



To inspire Arkansas Baptists as we

Intercede, Network, Submit ideas, Praise, Inform, share Resources, and Encourage each other through prayer.

Praying for Missionaries

Jimmie Sheffield

During this time of the year, our minds naturally focus on Christmas and the birth of Christ. This is truly a wonderful time of the year for Christians.

But, we also are asked to focus on our international missions and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Have you ever had the opportunity to ask a missionary--state, national or international--“What can we do to help you?” If so, you probably got this response, “Pray for us.” Prayer is very important to missionaries. We even have weeks of prayer for state, national and international missions.

I want to answer two questions in this brief article that, hopefully, will challenge you as you think of praying for missionaries.

The first question is “Why?” Why should we pray for missions and missionaries? Let me share two very important answers to that question.

First, it is biblical. Paul, a great missionary, asked people to pray for him.

- Romans 15:30: “...join me in my struggle by praying for me.” (NIV)
- Ephesians 6:19-20: “Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which also I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”
- Colossians 4:3-4: “And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.”

The second reason to pray for missionaries is very obvious. They all ask us to pray for them.

Now, I want to deal with the question of “What?” I am not offering a complete list. You could probably name many more things for which you pray for missionaries. Hopefully, this short list will give you some direction as you pray for missionaries.

- Pray that missionaries will have opportunities to share the Gospel with many people. Whether in Arkansas, the United States or international countries, thousands of unsaved people need to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. Pray that God will open their hearts to hear the real meaning of Christmas.
- Pray that missionaries will be able to disciple believers so that believers will become disciple makers.

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We don't have enough missionaries anywhere to reach all the unsaved. We need all disciples (Christians) to become soul-winners and lead the saved to become disciple makers.

- Pray that missionaries will have the opportunity to plant new churches wherever they serve. In Arkansas, for example, our goal is to start fifty new churches in 2017. Pray that your church planter missionaries and church planters will have the strength and the will to see this goal accomplished.
- Pray that missionaries will have physical strength as well as spiritual strength for the work that needs to be done. Pray that they will have perseverance to stay with the task of reaching people for Christ and starting new churches.
- Pray for protection for many missionaries serving in difficult and dangerous places. Satan is alive and well. He will do anything to stop the outreach of the Gospel.
- Pray for the missionaries' children. Children do not often understand the need to give up the comforts of living in the United States, traveling and living in a foreign country or a different state where they don't have friends, and finding themselves in a strange culture very different from home. Conversely, older children may have a hard time adjusting when they return to the United States for college. Pray for them as they adjust to a culture that is far different from where they may have spent most of their lives.
- Pray for family members left at home. Most missionaries have to leave mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters at home. They may not see them for several years at a time. Parents often have a difficult time understanding God's call on their children. They need our prayers.

Praying for missionaries is both a challenge and a joy. I would also encourage you to pray for missionaries by name on their birthdays. You may find this list in *Open Windows*, a publication of Lifeway, and *Missions Mosaic*, a publication of the National WMU.

This is the season--to pray for missionaries. Make your Christmas season one of praying and giving as well as receiving!

The logo for Lottie Moon Christmas Offering (LMCO) features the letters 'LMCO' in a large, white, sans-serif font. The letters are set against a background that transitions from a teal color on the left to a dark blue on the right. The background also features a subtle, wavy pattern of fine white lines.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering Week of Prayer for International Missions December 4-11

Click on the graphic above to find resources to promote the week of prayer for international missions.

<https://www.imb.org/lottie-moon-christmas-offering-week-prayer/>

The logo for the International Mission Board (IMB) consists of the lowercase letters 'imb' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are set against a white background.



Dr. Steve Gaines to speak at 2017 Prayer Leaders' Workshop on January 30

The annual prayer leaders' workshop will be held on Monday morning, January 30, preceding the statewide Evangelism Conference. This year's workshop will be held at Geyer Springs First Baptist Church, 12400 I-30, Little Rock. Registration begins at 9 a.m. The program will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at 11:30 a.m. to allow time for participants to go out for lunch before the Evangelism Conference begins at 1 p.m.

Steve Gaines serves as the Senior Pastor at Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn. He has served in four churches as senior pastor over the past 30 plus years. He holds a Ph.D. in Preaching from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas, and currently serves at the President of the Southern Baptist Convention. Steve is married to Donna Gaines. They have four children: Grant, senior pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Jackson, Tenn.; Lindsey, homemaker and wife of Ryan Wingo, worship pastor at Apex Baptist Church in Apex, N.C.; Allison, homemaker and wife of Gentry Hill, who is the Senior Pastor of FBC in Poteau, Okla.; and Bethany, a first grade teacher at Treadwell Elementary in Memphis and who is married to David Golding of Golding Mechanical Services. Steve and Donna have ten grandchildren. They are both authors. Steve has published a musical worship CD, and his latest books are *Pray Like it Matters*, *Share Jesus Like it Matters*, and the re-release of his devotion book *Morning Manna*.

[Click here](#) then scroll down the page to watch videos and find articles designed to inspire Arkansas Baptists to pray, to give and to go.



is a strategy for sharing the stories of how your Cooperative Program is at work in Arkansas and around the world.

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

I Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV)

Senior Prayer Force Continues

It is not hard for senior adults to give thanks. We have been around the block a few times and know "whence cometh our help." That's why Thanksgiving is such a wonderful time. When we take time to thank God for His blessings, we position ourselves as creatures before our Creator. We acknowledge our dependence on the Almighty, our need of His provision and sufficiency. We admit that we have nothing by our merit and everything by His mercy.

GOD IS HEARING OUR PRAYERS FOR REVIVAL AND AWAKENING. Please do not "grow weary in well doing, for you shall reap if you faint not." The pockets of people across our land uniting to pray for revival and awakening are increasing. Our God is not quiet nor silent though His works are usually behind the scenes and invisible. Trust Him and press on! Read Jeremiah again this month and you will understand how critical it is for us to cry out to God for His mercy!

A BIG, BIG THANK YOU FOR YOUR PRAYERS FOR NITA AND ME. She has made amazing progress. She was cancer free at her last scan and the decubitus ulcer is now healed.

YOU CAN ENCOURAGE OTHERS. If you would answer any or all of the following questions and email or mail your response to me, I could use your experience to inspire others.

1. How have you been prompted to keep your commitment to pray daily for revival and awakening?
2. Have you joined with others or have others joined with you in this prayer effort?
3. Can you tell us one thing you believe has happened in your area that would indicate God is hearing and answering our prayers?

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You are encouraged to forward INSPIRE to anyone in your church who is interested in prayer. This is a ministry of the Cooperative Program and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention

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