

AMERICAN INTERIM PASTOR MINISTRIES, INC.
“LIVING & SERVING IN THE UK” for YOUTH WORKERS
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Introduction

This document will be used to help provide an orientation for Americans going to the UK to serve as volunteer youth workers for the first time.

This document will remain evergreen, and we will appreciate suggestions for improvement from all those who serve in this ministry.

The first draft only addressed the northeast of England. Subsequently, AIPM Was given opportunities to serve in other parts of the UK. We are trying now to make the comments fit multiple locations. Although England, Scotland and Wales are not large, they are on an island and there are enormous regional variations—in weather, lifestyle and traditions. Even within just a few miles the way people live can be very different and it really does have to be experienced to be understood.

We suggest that our youth workers take these comments with a grain of salt. Please go to the UK with a mindset that the local people know their church, community, area and country best and be prepared to learn from them. They will love you and take very good care of you.

For the first 14 years of this ministry, we only served in Baptist churches. In 2014 we began serving at Bootle Evangelical Church (BEC) in Cumbria. The doctrinal beliefs of Evangelical Free Churches are very close to Baptist beliefs, so we are available to serve in other Evangelical Free Churches in Britain. And more recently, we have decided that we should help all truly evangelical churches regardless of denomination.

Accommodations

Almost without exception, youth workers will be given accommodations in homes of church members. The UK church will likely contribute to the member to help offset the extra costs. Please refer to the following AIPM documents:

Advice and Guidance for Youth Workers

There are 5 key sources for advice available to American youth workers who serve in the UK. They are the UK church's pastor and leadership team, a former American volunteer that has done youth work in the UK, someone from the association that works with youth workers and possibly a youth worker at a nearby evangelical church.

The UK church's pastor and leadership team will feel responsible for how things go in their church, and they will have been instrumental in getting the church to invite you. They obviously want the enterprise to succeed for God's glory and they also have a huge personal interest in your success. Ask for their opinions and for information about needs in the church, standard practices, etc.

If there are meetings of youth workers in the association or the community, they may be worth attending. Ask the pastor/leadership team for advice. Those sessions would allow you to know folks doing the same kind of ministry you are doing, and it demonstrates that we Americans are team players and not interested in a "Lone Ranger" kind of ministry. It would be good if the pastor our leadership team were to notify the association of your arrival and ask that you be included on notices, etc.

Airline Ticket Reimbursement.

DO NOT BUY YOUR TICKETS UNTIL YOUR PASSPORT WITH VISA STAMP IS IN HAND! You will need to do fund raising for the ticket cost. You will work with the UK church about airport for arrival and departure because we want the church to pick you up and return you to the airport.

Baggage

Baggage rules vary widely so check with the airline before packing. Please be alert for fees for extra bags. We hope interim workers will be able to manage with 2 checked bags per person to avoid extra cost to the church.

Baptist Union of Great Britain

The Baptist Union of Great Britain (BUGB) is like the national or state conventions in the USA. There are about 2000 Baptist churches in the BUGB with most in England and a few in Wales and Scotland. The Welsh and Scottish Baptist churches that belong to the BUGB may be aligned with two Unions. The BUGB provides support for these churches like USA conventions. The Union is made up of 13 regional Associations. Each association has a team that provides some pastoral oversight of the ministers and their family and work strategically for "mission" (a British Baptist expression for ALL that the church does) in the region.

Camera/Smart Phone

Take loads of digital photos to send home and to AIPM.

Children, Youth and Vulnerable Adults

British law is very strict regarding the well-being of children. The Baptist Union of Great Britain has a major section on their web site www.baptists.org.uk with comprehensive information on what they call "Safeguarding." This site provides information on policies and procedures for working with children and young

people. This is a “must read” for youth workers before the assignment begins. Each church may have its own version of a safeguarding policy, based on information from the Baptist Union or elsewhere. It may be customized to its own situation. This document should be studied thoroughly, too. Additionally, the pastor or leadership team should arrange a meeting with the association’s safeguarding representative and ask for a detailed orientation. The church should have someone named as the safeguarding contact person (child or youth advocate) and it might be good for that person to attend the orientation session at the association as well. This is important for the protection of children and youth, for the church and for American youth workers.

