

ISI PD Training

Approaching Churches for Support

General Principles:

- The church most likely to support you is one in which you are known and are involved in ministry.
- Conversely, it is unlikely that you will gain support from a church to which you have no connection, either presently or in the past. However, having a respected champion or advocate within the church can make all the difference.
- Since ISI is a non-denominational organization, you are more likely to be funded by a church that is not strongly oriented toward a denomination in its mission outreach.
- Know before you go: know a church's missions policy before you approach them for support:
 - Know if the church has a focus within its missions program
 - Know how the church funds its corporate missions program. For example, know if the:
 - missions budget is a line item in the church's overall budget;
 - missions budget is a percentage of church income;
 - missions budget is raised by faith-promise pledges; or
 - missions budget is funded by separate giving to the church missions fund.
 - Know the church's policy regarding corporate vs. individual support. (i.e. some churches will not allow you to solicit individuals within the church if the church corporately supports you.)
- It is wise to have a few anchor supporters who, together, carry a larger share of your monthly support. A church could be one of these anchor supporters. But overreliance on one church for a large portion of your monthly support is not wise. Why?
 - Pastors change
 - Missions team members change
 - Church missions philosophies change
 - Churches undergo life-cycles and splits.

Nature of the beast:

- Churches may require you to re-apply for support as often as every year.
- Churches may require you to fill out a written report annually.
- Churches may require you to align with them doctrinally.
- Churches may require you to attend their missions conference (and may or may not reimburse your expenses).
- Church processes move slowly. Getting an answer about support from a church will usually take significantly longer than with an individual.
- Try to find out who is the best person to start the process within a given church. In larger churches, it may not be the senior pastor but the missions pastor or chairman.