

**PLANNING GUIDE
FOR PASTORS AND MISSION LEADERS
Annie Armstrong Easter Offering®
North American Missions Emphasis**

Why a North American Missions Emphasis?

Every Christian knows that hope for the world is Jesus Christ. And that world is just outside our front door. About 3 out of 4 people in North America are without Christ. Those people are your neighbors, your coworkers, your friends, and perhaps your family members. You may have prayed for them and shared the gospel with them many times. But you are still waiting, and Christ is waiting. They must not only hear the gospel but believe and accept it. In North America, the spiritual lostness is great.

During the North American Missions Emphasis, lead your church to learn how Southern Baptists are working to reach the lost in the United States and Canada. Encourage your members to pray for, give to, and become active in missions in North America.

Praying: Week of Prayer for North American Missions

- First Sunday through the second Sunday in March
- Eight missionary couples represent the work of more than 5,000
- Free Posters and Prayer Guides available from state WMU/convention offices

Giving: Annie Armstrong Easter Offering (AAEO)

- 100 percent of money to AAEO goes to North American mission work. Money goes to pay missionary salaries and benefits. It supports their ministries (work to share Jesus) in the United States, Canada, and their territories.
- A national goal is set each year; churches set their own giving goals.
- Since the first offering in 1895, more than \$billion has been given for missions work in the United States.

Going: Short-term and Long-term Missions Service

- Volunteer and fulltime, or career, mission opportunities are available
- www.answerthecall.net (*career and short-term missions*)
- www.thebridge.namb.net (*short-term, individual or group*)
- www.ActsOne8.com
- www.namb.net

Week of Prayer Missionaries

Each year, the North American Mission Board (NAMB) chooses eight missionaries or missionary couples. They represent the work of more than 5,000 missionaries who serve throughout the U.S. and Canada. Stories about these missionaries are in English. You may find them in Southern Baptist publications in the spring. Check your state Baptist paper, the *Baptist Press*, *Missions Mosaic*, and *On Mission*.

RESOURCES

North American Missions Emphasis (NAME) Planning Guide (in English only)

(Sent to Southern Baptist churches by mid-January each year)

The Guide includes the North American Missions Emphasis DVD with video stories and a copy of this planning guide. Please call 1 866 407-6262 or e-mail aaeo@namb.net if your church has not received a kit.

North American Missions Emphasis (NAME) Video (in English, Spanish, and Korean)

The DVD included in the NAME Planning Guide features video stories on the Week of Prayer missionaries. Shorter video segments are useful for Sunday morning offering or prayer times. Longer stories are good for Sunday School sessions and mission groups during the Week of Prayer. Call 1 866 407-6262 to request additional DVDs. DVDs are free. You pay only shipping and handling charges. Video segments can also be downloaded in mpeg format from www.AnnieArmstrong.com.

Your Church on Mission with God Bulletin Insert (English only)

The March and April issues of “Your Church on Mission with God” give information and stories about the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and NAMB. Order a free subscription to inform and inspire your congregation about missions all year long. Call 1 800 866-3621, or visit <http://resources.imb.org> to add your subscription.

www.AnnieArmstrong.com (English only; however, there is a language section on the site that provides some resources)

Want more information about Annie Armstrong, missionaries, the Week of Prayer, or North American missions? Visit www.AnnieArmstrong.com.

Missionary Prayer Cards (English only)

Full-color cards feature the eight Week of Prayer missionaries. They include facts, photos, and prayer requests. Sold in packs of seven identical sets of eight cards. Call toll-free 1 866 407-6262, or visit www.nambstore.com to order.

Week of Prayer for North American Missions Program Cover (English only)

This program cover includes an inspirational paragraph on the back cover and a colorful front cover. It is blank on the inside for your church’s information. A priced item, the cover is available from WMU Customer Service at 1 800 968-7301 or through LifeWay Stores.

Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® Envelope (English only)

Easily keep records of gifts made to the offering by using these envelopes. To order call, write, or e-mail your state WMU office.

Week of Prayer for North American Missions Prayer Guide (English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, French) Read short stories and learn prayer requests of the Week of Prayer missionaries. They represent more than 5,000 missionaries serving in North America. To order call, write, or e-mail your state WMU office.

Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® Poster

(English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, French) Display this attractive poster in areas in your church where they will be seen easily. It provides a place for showing your church's offering goal. To order call, write, or e-mail your state WMU office.

State Woman's Missionary Union Contact Information

Order language posters and prayer guides, and English-language offering envelopes from your state Woman's Missionary Union office. Your church office or associational office should have this contact information. To have your email sent to the right contact in your state office, email aaeo@namb.net.

