

# Sending Churches: Why Require a Sending Church?

## **Q: Why does Pioneers require workers to have a sending church?**

A: First of all, from a philosophical standpoint, we want all missionaries coming into the organization to be very aware that the church is really at the center of our mission.

We're church planters. We're sent by churches when we leave to go to the field from North America. But then, when we get on the other side of the ocean, a lot of times we're working with indigenous churches that are over there as well to do more church planting.

So when somebody comes to Pioneers and makes an inquiry about service, we train [the "mission mentors" who are our first line of contact] from the very beginning to begin to ask questions about [the candidate's] involvement with a local congregation. Who in their life is overseeing them and working with them? Who's their spiritual authority? So that happens at the very beginning to philosophically put the church at the core.

Past that, we recognize that an organization like Pioneers is really there to work in partnership with the local church, not to usurp the role of the local church. When we have issues or problems with people on the field, we're going to be looking to that local church for guidance.

But even in the deployment process, we don't want people going out overseas [who should not go]. And it happens occasionally, when someone comes through our process of appointment, and they actually don't even have a lot of experience in doing evangelism, or discipling, or any of the things that are involved with church planting. And who knows whether that person has that experience? It's the local church.

And so we lean heavily on the local church. And that's probably the most important thing in this whole process: getting an idea of who that person is, and what their gifting is, what their ministry involvement is, so that as they minister on the field, we'll know that they've got that local church's blessing on what they're doing on the field.