

Hi Everyone.

This Sunday, Oct. 8th, is a Missions Sunday at MCC. We are placing it in the context of the YOUR STORY message series by encouraging us all to step out of our comfort zones and intentionally write “missions” into the stories of our lives!

Each year around this time I ask you to strategically partner with your pastors to make this an effective Missions Sunday. Here’s what we know: Community groups create wonderful *ongoing* environments where people can experience transformation in their spiritual lives. Mission trips are powerful and transformative *events* that we can help to provide for individuals. Combining these two types of opportunities has the potential for yielding a tremendous impact on our church family.

Here’s the plan: This Sunday, every household attending MCC will receive a “Departures” catalog that details MCC mission trips for 2017-2018. In your groups this week, please **use the catalog** coupled with the questions and group discussion ideas below, to lead an effective group meeting about missions – even if you’ve never been on a mission trip, yourself. Feel free to pick up one or two extra copies of the "Departures" catalog in the Foyer on Sunday to use in your group this week.

One goal for this experience is that individuals and families in your group will begin to prayerfully consider personally participating in a mission endeavor over the next year. Of course, a great place to get started on that journey might be the “Group Mission Opportunities” that you received in last week’s material and hopefully began to discuss with your group.

Also, be reminded that everyone is invited to stay after second service this Sunday for a catered lunch compliments of Effective Ministries International.

Thank you in advance for partnering with us as we strategically place this Missions Sunday and emphasis in the middle of our fall series and community groups. Let’s pray and believe God, together, that He will inspire BIG DREAMS in the hearts of our great people!

Have a great week!
Pastor Dwayne



PS – I want to apologize that the messages from this series have not been made available on the website or podcast. We have experienced significant technical difficulties that are currently being addressed. We believe that the remaining messages will be posted on the site early each week.

WEEK #5 – BULLETIN INSERT

Mission – Where You Go

1. We go on **MISSION** so we can live **MISSIONALLY**.
Acts 1:8
2. The Gospel is the **GOOD NEWS** for all mankind.
Mark 1:14-15
3. The Gospel **DRIVES** us to our mission.
Mark 16:15
4. **LOVE** not **OBLIGATION** compels us to share the Good News of Christ.
1 Corinthians 13:1
Romans 10:13-15
2 Corinthians 5:14-21
5. We have only **ONE LIFE**.
James 4: 13-15
6. Will you write **MISSIONS** into **YOUR STORY**?
John 20:21-22

Your Story

Revealing key ways
that we can partner
with God in order to
live an epic life

GENERAL GROUP LEADERSHIP TIPS

Has someone else hosted your group yet, helped out with refreshments, or led the ice breaker?

WELCOME/SNACKS 15 minutes

OPEN (Ice Breakers) 10-15 minutes

Choose From:

1. Tell the group about your favorite “comfort food” (or alternately, your most comfortable chair or article of clothing.) Describe how it makes you feel?
2. Do you have a “bucket list”? Briefly tell the group one thing that you would like to see or experience before departing the earth?
3. Invite a few people to talk about previous missions trips and their experiences. (*Watch your time.*)

ADULT INTERACTION OVER SUNDAY’S TOPIC/MESSAGE 40-45 minutes

Provide a copy or two of the “Departures” Catalog to use during your discussion.

Take 2-3 minutes to ensure that everyone has all the blanks completed from Sunday’s CAGES bulletin insert.

1. Briefly tell us about a time when you were forced out of your “comfort zone” in some way and found the results to be surprisingly positive.
2. *Without warning, ask everyone in the group to change where they are seated so that they are in a different part of the circle and seated beside someone else.*

SAY: Each of you just moved out of your comfort zone. Why did you move? (You were asked; you were willing to obey the leader's authority; you deemed that the adjustment was not too costly to make, etc.)

Now that you're seated somewhere else, what can you see from your *new perspective* that you hadn't noticed before? (Different perspective on the room itself and on the people in the room; I'm now able to engage closely with different individuals than before; it also enlivened me – my senses are more engaged as I'm seeing new things, hearing differently, etc.)

How would going on a mission trip get you out of your comfort zone? What are some possible results of doing this?

3. Invite a volunteer to read Mark 16:15 aloud.

Mark 16: 15 (Jesus) said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.

What did Pastor Mitch mean on Sunday when he said that the Good News of the Gospel "drives" us to our mission?

(To find the answers in scripture, have volunteers read 1 Corinthians 13:1; Romans 10:13-15; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 aloud. **Love** is the motive; not obligation. We love Jesus for what He's done for us and so we respond to command. The message of reconciliation with God has been **entrusted** to us.)

4. Discuss the difference between living a missional life and actually being a missionary?

(Missionaries have answered a very special calling to share the good news of Jesus Christ with others cross-culturally and for an extended period of time. That is a sacred calling for unique people. At MCC, we want people to have the transformational experience of participating in short-term missions trips, for sure. We also want people to live a missional life – living in such a way that the light of Christ shines through and opens doors to share personal stories of what Jesus has done. See Week #4 material.)

