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secondary support of church planters |
| Preparing and Equipping | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prefield training Onboarding/Orientation Worker development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure Support Team is in place (<u>Serving as Senders</u>) Prefield Mentoring (<u>Mission Smart</u>) Ongoing pastoral care and mentoring |
| Finances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Channel support to workers Regular reporting of worker finances Equity fund | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Support Prayer |
| Home Assignment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airfare Debriefing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make sure physical needs are met Provide opportunity for workers to share Debriefing |
| Logistical Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airfare to the field Guidance for church visits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure legal and financial management services are in place |
| Re-entry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airfare Debriefing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debriefing Provide opportunity for workers to share Reintegration support |
| Reporting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly to Pastors Annual call after team visit Communicate concerns about workers and teams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate concerns about workers and teams |

Why Have A SENDING SUPPORT TEAM

Imagine that God called you to a strange land with a strange language and a strange culture to proclaim the gospel message, disciple new believers, train leaders and raise up a church. God worked in your heart and then affirmed the calling by your church through the Holy Spirit's leading. In this process of being called of the Lord to share the gospel message to those who have never heard you have received multiple confirmations to the call. But now, how do you begin to answer and implement God's call? Where would you begin? No doubt the whole concept sounds rather overwhelming.

Acts 13:2-3 gives us a Biblical model of how the first missionaries were called and sent: "While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Saul and Barnabas for the work to which I have called them.' Then after fasting and praying, they laid their hands on them and sent them off."

In these verses, the Bible makes it clear that the home church bears a responsibility to send off those who've been "set apart" in a loving and caring way. But the task is not completed once they have been sent off. We see at the end of Acts 14 that Paul and Barnabas returned to the church that sent them, told of the things the Lord had done, and remained with them for a considerable time. Today, statistics show over 70% of all returned missionaries leave their sending church within the first year after returning home.

At DNI, we feel these statistics are unacceptable and we want to do better. To accomplish this, we feel each worker/family unit needs to have a support team in place to provide moral, prayer, logistic, financial and communication support. This support needs to start from the time of their calling until God calls them back home again. Support is needed in the preparation phase as well as in the leaving, on-field, home assignment, and reentry phases. When this support is not done well, missionaries can get very discouraged and tempted to give up on their call.

One discouraged missionary wrote:

"Yesterday I was really feeling frustrated. We have all these ways to connect and help each other, and communication from back home just needs an overhaul. Looking back, these two questions are rarely being asked: "How can I pray for you? How can I help?" I am the type of person that hates asking people for help, because I don't know if they have the time. I don't know if they really want to help. I don't know if they really care. I know people are praying, but I don't hear the [actual] words... I know there have been people at times who have asked, but I wish they did it monthly somehow. I need a Missions Committee and a church back home that gets involved. Honestly, I think they need people on the committee that are less busy."

This was from a missionary that was on the field for more than 10 years. Missions committees, support teams, and even church congregations change over the years. Therefore, without an intentional, wholistic plan of support in place, the missionaries are forgotten.

Here is where the Sending Support Team comes in. This is usually a small group of people, maybe 4 to 6 couples; and consists of family, close friends or fellow church members with a keen interest in the missionary's calling. A Sending Support Team can also be the church's Mission Board/ Committee.

In order for a Sending Support Team to function well, both good listening and close, open communication are needed between the Team and those being sent. Communication is a two-way street. If either party is reserved in their communication, good care will be compromised.

The following page includes the basic areas of care to consider in each phase.

1. Preparation Phase – This seems to be the most overlooked phase of care. It is an ideal time for the Sending Church to provide mentoring, particularly in developing and exercising the gifts and talents of the missionary. This period may take a year or more, depending on the new culture and location of service. As the missionary prepares, there will be a considerable time and financial investment in the application stage, various personal and field components as a result of meetings, field visits and training. Things to consider in this phase are travel and training costs; child care; and limited time for gainful employment.

