

Sending Churches: Filling the Gaps

Q: What if our church, as a sending church, can't or doesn't feel able to do all that a sending church should do? Will you fill in the gaps?

A: Well, yes and no. There are instances where a church says, "We don't want to have this role in this person's life. And they may even be qualified for ministry but we don't want to have this role," and in that case, we're not going to send that person. So, first of all, it's a requirement to have a sending church endorsement.

However, we're very willing to walk alongside a sending church if they want to get behind that person but just feel inadequate, that they need some help or some coaching to do that. I'm thinking right now of a case where a sending church for somebody who came onto our staff not in a missionary role, and now they want to go into a missionary role. They went to their sending church which is in another state from our office where they were working, and the church said "No, we're not going to play the role of a sending church because we really don't have a vision for unreached peoples." And what they agreed to do with this particular person was to release them. This person is moving to another location where another church has invited them to come into their midst and work with them. However, in the meantime we're going to try to continue to try to relate to this original church because there's some openness there.

And so we will try to work with churches along that line. But the bottom line is, without a sending church, the missionary really can't be sent.