The church may have designated some member as the person to turn to if there are questions about the rules. This could be a schoolteacher who should be thoroughly familiar with the requirements, or the church may have sent a member for special training. Be very careful to follow all the rules—don’t hesitate to ask questions. A police check will be conducted on each AIPM volunteer before they report for service in the UK. The youth worker will complete a consent form for the police background check and send to AIPM, Inc. AIPM, Inc. will have the police check made through the Protect My Ministry organization for a fee. The confirmation of “No Record” will be forwarded to the church secretary and to David Hunt of Gateshead International Ministries by AIPM, Inc. One American volunteer religious worker was told that an “Enhanced Criminal Records Check” is required in the UK for work with children. The value of this is not clear since the candidate will not likely have lived in England, but the local church rules must be followed. AIPM will try to keep up with any changes and follow any new rules.

We have been told that recent rules require children less than 4 ft. in height or under 12 years old to be in a booster seat when riding in a car. This could influence arranging transportation for events for children.

As is the case the world around, AIPM’s volunteers must be sure to have a second responsible person present at all meetings with British children, youth and adults. We understand that Billy Graham followed the practice of, “Never being alone with a person of the opposite gender that is not a family member.” That is good advice for AIPM’s volunteers and in these times

the words “opposite gender” might be dropped! To be crystal clear—do not meet with another person or go into the home of another person by yourself. Take a responsible adult with you! That may make visits more difficult, but it will be good if the church members develop the habit of making visits!

Children’s Workers

Sadly, many UK Baptist churches have no children attending services or in any way connected to the church. Since work with children has a high energy demand some congregations with only elderly members may find the prospects of personally working with children daunting. AIPM, Inc. may be able to recruit university and seminary students or recent graduates to minister to UK church children. Assignments of 12 to 24 months are ideal because of the time required to build relationships with British young people. A summer session of around 10 weeks may be made to work, but longer assignments are preferred by British churches. Details of such an arrangement would have to be worked out on a case-by-case basis. There is a Terms of Reference document specifically for youth workers.

Church Relationships

Generally, churches in the UK do not use committees to the extent that Baptist churches in the USA use them. The deacon body does much of the work of keeping the church operating. A deacon’s involvement in pastoral ministries, quite like the USA, depends on the individual deacon and his or her pastor’s leadership.

A key position in an English Baptist church is “Church Secretary.” This is not the pastor’s secretary, as the title might imply in America. It is the official lay position that handles the church’s business. This business includes making denominational reports, handling official correspondence, keeping track of membership, scheduling supply preachers when the pulpit is vacant, etc. The Church Secretary does many of the duties that a business administrator might do in a church in the USA. One British Baptist pastor said, tongue-in-cheek, “First there is God and then there is the CHURCH SECRETARY.”

Many UK churches do not have a “minister of music” or praise and worship leader. This is especially true of the smaller churches. UK pastors generally lead the entire service including the praise and worship. Some simply announce the hymns or choruses and let the instruments or a

worshipper with a strong voice lead the congregational singing. Others also lead the singing depending on talents and gifts. Youth workers with spiritual gifts/talents with instruments and/or voice may have many opportunities to use them in UK churches.

The mindset of the American volunteer should not be to import methods and programs from America. A preferred approach would be to learn what works well in the local culture and capitalize on those things. The local people generally are not lacking in ideas for ministries to do or how to do them. Their primary need is for resources to implement the ideas they already have. They will have developed ideas for ministry from their own experiences and from the experiences of local churches that are seen to be successful. It would be a good idea to wait until asked, "How do you do it in your church in America?" before offering very many American approaches.

The American youth worker may be invited to attend deacons' meetings and other meetings of the leadership team. It would be appropriate to ask the pastor what is expected from the youth worker before the meetings.

Youth workers may choose to move their church membership to the UK church. However, considering the limited time involved an alternative is to come under the "watch-care" of the church. The watch-care arrangement grants volunteers all the rights and privileges of membership except the right to vote on church business.

The process of becoming a member of a British Baptist church is substantially different than entry into a Baptist church in America. The standard approach in Britain seems to be a prospective member applies for membership by letting the Church Secretary know in writing of the interest. The Church Secretary takes the matter to the deacons meeting. Deacons may appoint a deacon and a non-deacon member to visit the prospect. The results of the visit are reported to the deacons and the deacons then vote on admitting the prospect into membership. The next step is for the Church Meeting to hear a recommendation from the deacons and then vote on membership. If the church votes for membership, the pastor or American volunteer who serves in a pastoral role will welcome the new member into the fellowship at the next communion service. The new member may be invited to sit on the front row of seats and he or she may be served the Lord's Supper as the deacons are being served.