Planning an AAEO Experience

Pray: the most important step

- Pray for your church to know more and care more about missions.
- Pray for members to give to the AAEO.

Plan: know what works for your church

- Form a team to plan. . Include pastor, mission leaders, and others who care about missions.
- Place a date for AAEO on the church calendar. Many churches start the Week of Prayer the first Sunday of March. Your church can give the offering any time of year.
- Set a giving goal for the AAEO. It should be a challenge, not just an easy amount.
- Provide a visual way for the church to see how they are doing in reaching the goal. Ideas for visuals can be found at www.AnnieArmstrong.com.
- Encourage Sunday School classes and Bible study groups to set goals.
- Order helps to promote AAEO. Order these two to four weeks before you need them. Decide how each will be used in your church. Decide how many you will need.
- Order posters, prayer guides, and offering envelopes from your state WMU office.

Enlist: get people involved

- Ask your pastor to preach a sermon on North American mission work. He will find a sermon outline (English-only) at a www.AnnieArmstrong.com/pastors.
- Ask members to tell why they give to AAEO.
- Ask mission leaders to visit every Sunday School department or class. Ask them to encourage praying for and giving to North American missions.
- Invite a North American missionary in your area or staff member from your association, state convention, or NAMB to speak to your church. Ask that person to tell how AAEO is used in your state.

Remember: It is important to ask these people several weeks before they will speak.

Show and Tell: Be sure everyone in the church knows about AAEO

- Display AAEO posters in areas where they will be seen.
- Give AAEO offering envelopes. Put them in pews, through Sunday School, bulletins, or make them part of the visual (see above).
- Give the Week of Prayer guide to every member or family.
- Think about giving each family a set or a single missionary prayer card. This will be the missionary or missionaries they are to pray for during the week.
- Tell about the offering in missions organizations, Sunday School, printed material, and worship services. Include special prayer times during church gatherings.
- Remind church members that 100 percent of their money to AAEO will support North American missionaries and their work
- Show the NAMB video stories in worship services, prayer meetings, and other church meetings.

You do not have to do everything. But the more ways you explain the AAEO, the more people will want to give to this way of sharing about Jesus.

Offering Visual Idea

On a map of North America, give a dollar values to each state and Canada. For example, if your goal is \$490, each state would be \$10. Color in states as offerings are given.

Week of Prayer Idea

Divide people into groups of three or more. Ask each group to pray for one of the missionaries. Use information from the planning guide, video clips, and www.AnnieArmstrong.com, as prayer ideas. Ask members to continue to pray for their missionary during the next week..

Offering Collection Idea

Collect and decorate plastic eggs. Let children put their offering in the decorated eggs. During a worship service, have a “missions march”. Children will place their eggs in a large Easter basket at the front of the meeting room.

Combined Mission Offering

Plan a missions banquet for church members. Invite International and North American, state, and local missionaries.. Decorate tables with items that show different areas of missions work.

Planning a Week of Prayer Emphasis

- Ask a group of people to plan this event.
- Follow ideas in “planning an AAEO Promotion” above.

GOOD IDEAS FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT

1. A Gift to Annie: How does my money help?

Most of AAEO gifts pay salary support for missionaries. Some is used for their work, or ministry supplies. Information below will give people a better idea of how missionaries use AAEO funds.

\$1 New Testament for an unbeliever
\$5 Study book used in literacy missions for those learning to read and write
\$10 “Bible in a Bucket” – delivered to Native Alaskan homes in the Arctic
\$2 5 Sports Bibles for collegiate athletes
\$50 Refreshments for a children’s event where they learn about Jesus
\$100 Newspaper ad and invitation to a new church
\$250 Signs showing location and worship times for a new church
\$500 Materials and supplies for a new church to hold its first Vacation Bible School

Activity: Make large posters that look like dollar bills. On each write one amount from the list above. On the back of the poster write what that amount will buy. Ask children or youth to hold the posters with the amount facing the audience and to read the information on the back (what that much will buy). This is good for a worship service or for Sunday School or Bible Study groups. After the last poster is read, ask all those holding the posters to say together: “What will you give to help people know about Jesus?”

2. Who was Annie Armstrong ?

Annie Walker Armstrong (1850-1938) did not serve as a missionary. She did use the gifts that God had given her to serve Him. She spoke up for career missionaries who were helping change people’s lives by introducing them to Jesus. She showed people the need to give to the work of missions. She told people about the importance of prayer for missionaries. She asked people to pray for missionaries to have safety and boldness in sharing the gospel. She explained how important it was to give to missions. She helped to start offerings for both home and international missions.