5. Many people have a "bucket list" – a list of things that they would like to see or experience before dying. How does James 4:13-15 speak to this practice? (Invite someone to read it aloud.)

James 4:13-15 Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." 14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. 15 Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

(James is encouraging believers to make their plans for the future in cooperation with God's will. Our lives are too short – James calls them a mist – to fill them with frivolous activity. With God helping us to say 'yes', we can venture outside of our comfort zones to make our life stories the best they can be!)

What might it look like to invite God into the creation of your "bucket list"? What might He want you to include on it?

GROUP RESPONSE AND PRAYER 15-20 MINUTES

(You will need to choose from these options.)

- 1. Take some time to browse through the "Departures" catalog together as a group, noting the stateside and overseas opportunities.**
- 2. Ask:** Who already knows that they are going on one of these missions? Ask them to express why and how they came to that conclusion.

Is there a mission that you feel God may be beginning to put on your heart to consider?

(You may discuss these briefly and have the group pray for those who are feeling a direction to go.)

3. What would it take for you to go on a mission trip sometime over the course of the next year?

(God would need to tell me – I'd have to be asked; the money would have to materialize – or I'd have to work hard to generate the money for it; I'd have to take vacation days off work & maybe shorten time off at Christmas, etc.)

SAY: Ultimately – going begins when we say “yes”, just as it did when we switched our seats. All of the other “issues” (like money, time, etc.) will be worked out AFTER our “yes” is solidified. And for most of us, the change of location that God is asking us to make is temporary.

(Indicate that everyone can go back to where he/she was originally sitting, if they like, or stay where they are.)

GROUP MISSION MOMENT 10 minutes

Say something like: “It’s time to decide what kind of group mission we’re going to do together.”

- Take time to look over and to discuss with your group the SAMPLE MISSION OPPORTUNITIES page (attached to the email and included on Page 5).
- *Discuss any ideas that the group previously offered.*
- *Make a decision about what the group will do. Don’t put it up for a vote – which creates winners and losers. Strive for a consensus and then just go for it. (You can always do more than on outing!)*
- *Please inform me as soon as possible of the group’s plans to reach out and serve others.*
- *It would be best if the group could plan to carry out this mission in the near future (i.e. during the series), but this is not essential, so long as the group plans to continue meeting together.*

SAMPLE MISSION OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS (2017)

1. Feed the homeless in Downtown RVA on a Saturday Beth Heath beth.heath22@gmail.com or Wes Monger (804)920-1726 w_m_001@yahoo.com
2. Putting together goodie bags and toiletry bags any time of the year – donating them to a shelter or distributing them as desired.
3. Donating canned food items and nonperishables to MCC's food pantry (especially tuna & peanut butter) Richard Wilson rafuel@comcast.net
4. Host a harvest festival / block party in a group member's neighborhood on Halloween
5. Volunteer as helpers on Wednesday nights for children's ministries Amy Adams aadams@mccag.org
6. Volunteer one Sunday a month at 11AM in God's Song (a ministry at MCC for special needs children) Susan Kuuskar skuuskar@mccag.org
7. Visit a local nursing home together
8. Visit some of MCC's shut-ins (list available upon email request) Carolyn Clark cclark@mccag.org
9. Prepare some care packages for college dorms
10. Consider serving an individual or family in need that is connected to someone in your group.
11. Feeding the homeless downtown every Sunday morning from 8:15-9:00 am Sandra Bowling sbowling@mccag.org
12. Take brownies/cookies to local police stations, fire houses, businesses
13. 2nd and 5th Saturdays handing out bags to the homeless Sandra Bowling sbowling@mccag.org
14. 4th Saturdays cooking/serving the homeless downtown Sandra Bowling sbowling@mccag.org
15. Thanksgiving Day – Volunteer to serve good at a local shelter/ministry
16. Volunteer to help the Northside Outreach Center (NOC) Burt Johnson, 366-1502
17. Help with NOC Christmas Store (early December) by donating toys or volunteering Burt Johnson, 366-1502
18. Do a service project for an elderly person
19. Help out at the Richmond Pregnancy Resource Center (804) 673-2020
20. 5th Saturdays feeding homeless Veterans Misti Birns texasgrivna60@gmail.com
21. Group commits to serve together as Ushers one Sunday each month Pastor Dwayne dmoore@mccag.org
22. Bless some of 'our own' missionary families through mCare (Missionary Care Ministry) David & Kim Hoyt mcare@mccag.org
23. Christmas – Prepare goodie bags for homeless people
24. Collect new toys and stuffed animals for New York and the NOC (Nov – Dec) Sandra Bowling sbowling@mccag.org