Maintaining a healthy relationship with other Christian churches in the community is important to UK Baptist churches and recognizes the fact that the community is watching to see how we treat one another. Some communities have Churches Together, an official national organization with certain criteria for membership. The deacons will advise American volunteers of the church's membership in Churches Together or any other similar organization and any background on the subject. Also, often the season of Lent involves cooperation and sometime shared services with other churches in the community. This may include holding services on weeknights at each of the participating churches during Lent. Some Baptist churches have combined services on Maundy Thursday evening and Good Friday morning.

Church Services

The Lord's Supper may be served in a different way from Baptist churches in America. Some UK Baptist pastors announce, "We will eat the bread as it is served symbolizing that we come to faith in Christ as individuals. We will hold the cup and all drink together symbolizing that the church in one body in Jesus Christ." Taking the Lord's Supper to people who can't get to the church can be a real blessing. Portable communion kits are available and very helpful for this meaningful ministry.

At the end of most meetings and services many UK Baptists say, "The Grace." This is a direct quote of 2 Corinthians 13:14: "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen." The congregation will look at each person present as they say The Grace. It is a great way to end the meeting!

American volunteers should adjust to the UK church's preference for style of praise and worship music. Many Baptist churches use blended, but no assumptions should be made. Also, many British hymns are not the same as their American counterparts; either the melody may be different for familiar lyrics, or the lyrics may be different for a familiar melody. Many of the songs will be totally unfamiliar to one from a traditional American Baptist church. Most of the song books (hymnals) in the pews do not have the music – only the words.

Prayer meetings may have extended periods of silent prayer. If folk stop praying audibly, this may not mean the prayer meeting is over, but

rather that folk have decided to pray silently and may resume praying aloud later.

Mother's Day in GB or "Mothering Sunday," is held on the fourth Sunday of Lent. It is exactly three weeks before Easter Sunday and usually falls in the second half of March or early April compared to a May date in the USA. It is often celebrated in the worship service by having the children pass out flowers to the mothers present. American volunteers should ask the UK church leaders what their tradition is and follow their lead. On both sides of the ocean, this is not a day to overlook someone.

Clothing

See "weather" below. You will need water-resistant outerwear to deal with the frequent rainfall ranging from a drizzle to a downpour. You will need to be able to add layers for warmth when the sun goes behind the clouds and to remove layers when it warms up.

You will need a good umbrella for each person. An alternative to an umbrella for the more rainy and windy locations is a waterproof jacket with a hood—umbrellas and wind don't go well together. A long all-weather coat with removable liner can serve as a nice overcoat for cold days and a raincoat for wet days.

Wool sweaters are good to keep the cold out and you will sometimes find British people sitting in their homes with a heavy shirt and heavy sweater on. That should tell you something about where they like the thermostat set. The thermostat may be set low because of the cost of fuel or personal preference—it is best to not prejudge their reason. Wool trousers are very comfortable in the winter. You may find that our lightweight wool and manmade fibers are just not that warm for you, but your British friends may be quite comfortable in them. It would be a good idea to take a pair of thermal underwear for the coldest days, especially until you get acclimated. A good fleece pullover or zip up jacket is a good thing to have. You might find these at a clothing resale shop in the UK.

Dress for Sunday worship service varies church to church, so it is best to ask what they expect the youth worker to wear before packing.

Take clothing for whatever outdoor activities you enjoy. Many British people love to go for walks and there are some beautiful places to walk all over Britain. The British may have invested in good walking shoes and heavy wool socks, or they may go walking in everyday shoes or tennis

shoes (called "trainers"). A walk is another occasion when it is essential to be able to add or remove layers of clothing. A small backpack is useful for carrying water, sandwiches, camera, etc. on walks.

Computers and Internet service

Being able to send emails back to America is extremely helpful. And, Skype/Zoom have become popular ways for American volunteers to stay in touch with family back home. This shortens the apparent distance between the UK and home. If you don't have Skype/Zoom and your computer has a camera, microphone and speakers you can use Skype/Zoom software for free. Other services such as WhatsApp are available as well. Check that your computer's microphone, built-in camera and speakers all work before you leave the USA as that equipment may be much less expensive here. You will be able to learn the approximate cost in the UK of electronics, etc., from the Internet by going to sites such as www.comet.co.uk or www.pcworld.co.uk.

