**The Modern Mission Connections Letter**

What is expected in a Mission Connections letter? What communicates well and what doesn’t? And why is World Mission so particular about what mission personnel write in them?

We have long been asking for rich content — stories that show God’s transformation and the sharing of personal insights and struggles. When U.S. partners feel drawn in and are invited to participate in the work you are doing, they will engage more deeply with God’s mission.

How can we engage and involve of readers?

The magic of stories!

Readers do not connect deeply with a mere recitation of agendas or chronological accounts of all that has transpired since your last letter. They want to *see, feel, hear, and taste* God’s work — they want to be carried to the scene.

**Please note the following:**

1. We are looking for the stories of your ministry that show how God is at work. Please show us through content that has a shelf life of up to six months.
2. Mission Connections letters are not the place for time-sensitive prayer requests or announcements. Please know that a prayer request for a specific event happening three weeks from the date of your letter might be outdated by the time it is posted on the web or received through snail mail.
3. For time-sensitive news, updates, and prayer requests, we encourage mission personnel to keep an online blog or send more frequent email letters to your contacts. We are happy to provide a link on your Mission Connections web page to your blog, Facebook page, or other social media page if you request it. Also, upon your request, we will post your news, updates, and prayer letters — up to one per month — but they will not count toward your four required Mission Connections letters.
4. Each of the four required Mission Connections letters should include an explicit invitation for readers to join in partnership with you through prayer, communication, and financial commitment. Please see the document “50 Ways to Leave Your Letter” on the Quiet Site under the Mission Connections tab for examples of ways to keep this invitational language fresh.
5. If you receive coaching notes from me, please respond. We cannot post or mail letters until they are finished.

As mission workers are commissioned by U.S. Presbyterian churches to serve as God’s ambassadors to and with partners around the world, the responsibility of the mission worker to the commissioning churches includes *inspiring* U.S. Presbyterians, *equipping* them, and *connecting* them to God’s mission in the world.

**INSPIRE**

* Tell a story of transformation in the life of an individual, family, or community in your country of service.
* Share insights and transformative learning you have experienced through your work and play, both joyful and difficult.
* Thank your U.S. partners for their commitment to your sending and support, showing them through the story how they have made a difference.

**EQUIP (TEACH)**

* Include country and cultural context within the story you tell. Help us feel, see, hear, taste and smell the fragrance of your ministry setting.
* Include ministry context, especially partnership, within the story you tell.
* Include how you see God at work. Some ideas on how to frame this:

Critical Global Initiatives addressed:

* **Alleviation of poverty**, especially as it pertains to women and children
* **Evangelism**,sharing the love of God through Jesus Christ
* **Reconciliation** in cultures of violence, including our own

AND / OR

World Mission’s core values of faithful and effective mission practice being carried out:

* **Dignity:** Following the model of Jesus, we must treat each person with dignity and respect, standing together with those who are marginalized.
* **Empowerment:** Focusing on long-term relationships, we strive to build the capacity of each member of the Body of Christ to engage in God’s mission in sustainable ways.
* **Holistic ministry:** A Christ-centered proclamation of the gospel requires that we share the gospel through evangelism, minister in compassion, and advocate for justice.
* **Partnership:** Our work with partner churches and organizations around the world and with U.S. Presbyterians is based on mutual respect and trust, leading to common prophetic witness and to mutual transparency and accountability.
* **Relevance to God’s world:** Responding with creativity and integrity to a rapidly changing and interdependent world, we will maintain our centeredness in Christ as we follow the example of our spiritual ancestors: “The church reformed, always reforming” (Book of Order G-2.0200).
* **Stewardship:** We place under the Lordship of Christ our time, talents, and financial resources; our political and economic choices; our relationships; and our very lives.

**CONNECT**

* Request prayers for ongoing needs of your global partners, of those with whom you minister, and of you and your family members.
* Request a commitment to further learning — through reading your Mission Connections letters, corresponding with you, visiting you, and advocating for the people of your area.
* Warmly thank your readers who faithfully support you.
* Gently invite your readers into deeper engagement in mission. Let them know specific ways to become more involved: prayer, communications with you, financial gifts, reading and visiting to learn more, and advocating. There are some who are new to your ministry and some who may not have yet made a commitment into a full partnership with you. Invite them all to walk alongside you.

If your Mission Connections letter contains one — just one — story of transformation, and if you’ve included elements that inspire, equip, and connect, you have created the “story to tell the nations.” Your letter will have staying power in expressing God’s mission in the world.

If you have questions, ideas, or thoughts about Mission Connections letters, please feel free to contact me at *jennifer.goldberg@pcusa.org*.

*Collaborating with you as you craft your inspirational stories is a true honor.*

“Modern Mission Connections” created by Michelle Lori Updated by Jennifer Goldberg (2/18)