



Episode 054: The Impact of Short Term Missions on Pastors – Mario Villanueva

Mario Villanueva is Pastor of Outreach Ministries at [Morningstar Christian Fellowship](#) in Toronto (Scarborough) Ontario, Canada. Mario was born into a Christian home in a Muslim enclave in the southern Philippines. For a season in the 1990s Mario and his wife Raquel served as church planting missionaries with [SEND International](#) in Madrid, Spain. Mario and Raquel began serving at Morningstar Christian Fellowship in 2005.

What does your role at Morningstar Christian Fellowship include?

- It includes local and global outreach.
- Our local outreach includes Alpha, small group, starting 5 new site areas, and reaching out to our community.
- We also encourage our members to be part of our short term missions within Canada. For the last few years I have led a team to Monetville, Quebec. This July a team of about 18 people are going to Fort McMurray to assist with door-to-door evangelism, soup kitchen, and a Bible camp.
- There are 74 nationalities congregating at Morningstar Christian Fellowship.
- Our global outreach includes about 30 missionaries and mission organizations. At the same time our focus is on leadership training of nationals of different projects in different countries like the Philippines, in Central America, India, Nigeria, and Kenya.

How do you see short-term missions benefiting your church? Why and how is it benefiting Morningstar to be involved in short-term missions?

- It benefits our church in 3 areas.
- The participants going on short-term missions will be impacted. Their priorities will be straightened out.
- During our short-term missions we are studying the book [Participating in the Mission of the Church](#) which really enhances their sensitivity and involvement in local and global missions. When they come back from short-term missions they will be involved one way or another in missions.
- It impacts the church that receives us.
- It also impacts the people who receive the participants.
- The short-term mission should be organized and planned well.



Not everyone who goes on a short-term mission will become part of the missions committee. But there will be other ways that bear fruit in their lives, right?

- I agree. Part of this will be partnering with the missions through prayer, and financial support.

Why do you think pastors should consider going on short term mission trips?

- I believe there is a big place for the pastor going on short term mission, because if you want your church to be missions minded, both local and global, you should model it. You should be excited about it, and see for yourself what is out there and maybe visit your missionary and see what they are doing so that when you come back you will have a fresh experience with your missionary.
- We as pastors should be role models. Participating in short term mission is modelling how exciting it is to be involved in missions.

Is this something that every pastor should consider?

- Every pastor should have a role to play in the church.
- In our case we have multiple pastors. We realize that every pastor has their role to play in the church. You can play a certain role in enhancing the participation of all members in the mission of the church.

What are some of the possible types of short term ministries that pastors can consider? How can they get involved?

- They can start with connecting with their missionaries on the field. This will be a two way blessing. You are interested not just in giving your money or praying, but are interested in the impact the missionaries are making on the field.
- Ask your missionaries if they can receive a team from your church. See what project missionaries on the field can offer you so that you can not only enhance your involvement with that missionary, but also enhance the impact of the missionary on the field.

To have the engagement of the home church – and particularly the leaders of the home church – engaged is such an encouragement to workers on the field. It will bear fruit over and over again.

- That is correct. For example this summer we are going to Fort McMurray. We would like to continue to connect that relationship we have. We reconnected with a church in Quebec to assist them in helping their community. They felt encouraged, and we came home full of blessings. We call this “Adorning the Gospel”.

Visiting your own mission workers is one type of trip a pastor can engage in. What are some other possibilities?

- We train national pastors in different countries. We train our leaders here to know how to facilitate and use the material from [the First Principles Series](#) from [Bild International](#) so that the pastors in those countries can receive the training. Sometimes we have 5



days to one week training. We bring the local pastors to one place and we go there to train those pastors, and send them off to their respective ministries and churches.

Any other thoughts on the types of trips that pastors might consider?

- We believe in the local church. The greatest need now in global missions is training of local pastors. So we reinforce their ministry.
- A construction team working with a local church can be a good idea. After a hurricane, our church raised about \$45,000 and built three homes in Dominica. This is not just giving practical help – it's connected to a church.
- We are excited that we can do training of pastors, but also physical help – because it is connected to the church and we want to that church to have an impact in their community.

If pastors are listening to this podcast and want to consider a short term mission trip, what advice do you have for them? What are some of the first steps they can take to get started in this?

- I would suggest doing the study [Participating in the Mission of the Church](#) through [Bild International](#) .
- Go to the [Global Missions Podcast](#) to hear testimonies of people impacted by short-term missions.
- They can connect with me, and [SEND International](#) and other agencies that are open to short term missions.

If you could imagine yourself sitting in a room speaking to some of your peers about short term missions, what would you want to say to them?

- Be a part of short term missions.
- The church we planted in the Philippines benefited from the blessing of receiving short term mission.
- Mags life was impacted by going on a short term mission trip.
- It's great to be part of short term missions – to model to your people your excitement and involvement in missions.
- Don't hesitate! Be a part of short term missions and inquire more about how you can be involved in short term missions in your church or through a mission organization.

If our listeners wanted to learn more from you, how might they contact you?

- Call [Morningstar Christian Fellowship](#) at 416-281-4138 x 3230