A laptop computer would be ideal to take with you. If you own a laptop, its battery charger will likely handle a range of voltages from 100 to 240 volts—look on the back of the charger for voltage details. If so, all you need to operate the laptop in the UK is a plug to convert from USA 2-pin to UK 3-pin. As in the USA, there are multiple providers of Internet services. The UK church should provide Internet service.

Cultural Differences

A considerable amount of "orientation" is expected before American volunteer religious workers report to serve a church in UK. This is usually handled by volunteers spending a day or two in our home after the invitation to serve has been extended by the UK church and accepted by the candidate. Some examples of cultural differences at this stage may be helpful. Following are some of our insights but we are not optimistic that we have covered either a very large percentage of them or the most important ones.

American volunteers are well advised to keep in mind that they are living overseas, and many things are different. We wouldn't recommend spending time analyzing which is best but concentrate on the adjustments that you will need to make to be effective. You may be there only six-months and your British friends will remain there a lifetime.

The "British reserve" is talked about widely. Here's what it means in practice. Typically, a British person respects another person's right to privacy at all costs. This may make the British person seem aloof or unfriendly. Experience has shown that British people love Americans and enjoy chatting with Americans. A simple comment about the weather may open an interesting conversation and can even lead to a lasting friendship, and possibly the opportunity to share the Gospel.

Another cultural difference that can affect church work in Britain is the way decisions are made. Generally, British people take a long time to make decisions. Seldom will they make important decisions on the spot. This means that "relationship evangelism" may work far better than "cold calls" to share the Gospel message. In fact, making calls at homes without prior appointments may not result in an invitation to come into the home. A visit at the door is about as much as one can expect when making cold calls.

On a more positive note, the American accent is sometimes sufficient to gain a person permission to make a visit in the home. A call to plan for a visit in the home may result in a very pleasant time spent with a British family.

Laurence Singlehurst, a British minister, has written an excellent book, *"Sowing, Reaping, Keeping"* on outreach in the UK. He recognizes that all efforts to move lost people even a little bit closer to faith in Christ is truly evangelism. He says that in the British culture the first objective is to show lost people that "God is good and Christians are okay." This book is a must read for American Interim Pastors in the UK.

Two other helpful books are: "Evangelism Made Slightly Less Difficult" by Nick Pollard which I am told has a lot of helpful insights into the way British people tick and "Watching the English" by Kate Fox. I have read the Fox book, and it is particularly insightful but there is no Christian emphasis.

Women are far more widely used in ministry in Baptist churches in UK than in the USA. It is probably fair to say that if it were not for the service and faithfulness of women in UK Baptist churches, many more would have had to shut their doors a long time ago. The deacon body may have one or more women members. Deacons in UK Baptist churches are elected and not ordained. Some churches have women as

pastors. Women have been in pastoral ministry in the UK since the 1930s.

Generally, the use of alcohol does not seem to be frowned upon as much in Baptist circles in UK as in some Baptist churches in America. An offer of a glass of wine with a meal or a glass of sherry during a visit is not uncommon. It is probably best that American volunteers do not provide alcohol for guests to avoid offense or the wrong impression because the above-mentioned attitude toward alcohol is not universal.

Electricity

The electric service in the house is 240 volt and plugs have 3 prongs. You should take 1 or 2 converters (transformers from 240 v. to 110 v. for your small personal appliances). Also take several plugs to adapt from our 2-prong/110 volt to their outlets. You can find these kits at Wal-Mart for about \$20.00. UK electric current frequency is 50 cycles compared to our 60 cycles. Electric motors will run a bit slower, but this should not harm the motors or adversely affect the performance of the appliance. There are no electrical outlets in bathrooms except perhaps 2-prong outlets for electric shavers--safety concern and it is the law. Laptops generally operate on any voltage from 100 to 250.

Expectations

The "Terms of Reference" document should be developed by the church and should be reviewed and approved by the American volunteer and AIPM, Inc. before the assignment begins. This document need not be lengthy but the things that are critically important to the church, the American volunteer, AIPM, Inc. and GIM should be addressed. The Appendix below contains a sample "Terms of Reference" document.