"I need a Missions Committee and a church back home that gets involved."

2. Leaving Phase – Some things to consider in this phase are the worker's disbursement and/or storage of property and goods; their temporary shelter and transportation; and other such logistics.

3. On-Field Phase – This phase requires making intentional effort to pray for, stay in touch with, provide home church news to, and also visit the missionary, not overlooking the wife and children.

4. Home Assignment Phase – Needs during this phase include living arrangements, transportation, staples, cell phones, continued financial support, and care for emotional and spiritual needs.

5. Re-entry Phase – In this final stage, effort should be made to provide care for reverse culture shock, temporary living and transportation needs, heart needs by lending a listening ear, and aspects of everyday life.

DestiNations International desires to encourage and assist sending churches in being excellent senders. We desire for the sending congregation to view the work of the missionary as an extension of their own work.

We have help and resources available to assist each congregation in fulfilling the calling of being excellent senders, and we would be delighted to share these with you. See [page 14](#) for further details.

What We Mean by **MEMBER CARE**

While living in our home settings, we enjoy close proximity to spiritual communities that take a pastoral interest in our heart and soul. On the contrary, missionaries often become increasingly alienated from the resources of their former communities the longer they are on the mission field. Generally, leaders of our faith communities have seldom had the time and energy to understand the needs of their missionaries, or to tend to the spiritual health of those who are serving in the field. Many of the difficulties that missionaries encounter are rooted in the lack of a spiritual community and the subsequent care and tending to their spiritual lives. Therefore, we at DNI desire to partner with sending church leaders to provide excellent care for those they send.

In our modern and proudly individualistic western culture, we are subtly taught to "make it on our own," so that Christians may believe that we do not need help from anyone except God. We may believe that asking for help is a sign of immaturity or weakness, a lack of faith or spirituality, or perhaps a symptom of illness—either mental or physical.

But God designed us to be in relationship with Him and others. When man tries to "go it alone," things go wrong. Yes, Christ came to restore each individual's broken relationship with the Father, broken by one's sin and independent attitude. But the Bible doesn't speak about individual Christianity. Instead, as members of the Body of Christ, we are interdependent on each other to survive, grow and function. This interdependence is especially pertinent for cross-cultural church planters who work in the least-reached parts of the world.

