Being In Mission from a Distance

The Covid-19 pandemic is continuing to change our lives daily if not hourly. As Volunteers in Mission we are used to getting out and using our hands throughout the world. This time is uncertain for all of us and we are unsure what we can do to help in our community and our church.

First take care of yourself. I found this post on Facebook and thought these questions might help.

Daily Questions

1. What am I GRATEFUL for today?

2. Who am I CHECKING IN ON or CONNECTING WITH today?
3. What expectations of "normal" am I LETTING GO OF today?
4. How am I GETTING OUTSIDE today?
5. How am I MOVING MY BODY today?
6. What BEAUTY am I either Creating, Cultivating, or Inviting in today?

Below are some other ideas to Be in Mission from a Distance

**No Travel Mission**

How can we still support the vital work being done by our partners at mission sites where we serve? We'll look at a couple of ways to stay engaged while staying home.

1. Pray. The very first thing we should do is pray: pray for the mission site, pray for the people who work there, pray for the community. Ask team members and congregation members to join you in praying on a certain day and time. Pray without ceasing.

2. Donate to the ministry. The need that was present at the mission site before the global pandemic prohibited our travel is still there. If the project where your team was going has a way to accept donations (through The Advance, PayPal, etc.), support the ministry through financial offering. You can do this as an individual or as a team. They will need this help now more than ever!

3. Send a note of encouragement. Do you keep in touch with people from the site? Send
them a note of encouragement! Chances are, they are being directly and indirectly affected by the pandemic: not only are they facing personal risk of infection, they also may be dealing with a huge hit to the ministry. A friendly word on Facebook or in an email can mean so much.

4. Keep up team unity online. Many teams spend months raising money and preparing for the mission only to have all these plans cancelled. Keep the team unity intact and spirits up by having a Skype, FaceTime, or Zoom meeting with your team members from the safety of your home. Share updates from the project site if you have them, talk about options for a future mission dates, and check in with each other to see how each other is doing.

5. Focus on the "why". Does the mission site where you were going to serve work with the poor? Do they work with women and children? Perhaps they work to end homelessness? The need will still be there once we are able to travel again. In the meantime, organize a book study around the topic to keep team members focused on why they will be needed once this pandemic has passed. Ask individual team members to each take a chapter and lead the discussion. You can easily create small groups on Facebook for these conversations.

6. Meanwhile... If it looks like it may be awhile before your team can coordinate travel schedules, why not volunteer as a group in a local ministry once we are able to safely be together? If you are going to help build casitas at Manos Juntas México, why not volunteer
at your local Habitat for Humanity? Does the mission site deal with hunger and food security issues? Take up a canned food collection at your church and donate to a local food pantry. This may also be a good way to recruit a new team member or two from your congregation!

UMCOR Sunday
Don’t Forget this MUCH NEEDED Ministry at this Time

This Sunday, United Methodist Churches across the world are called to celebrate UMCOR Sunday. In the midst of a pandemic and other disasters, UMCOR continues to offer healing and hope. Your offering is a tangible action that allows people to respond to an unprecedented crisis.

At our core we are a mission and ministry. Funds ensure adequate training for emergency response coordinators, construction volunteers, and case managers who assist survivors of disasters. You are UMCOR. Through our global connections, every United Methodist church and member is a vital part of our mission and ministry.

Your support allows the vital work of UMCOR to reach communities everywhere when disaster overwhelms a community’s capacity to respond on its own. For 80 years, UMCOR has provided assistance where it is most needed. Every gift helps strengthen the organization for the days, weeks, months and years ahead.

When your support UMCOR Sunday, you are part of a ministry that directly serves those in need during the emergency while developing longer term strategies for recovery in the years ahead.
You can give online: umcgiving.org/giveUMCOR or mail checks to: UMCOR Sunday GCFA, P.O. Box 340029, Nashville, TN 37203.

The generosity of United Methodists like those in your congregation makes it possible for UMCOR to save lives and offer hope around the world in the midst of disaster. Thank you for being part of it!
Prayer for a Pandemic
May we who are merely inconvenienced
Remember those whose lives are at stake
May we who have no risk factors
Remember those most vulnerable
May we who have the luxury of working from home
Remember those who must choose
Between their health and making the rent
May we have flexibility to care for our children
When the schools close
Remember those who have no options
May we who have to cancel our trips
Remember those who have no place to go
May we who are losing our margin money
In the turmoil of the economic market
Remember those who have no margin at all
May we who settle in for quarantine at home
Remember those who have no home
As fear grips our country
Let us choose love
During this time when we cannot physically
Wrap our arms around each other,
Let us find ways to be the
loving embrace of God to our Neighbor
Amen

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Your UMVIM WJ Conference Coordinators are there to assist and support you as you answer your call to serve as a short-term mission volunteer. If you are already scheduled to serve on a mission journey, let us know about it, so that we can share your story. Please feel free to contact them for information or connection to other VIM Resources.

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