Financial Business

Living in the UK may be approximately 25% more expensive than in the US depending on the exchange rate. Recent reports are that groceries are about 25% more expensive in the UK.

Before you leave the USA have your local bank obtain about \$300.00 worth of UK money (Pounds Sterling--"£" is the symbol like our \$). Some folk use GBP for the symbol). This amount will be sufficient for a while especially if you allow the church to reimburse for airline tickets after you arrive. Also, you will be able to use a USA credit card at most businesses. The \$300.00 should get you about GBP 230.00 depending on the exchange rate in effect. If

you're uncomfortable carrying currency, you can buy traveler's checks—there is a fee for cashing traveler's checks. (The British spelling - "cheques") The \$300.00 will be enough for incidental expenses for the first few weeks. You will not likely be allowed to open a UK bank checking account since you will not have any UK income and won't have a UK address dating back 3 years.

You may have some bills to pay and need to write a few checks. An alternative to a UK checking account would be to arrange with a church member to exchange one of his or her checks for your cash for your bill payment. As in America, never put cash or a credit/debit card in the post.

We recommend that you use your USA issued credit card for most of your purchases and expenses. You will get the very best exchange rate and avoid the bank's commission for cashing your USA checks. The commission may be 2 or 3 percent! And, you won't have to carry a lot of cash with you. British credit card companies have gone to a credit card with a chip in it and using it requires a PIN. If your credit card does not have a chip, the merchant will have to use other means to read the card such as a card reader. I would bet that British businesses will find a way to be able to use USA issued credit cards otherwise, tourists are in for a lot of trouble and businesses are in for big losses.

Notify your credit card company before you leave the USA that you will be living overseas for the period you have committed to stay so they will not suspect card theft when they see charges from England show up on your account. If you use a British ATM, be sure to check the fee for ATM use.

Be very careful about displaying your money. Put it all into your purse or wallet before you leave the bank or store. Out on the street, as may happen in USA, someone might run by you and grab it out of your hand. ATMs are available in the UK, and we recommend that you use one that is located **inside** a building.

American volunteers should follow the Holy Spirit's leading regarding where tithes and offerings are given. They may wish to contribute to the church in UK while serving there. We are not tax advisors, but we understand that contributions are not allowable IRS deductions if given directly to the church in UK. It may be possible to contribute to the home church in the USA and designate the funds to the church in UK. This has worked for some. It is also possible

to donate funds to the UK church through AIPM, Inc. By IRS rules this must be an arms-length donation. When American volunteers chose this method, I must ask for approval from the AIPM, Inc. board of directors to forward the funds to the UK church. The Board always approves. To avoid questions about "arm's length" please do not write the name of the church on the check. Simply put a note saying you are giving to the UK church in the envelope with your check. Mail to AIPM's Treasurer at: AIPM, Inc., 189 Anderson County Road 4258, Palestine, TX 75803. One hundred percent of the donation will go to the UK church. AIPM does not retain any part! The UK church would not be allowed to pass on to the American volunteers any portion of the donation. AIPM's records must be clear and complete if we are audited by the IRS.

It is a good idea for our volunteers to have nothing to do with the UK church's money. The church will have already designated people to count money, make bank deposits and pay bills, etc. If American volunteers make purchases on behalf of the church, the expenditures should be reimbursed upon presentation of a receipt. Approvals in advance of expenditures are advisable and should be handled the way church expenses are handled in America. To avoid overloading the church treasurer it is a good idea to collect a few receipts and submit them at one time rather than handling them one receipt at a time.

The financial status of church members may vary all over the map. Many churches have several retired persons and, in that case, as in America, their income may be fixed. If the church is in an area with high unemployment, many may be receiving government assistance. British people tend to be very generous regardless of their financial situation and their love for those who serve in their churches may prompt them to do generous acts. It seems the polite thing to do to accept their generosity graciously. Of course, no form of remuneration is allowed. If the opportunity presents itself to return the favor, it seems appropriate to do so.

Host Home in the UK

Hot water pressure may be quite low. This is because regulations require that a break tank be installed in the attic or in a closet at a high level. This prevents any possibility of hot water flow from the home back to the water mains. Some homes now have "combi-boilers" which require no storage tanks. They supply hot water on

demand to the central heating radiators as well as to all sinks and the bathtub.