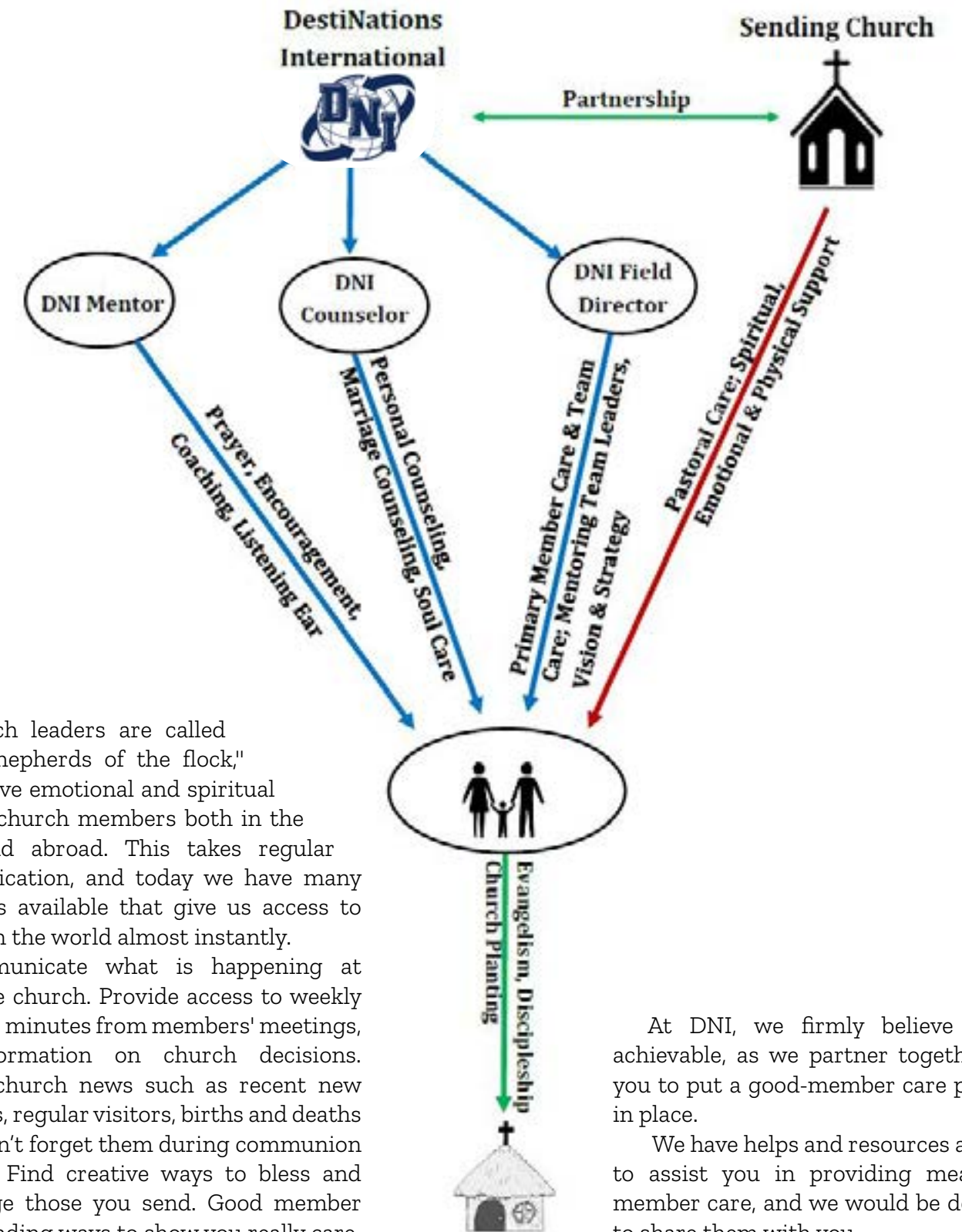
The *longer* a missionary is away, the more important the need is to be *connected* to their sending community. However, unless *great intentionality* is given, the community begins to *forget* the missionary.

Along with the numerous challenges that come specifically with cross-cultural work and life, missionaries experience the same bumps in the road that we all do. They experience the normal transitions of life—parents who die and children who get sick, etc. However, most of their support systems are far away. Beyond this, married missionaries often face difficulties due to differing cultural norms and accepted behavior for couples in foreign cultures. Single missionaries may face a deep loneliness, with most or even all of their caring friends on the other side of the globe, living in a different time zone. In addition to this, missionaries often face harsh realities of living and working in less secure communities. Understanding stresses such as these helps us to see why missionary hearts greatly need pastoral tending.

Consider this quandary: often when a missionary is sent from a church to work overseas, the need to be connected to his sending community grows more important the longer he is away. However, as a sending community, (again, unless great intentionality is given) the temptation to forget the missionary grows with the passage of time.

Furthermore, many places in the world require a long-term commitment from missionaries in order to plant reproducing Anabaptist churches. This translates into 10+ years. If a missionary is gone that long, the leadership and membership of their sending church will naturally have seen significant change, as well as the committees that sent and supported them initially. Therefore, consistent member care is a need that must be addressed if we are to see long-term missionaries that serve in healthy, sustainable ways, and return to remain with their sending churches.

DNI and Sending Church **MEMBER CARE**



Church leaders are called to be "shepherds of the flock," and to give emotional and spiritual care for church members both in the pews and abroad. This takes regular communication, and today we have many platforms available that give us access to anyone in the world almost instantly.

