



FREE METHODIST WORLD MISSIONS

## Supporting a Worker in a Creative Access Country

Creative Access Countries often forbid missionary activities. Workers in these countries are sent as “teachers” or “international workers,” not as “missionaries.” Through their occupation — be it teaching or another occupation — they have the opportunity to share Christ by their words, actions and professional integrity.

Supporting one of these workers presents unique challenges.

- You may receive little communication from the worker. When they do communicate, they cannot share much of what is happening through their ministry. To do so could jeopardize their ministry and the ministries of others. It could also jeopardize their presence in that country.
- You need to use caution in all communication with the worker. Assume all phone calls, emails, letters, faxes, Skype calls and packages will be intercepted and reviewed by local authorities.

Although communication challenges do exist, these workers need your encouragement. Contact with their support base is vital to their morale. They may have very limited opportunities to fellowship with other believers.

When writing describe the activities of everyday life. Tell of the changing seasons; bring them up to date on your family; talk about their or your favorite sports team/s; describe a recent family trip — share the simple events of your life. Send a family photo. All the while, be aware that they may not be able to reciprocate.

Find creative ways to share *about* them, and stay informed about cultural and political events in the area. Learn about the culture and majority religion. The worker appreciates partners who have some understanding of their ministry environment and who can pray intelligently regarding the spiritual environment.

Please refer to the next page for guidelines to use when communicating *with* or *about* the worker you support.

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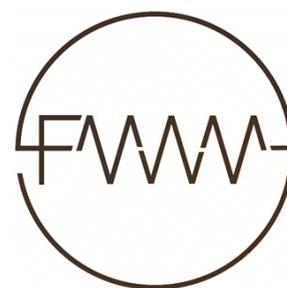
# Guidelines for communicating *with* and *about* workers in creative access countries

## Communicating *with*

- Do not criticize the host country's religion/s or religious leaders, government, policies or human rights record.
- Do not mention words such as: missions, evangelism, witnessing, conversions, salvation, prayer, discipling, outreach or other Christian vocabulary. Also avoid phrases such as church planting, giving out Bibles, and support raising or referring to Christian literature and other Christian workers, nationals or organizations.
- Do not send other missionary prayer letters, tracts, church bulletins, missions magazines, Bibles, etc.
- Do not mention national friends by name or in any way identify people who are new Christians or interested in Christianity.
- Do not send correspondence on church stationery or packaging with church labels.
- Do not use Christian email addresses (example: [jesus-saves@aol.com](mailto:jesus-saves@aol.com)) or email addresses that connect to a Christian organization or church. Also, don't include ministry names in email signatures.
- Avoid using military terminology such as: spiritual warfare, the Kingdom, the enemy, crusade, battle, target, etc.
- Do not send bulk email or include their name and email address on any group lists.
- Do not encrypt or code e-mails (or letters) as this can bring unwanted attention to the sender and the receiver.
- Have someone re-read any letters or emails before you send them to look for any problematic content.

## Communicating *about*

- Do not publish the name, country, photo, email or mailing address on the church website, in a church bulletin or newsletter, on a bulletin board or in social media. A single posting could "red flag" them to hostile authorities.
- In public services, refer to any workers by their first name/s only. Do not mention the name of their host country. Do not include their photo in Power-Point presentations.
- Check with the worker before recording or livestreaming any service in which they speak.
- Do not refer to them as "our missionaries."
- Do not post or publish their newsletters.



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When a worker visits your church, they may share more freely than these guidelines provided for your use. Being present in the situation they will be able to discern the appropriate level of discretion they should use.