Hot water for showers usually comes from an electric heater mounted over the bathtub. These are “on-demand” water heaters—the water is heated just before going to the shower head and there is no stored hot water with this type of shower hot water system. You can adjust the water flow rate and temperature—best to do this before you get into the shower. You turn the electric power for the on-demand heater on and off by pulling a string that is mounted on the bottom of the heater or on the ceiling.

Burglaries are a serious problem in some parts of Britain so all doors and all windows must be kept locked day and night. Don't leave valuables where they can be seen through a window. Don't leave women's purses on the stair, as they have been known to disappear in a heartbeat.

Laundry

Hopefully the host's home will have a clothes washer and dryer or a combo-washer/dryer. If they are available, ask the host if you are allowed to do your laundry. Your host may allow that and teach you how to work the equipment or may offer to do it for you.

If no clothes washer/dryer is available to you, you should be able to find a laundry mat (laundrette) nearby. For some reason dry cleaning is far more expensive than in the USA—perhaps 3 or 4 times as expensive. Ask church members where they take their clothes for dry cleaning.

Mail

Your post (mail) will be delivered to your address at the host's home. To send letters you need to locate a red mailbox in your neighborhood. There are usually boxes for mailing letters every 4 or 5 city blocks. You may find a small branch post office in the village shops area for buying stamps, sending packages, etc. but government cost cutting is making these less plentiful.

Postal codes serve the same function as our Zip Codes but give far more detail. For example, the postal code for the manse in Thornaby is TS17 8EA. The first two letters give the general area, TS stands for “Teesside” (beside the river Tees). The third digit or two-digits refer to a specific part of the larger area. The “17” for the manse covers the whole of Thornaby. The next number (fourth in order), that is, “8” for the manse, further narrows down the location. Finally, the last 2

letters give a very precise location on your street. Postal codes can be found on the Internet.

Make no assumptions about house numbers on opposite sides of the street. The Thornaby manse is at 92 Lanehouse Road. Directly opposite are not number 93 or 95 as we would expect, but numbers 155 and 157.

Meals

Perhaps there are variations on what meals are called, but the noon meal may be called “dinner” or “lunch” and the evening meal that may be served around 5 PM is often called “tea.” Teas seem to be simpler meals but Sunday “dinner” at around noon is often a big deal! Sunday dinners may be elaborate, multi-course meals which the hostess (or host) will have spent hours preparing. If you get an invitation and it is not clear, it is appropriate to ask, “What does this invitation involve?” You should be told whether you will be fed or not. We think that generally if you are invited to tea in the late afternoon, you will likely get tea and sandwiches and a bit more including a “sweet.” If you are “invited around” sometime in the late morning, you will likely get coffee and may get sandwiches, that is, lunch. If you are invited around in the early afternoon, you will likely be offered a cup of tea and a biscuit (cookie). When people call at your home (come by for a visit) it is customary to offer tea or coffee and biscuits (cookies or tea cakes). Don't get any hang-ups about this—the British are gracious people and realize our customs are different and they will make do with what you serve them. In their homes, if they offer tea and biscuits or tea and sandwiches—enjoy! Some British families have a “supper” just before going to bed. This seems never to be a large quantity and is kept simple. Finally, home visits even for a cup of coffee or tea and a biscuit usually take a couple of hours. So, don't schedule too many appointments in homes in one day!

Medical Care

As of July 2015, the UK Government introduced a new Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS). Part of the visa application process (online) requires the applicant to go to another site and input the start and end dates as listed on the certificate of sponsorship. The system then automatically requires a credit card charge of GBP 1035.00 per person per year (this charge varies year-to-year). The applicant is then given an IHS reference number. This number must be kept! With that number and the passport, the visa holder is

entitled to free medical care from the National Health Service (NHS) while in the UK.

We have had several volunteers go to England since the IHS was established. They visited the doctor's surgery (doctor's clinic in USA) in their town and learned that they indeed are eligible for NHS care for free. The office managers registered them as a new patient. Here's what they had to produce (this could change):

1. Completion of a long form with personal details,
2. Show passport photo page and visa,
3. Show USA driver's license (a second form of photo ID is required)
4. Show letter of invitation from the UK as proof that they have a UK address.

It is no longer necessary for our volunteers to purchase traveler's medical insurance. We have found that the GBP 1035.00 per person per year is less expensive than traveler's medical insurance.