Communicate what is happening at the home church. Provide access to weekly bulletins, minutes from members' meetings, and information on church decisions. Include church news such as recent new members, regular visitors, births and deaths – and don't forget them during communion services. Find creative ways to bless and encourage those you send. Good member care is finding ways to show you really care.

At DNI, we firmly believe this is achievable, as we partner together with you to put a good-member care program in place.

We have helps and resources available to assist you in providing meaningful member care, and we would be delighted to share them with you.

How You Can Support DNI

Prayer

We believe that God desires His disciples to ask that His Kingdom would come. Therefore, we put a strong emphasis on prayer when considering any and all areas of our lives.

We invite faithful believers to join in the work of DNI as intercessory prayer partners for our workers, administration, and sending churches.

DNI provides the Intercessors Bulletin, a prayer guide to present workers' monthly prayer requests. It is updated monthly and is available upon request by emailing destinationsupdates@gmail.com.

We would also welcome you to join us at our monthly prayer meeting, held at 6am EST on the first Wednesday of each month. Or if you prefer, join us during UNITE, our annual half-night of prayer, as an individual or as a church. Sign up for either event online: www.destinationsint.com. Your prayers truly make a difference!

DNI FINANCIAL Model

In 1999, as DestiNations International (DNI) was forming, the founders decided that DNI should operate under the Faith Missions Support model. This model takes the approach to ministry that encourages its workers to trust God to provide all the necessary resources for the work He has called them to do. As the years have passed, we have seen God faithfully provide in moments of both need and abundance. DNI publishes a booklet called "Stories to Encourage Your Faith" each year as a praise to God. This book consists of short stories of how God faithfully provides—financially and otherwise—as DNI workers ask in prayer.

DNI recognizes that the Faith Missions Support model is not a widely-used model, nor is it well-understood by the workers' sending congregations. We desire to better partner with the sending churches in fulfilling the mandate given to us in Matthew 28. Therefore, we trust that you will find the following explanation helpful.

- Our workers do not actively seek or need a specific level of support before they go to the mission field. Rather, they determine a sustainable monthly budget as a guide for donors.
- Workers are not paid a salary by DNI, but instead cover their own living and ministry expenses through the gifts of churches, business owners, professionals, and individuals.
- All DNI personnel function under the Faith Missions Support model, including all Administrative staff and Ministry Training Center staff. No one in DNI receives a salary.
- DNI acts as a channel for donors to give to its workers and ministry projects.
- For each worker/family sent from your congregation, DNI will provide a web link which will be updated monthly.

Giving

We invite churches, business professionals, and individuals to consider partnering with us to take the gospel to unreached people groups. Gifts may be designated to DestiNations International in one of the ways listed below. We issue tax deductible receipts for all donations.

We would be glad to answer any questions you may have.



- **General Fund**
The General Fund covers travel for workers to and from the field; worker training; administrative field visits; worker care; publications; and office expenses; as well as an equity fund (a 2% match of designated worker support set aside for each worker and given to them at the conclusion of their service).
- **Designated Worker Fund**
All designated (earmarked) funds for workers are paid out to each worker on a monthly basis. DNI does not withhold any percentage from worker support for administrative costs.
- **Undesignated Worker Fund**
Gifts to this fund provide financial assistance for workers whose support levels are significantly under budget.
- **Ongoing Ministry Projects**
Gifts may be designated for specific ministry projects such as community centers, coffee shops, or training programs. Visit our website to see a list of current projects (www.destinationsint.com/give).
- **Special One Time Projects**
Gifts may be designated for special one-time projects, such as a building project or an urgent worker need. Visit our website to see a list of current projects (www.destinationsint.com/give).
- **College Fund**
This fund helps DNI workers make minimum monthly payments on college debt. This enables DNI workers to get to their mission assignment without first needing to pay off their college debt. This fund is available to workers signing up for 3+ years.

