

Join a Sending Team



“Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore, we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.”

3 John 6–8 ESV

What is a Sending Team?



Vision

Calvary Tuscaloosa longs for the promised day that is described in Revelation 7 – “After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands and crying out with a loud voice,

“Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

What a day this will be!



Mission

To join God in the sanctification of the world, Calvary Tuscaloosa commissions its members to serve as long-term missionaries internationally. We don't want to *have* missionaries, we want to *send* missionaries in a manner that glorifies the Lord. Because we have chosen to **stay** for this season of our lives, our role is to *send* those that **go** in order to leverage the globalization of the gospel. We all have received a mission granted to us through salvation: we are Abraham's seed. Through Christ, we will bless the nations with the gospel He has given us.



Purpose

Sending Team serves as a channel between Calvary Tuscaloosa and the one who has been sent overseas. We like to model our Sending Teams after **Barnabas** – one of Paul's biggest advocates to the church when Paul became a follower of Jesus. His name literally translates to "son of encouragement." He was a partner in ministry and was also John Mark's advocate when Paul wanted to leave him behind. (Acts 15:37–39) Barnabas consistently spoke truth and showed grace to Paul, as well as the church. Likewise, a Sending Team will work together in order to care for their missionary's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.



Function

Calvary Tuscaloosa requires every missionary to form a Sending Team. The missionary can select up to 6 individuals (a person and their spouse counts as one individual). Once selected, the first responsibility of the newly selected Sending Team members will be to **invite** another person to join them on this team. Therefore, if a missionary selects 4 people, then the team will have a total of 8 people.

The team must be creative in forming practical ways to love and care for their missionary, as well as keeping them visible before Calvary Tuscaloosa's faith family. The members of the team must be fervent in prayer for their missionary – this means consistently praying for encouragement, strength, and other various needs. As missionaries vary in personalities and they will be serving in different parts of the world with individual challenges and obstacles, it is the responsibility of the Sending Team to **ask their missionary** how they can be of assistance to them specifically. The members would commit to at least one full term of the missionary's service, however, should the team members need to step off, they are responsible for replacing themselves.

Responsibilities & Roles

Every member of a Sending Team should commit to:

- Meeting together on a monthly basis or as special needs arise
- Being in regular communication with your missionary
- Praying often for their missionary
- Speaking well of their missionary and advocating for his/her work
- Being a Sending Team member for at least one full term of the missionary's service (this can last anywhere from 6 months to 4 years).
- Putting forth effort to create an environment for the missionary to be open and honest so that they may have a space for communicating personal struggles and issues – this includes keeping confidential concerns confidential
- Being available to provide practical care for your missionary

A Sending Team may function well with specific roles designated to individuals on the team:

1. **Team Organizer:** This person serves as the one responsible for maintaining the details for the team and for the missionary. This means keeping track of holidays such as Christmas/Thanksgiving/birthdays, maintaining money given by team members for gifts, etc. This individual could also keep a record of prayer requests and answers to prayer.
2. **Team Contact:** There will be times where Calvary Tuscaloosa will need to reach out to either the missionary or the Sending Team for various reasons. This person will be the connection between church leadership and the Sending Team. Should something arise while the missionary is overseas, this is the person that the missionary can contact.
3. **Meeting Facilitator:** This person is responsible for scheduling the monthly gatherings as well as keeping to the meeting agenda and helping team members focus on what needs to be discussed or prayed over during the meeting. He/she may also designate people each month to bring snacks, or a devotional for the gathering.
4. **Team Representative:** This role can change intermittently between Sending Team members. Biannually, all sending teams will gather together and provide an update of their team and of their missionary to the Sending Team Coordinators. At least one member of the team must be present at these gatherings.

Feel free to be creative and delegate roles and responsibilities to other members of the team. Based on the individual gifts that are present on your team, form a group of people that can send their missionary well for the sake of the gospel.

Ways to Care for Your Missionary

There are several different aspects of caring for your missionary. In scripture, Barnabas is seen caring for Paul by advocating for him, encouraging him, praying for him, joining him on some of his journeys, and even speaking hard truths to Paul when Paul disagreed on an issue. This is your team's job, too.

- Your team is to leverage your missionary's work to Calvary
- You must be quick to affirm him/her in their work overseas – especially when they are discouraged
- Ask your missionary about possibilities of someone being able to physically visit them
- You may find your missionary in distress and forgetting biblical truths. Take advantage of these times to express much grace, but also to direct them to scripture and prayer. They may face difficulties that cause them to question their faith, or they may be homesick. Always lead them back to the Lord

Spend some time with your team brainstorming uplifting and encouraging ways that you can care for your missionary. Some ideas could be, but are not limited to:

- Delegate different members of your Sending Team each month to write letters that can be mailed to your missionary
- Send quarterly care packages with treats, pictures, and gifts. Try to find things that your missionary can't access in their location (peanut butter is usually a great start!)
- Praying over your missionary. Consider reaching out to your missionary and instead of simply asking for prayer requests, come to the missionary with ways you are already praying for them and ask if there are any other ways your Sending Team can pray for them.
- Listen to them and ask questions when you are communicating with them. It can be difficult for your missionary to feel heard and understood – especially if their surrounding culture is vastly different from the USA. Try to be a safe person for them to vent to, if necessary.
- Decide which holidays you want to plan your care packages around (Thanksgiving, Easter, birthday, Christmas, Independence Day, etc.). Plan these months in advance, as it can take lengthy amounts of time for packages to be delivered.

Stateside Terms

At the end of every overseas term, your missionary will return for their stateside term. Typically, the missionary will have adjusted to life in another country, so readjusting back to their home-culture can be difficult at times. Being on a Sending Team, your job is to make this transition as smooth as possible.

Transportation

When your missionary returns, one question to ask them is if they have any mode of transportation. There may be a chance that they do not own a vehicle anymore. If this is true, brainstorm with your team ways that you can provide your missionary with a vehicle. Asking other members of Calvary Tuscaloosa if they have a spare vehicle that they wouldn't mind lending to your missionary is a good place to begin. Possibly consider raising some money to offset rental car costs.

Housing

Another great question to ask your missionary is if they have a place to stay while they are stateside. It's possible they do not. Calvary Tuscaloosa has members with multiple houses or with guest accommodations. Brainstorm with your team who would be willing to offer any housing accommodations.

Debrief

Your missionary will have a lot of stories and experiences to share. A difficult part of returning to The United States is coming home and feeling misunderstood because nobody shares their experience. A great way to ease this tension is providing a space for the missionary to debrief their time overseas. Set aside a few hours for your missionary to sit down with the Sending Team and others so that they have an opportunity to share stories of what God is doing overseas. Prepare a set of questions to aid with debriefing.

Update

Calvary Tuscaloosa wants to hear what God has been doing through its missionaries internationally. As your missionary prepares to come home, ask them if they'd be willing to speak to our congregation with hopes of updating us of God's work. Encourage them by telling them we want to hear what they've been doing. Be sure to communicate with Calvary Tuscaloosa's leadership about how and when this could take place.

Interested in joining a Sending Team? There may be a spot for you! Please contact Paul and Kristin Reed at (901) 896 – 6462 or email them at drkristinreed@gmail.com for more information. We are thrilled to walk with you as we partake in God's global mission at Calvary