Annie’s commitment to missions during her lifetime gives us an example. We follow that example by giving and praying.

Activity: Ask a good speaker to tell “Annie’s Story” in worship service or Bible study groups.

3. History of the AAEO: How did it all start?

- Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) began in 1888.
- In 1895 the Home Mission Board asked WMU to contribute \$5,000 to help pay \$25,000 debt and allow missionaries to continue their work.
- WMU started the Week of Self-Denial. It was a time to pray for and give to home missions. They raised more than the \$5,000.
- Since 1895, a week of prayer and a home missions offering have continued.
- In honor of WMU’s first corresponding secretary and crusader for home missions, the offering was named the Annie Armstrong Offering in 1934.
- In 1969, the name was changed to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, connecting the offering with Easter. WMU continues to provide information and encouragement for this offering and sets the goal for giving to North American missions.

Activity: Put one of the facts above on each of six pieces of paper. Ask six people to read one fact each. This is good in adult meetings or worship.

4. Funding North American Missions: Where does my money go?

One hundred percent of Annie Armstrong Easter Offering® supports North American Mission Board missionaries and their ministries. NAMB partners with state Baptist conventions, associations, and churches. It has commissioned (appointed) more than 5,000 missionaries to serve in the United States, Canada, and their territories. These missionaries have many different ways of sharing the love of Jesus.

- Starting churches in both rural and urban areas. These churches respect the ethnic and cultural makeup of their communities.
- Sharing the gospel by focusing on ministry evangelism – ministering to people’s physical and spiritual needs in church and community settings.

Offerings to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering will fund mission work in three important ways:

(1) Missionary Support

- Salaries (most missionaries receive funds through state conventions and NAMB)
- Health benefits
- Missionary training as they begin their service
- Ongoing missionary training

(2) Church Planting Support

Money for new churches, such as:

- Rent for meeting places
- Materials
- Advertising expenses

(3) Evangelism Support

Includes projects that support missionaries’ work, such as:

- Scripture distribution
- Sports evangelism
- Special evangelism events

Activity: On a hallway bulletin board or display write the question “Where does my money go?” On colored strips around the question, write key points of the information above. Make all the information available to anyone who wants it.

PLEASE REMEMBER: You will choose only those activities that are good for your church. You don’t have to do everything. You can have a successful AAEO time in your church, but still keep it simple.

NAMB Facts: Extra Information

Use these facts as you write sermons or share information on North American missions.

- Most North American Mission Board (NAMB) missions personnel receive funds from state Baptist conventions and from the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. (100

percent of which will directly support missionaries and their ministries). Since its beginning, more than \$1 billion has been given through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

- NAMB's primary purpose is to assist Southern Baptist churches in reaching the United States, Canada, and their territories with the gospel of Jesus Christ. NAMB gives help to churches, associations, and state conventions in church planting and evangelism. This includes soul-winning training, interfaith witness, and church and community ministries. Three main goals of NAMB are sharing Christ, starting churches, and sending people.
- NAMB was formed in 1997. Earlier the organization included the Home Mission Board, the Brotherhood Commission, and Radio and Television Commission. The national office is located near Atlanta, in Alpharetta, GA.
- More than 5,000 missionaries, 2,500 chaplains (serving in military, institutions such as prisons and hospitals, and in business settings), and hundreds of thousands of mission volunteers (such as World Changers and Disaster Relief workers) are working to reach the estimated 251 million unbelievers in the United States and Canada.
- Church and community ministries such as Pregnancy Care Centers, literacy missions, Baptist center work, weekday ministries, and immigration and hunger ministries result in tens of thousands of new Christians each year.
- Since it began in 1998, NAMB's Strategic Focus Cities emphasis has seen more than 400 church plants and more than 55,000 volunteers in nine major cities.
- All seven Southern Baptist seminaries including the Canadian Southern Baptist Theological Seminary have Nehemiah Project professors in place. Because of this partnership to train new church planters, church planter interns have been appointed to serve in summer, semester, and full-time work.
- More than 25,000 youth and adults learned about mission involvement and ministry by taking part in World Changers and PowerPlant projects each year.
- Each year, more than 1,000 high school and college students answer God's call as summer, sojourner, or semester missionaries.
- More than 50,000 people are trained in Southern Baptist Disaster Relief. In partnership with Baptist state conventions, meals, cleanup, and childcare are provided to those who are victims of disasters.

Note: for information about any of the programs mentioned above, see www.namb.net.

North American Mission Board, 4200 North Point Parkway, Alpharetta, GA 30022-4176
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For general information on the North American Mission Board, call (770) 410-6000, or visit www.namb.net. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering is a registered trademark of WMU.