ADDRESSING Personal and Team Concerns

DNI and Sending Church Partnership:

The personal, emotional, financial and spiritual health of workers is a responsibility shared by both DNI and the sending church.

- DNI shall provide the primary member care, team care, counseling, and direction for church planting vision and strategy.
- Sending churches shall provide pastoral care for workers' personal, financial, emotional and spiritual health, and facilitate ongoing connections between workers and the sending church.

Both entities shall report to each other items of financial, emotional, physical, relational and spiritual concern.

- Items of a non-urgent nature can be shared at the annual post-field visit check-in call between the field director and the sending church pastoral team.
- Items of significant concern shall be shared in a timely manner between the field director and sending church lead pastor.

Issues involving team relationships and mediation of team conflict shall be the primary responsibility of the field director and DNI administration.

- Workers shall be encouraged to follow the Matthew 18 principle of addressing the matter privately with the person involved.
- If the matter cannot be resolved privately, the worker shall ask the team pastor for assistance (or team administrator in the absence of a team pastor).
- If further help is needed in resolving the matter, the team pastor or team administrator shall ask the field director for assistance.
- The field director may ask for assistance in mediation from a DNI counselor, or may refer individuals to a DNI counselor for personal counseling.

- The sending church leadership will not be expected to be involved in team mediation, but may be involved if requested by the field director or the individual worker. Mediation often involves members from more than one sending church, therefore the field director shall make the final call on appropriateness of home church pastoral involvement.
- The worker shall be encouraged to ask for counsel and prayer from their sending church leadership team.
- The sending church leadership team shall be careful to maintain confidentiality.

DNI Counseling is available to all DNI workers for one-on-one counseling through several means:

- In person on home assignment
- In person at debriefing retreats
- In person at regional retreats (e.g. Asia Retreat)
- Via Zoom

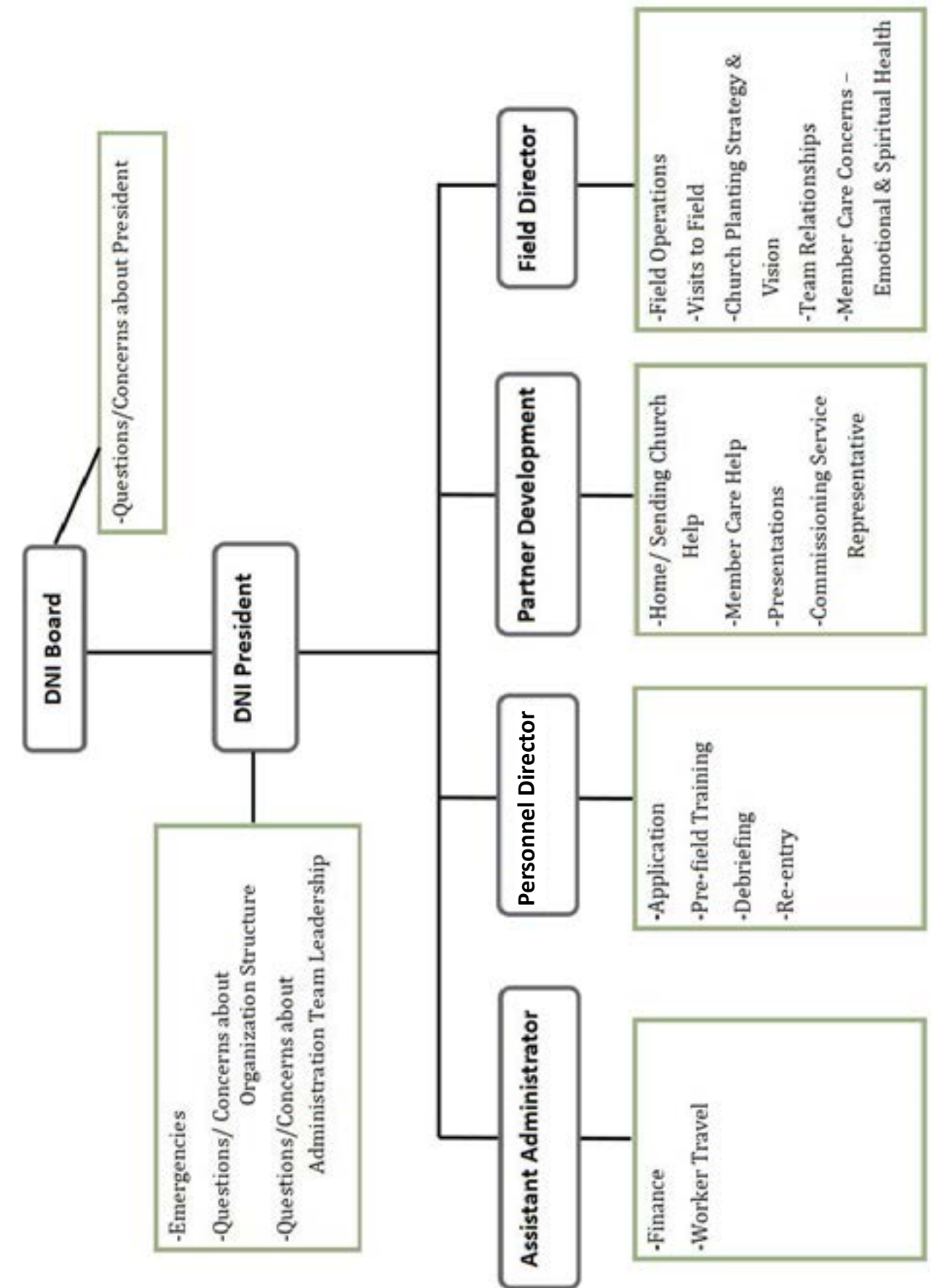
Access to counseling

- DNI workers may contact DNI Counselors directly.

Reporting and Communication

- The counselor will write a quarterly report of counseling activity to the president.
- These reports may be shared with the field director at the discretion of the counselor. The counselor should attempt to involve the field director and team leadership whenever possible.
- The goal is not to make the workers dependent on the DNI counselor, but rather to empower field leadership to provide member care for their people.
- Counselors shall be careful to maintain worker confidentiality in reporting.

Where Do I Go with My Questions?



Helpful RESOURCES

Representation:

- DNI Administration and Board members are available to share with sending churches about DNI in order to facilitate congregational understanding of DNI's "big picture."

Online Resources:

- www.brigada.org – "Brigada." Resources, trends, and motivation to fulfill the Great Commission.
- www.alifeoverseas.com – "A Life Overseas: A Cross-Cultural Conversation." Regular blog posts covering a range of missions topics.
- www.mrnet.org – "Mission Resource Network." Articles on missionary care, sending churches, short-term missions, issues in missions and more.
- www.missionarycare.com – "Missionary Care." Links to websites that provide resources for many different aspects of missions.
- <https://missionexus.org> – "MissioNexus." Resources for caring for missionaries.

Books:

- On the Way with Jesus by Richard Showalter. *Inspires a passion for missions.*
- I Think God Wants Me to Be a Missionary by Neal Pirollo. *Addresses issues to deal with long before you say goodbye.*
- Mission Smart: 15 Critical Questions to Ask Before Launching Overseas by David L. Frazier
- Serving As Senders Today by Neal Pirollo, Emmaus Road International. *Helps churches, family and friends grow as senders of missionaries.*
- Parents of Missionaries by Cheryl Savageau and Diane Stortz
- The Re-Entry Team by Neal Pirollo
- Re-Entry: Making the Transition from Missions to Life at Home by Peter Jordan, YWAM Publishing. *A good book to help missionaries understand themselves and the re-entry process.*
- Honorably Wounded by Marjory F. Foyle



DestiNations
I N T E R N A T I O N A L
Christ's last command, our first priority.