Since the beginning of AIPM we have recommended that volunteers from the USA check in at the "doctor's surgery" (medical clinic) shortly after they arrive in the UK. Establishing this contact may be helpful in case of an emergency during the assignment in the UK. During that visit it seems appropriate to talk to the General Practitioner's staff about your status in the UK and your IHS reference number, etc. There may be more than one doctor's surgery close to the manse and as in the USA, doctors at one may have a better reputation. It is a good idea to ask church members to recommend which surgery might be best.

Passports, Visas and Overseas Travel

Visas are now essential for American religious workers, including volunteers, for UK trips for ministry of any length! All our interim workers and any dependent children must get visas. There are several steps to the process:

1. Data for an application for a certificate of sponsorship is collected by AIPM from the UK church and from American Volunteers. This information is sent to Rev. David Hunt of Gateshead Ministries (GIM) and he issues a certificate for each volunteer.
2. The UK church must officially request a "Certificate of Sponsorship" from GIM. GIM has been approved by the UK

Border Agency as a Registered Sponsoring Agency and will handle all certificates for AIPM, Inc. volunteer workers. The UK church will reimburse GIM for the cost associated with issuing certificates.

3. GIM will apply online for certificates of sponsorships for "religious workers" for the candidate. Tier 5 certificates are required for youth workers. This permits both pastoral and non-pastoral work including teaching and preaching so there should be no restrictions on the type of service our volunteers do.
4. GIM notifies the American volunteers of their certificate numbers and provides a copy of the certificate of sponsorship. The certificate gives details of the length of stay approved, etc. The youth worker then goes online and applies for a visa at: <https://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/>
5. They enter their personal details and the certificate number. They also must give their credit card number for the visa fee (currently about GBP 750.00 per person). They can purchase prepaid/pre-addressed shipping labels on the visa web site through VFS Global. This seems a bit less expensive than going directly to UPS. Shipments are made via overnight packages to avoid delays. Packages are sent to the British Consulate in NYC. IF YOU DO NOT USE VFS GLOBAL, DO NOT USE FEDEX. THE CONSULATE WILL NOT RETURN THE VISA TO YOU IN A FEDEX PACAKGE (and I have no idea why).
6. When volunteers submit the application online, they will be given information about locations where biometric checks can be made. These are electronic fingerprints and perhaps a bit more. An appointment is made online, and the biometrics establishment is visited as scheduled. The biometrics place will initial the appointment confirmation document (the one that has a bar code on it). This is proof that your fingerprints are on file. This initialed document is enclosed in the package to NYC. The passport and other documents listed on the web site (AIPM has what we think is the same list of enclosures) are also included in the package to the consulate. The UK church will reimburse the

volunteer religious worker and spouse for the cost of visas.

7. The immigration health surcharge mentioned above under medical care is paid at the time of the visa application.
8. The certificate of sponsorship may be issued in a day or two following the submittal of all relevant data to GIM. After that, it appears to take a few days to do the biometrics check and about 10 business days for the consulate to issue visas if everything they receive is in order.
9. When the visas are in hand and ONLY when they are in hand, the interim and spouse can make airline reservations.
10. AIPM keeps a current list of the documents that GIM requires. Some are available before the certificate is issued. Some are available later. For example, the candidate scans the visa page of the passport, sends to McComb, GIM and the UK church. Additionally, within 10 days of arrival in the UK, the candidate must go to the designated UK post office and collect a Biometric Residence Permit (looks much like a driver's license). This must be scanned, and copies sent to McComb and GIM. And, very importantly, copies should be made and kept in a safe place and given to a representative of the UK church for safe keeping. The UK's immigration folks are changing things rapidly so instructions on their website trumps these notes!

In case of theft, make a photocopy of the photo page and facing page of your passport and your visa and put a copy in each piece of luggage and leave a copy with someone in the USA. AIPM and GIM also require copies of passport photo page and visa page and we distribute these to the UK church.

The US Government's State Department has useful information about overseas travel: http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html The following is recommended on the site: **Register your travel--** It is a good idea to register your travel with the State Department so that you may be contacted if need be, whether because of a family emergency in the U.S. , or because of a crisis in the area in which you are traveling. Travel registration is a free service provided by the State Department and is easily accomplished online at <https://>

travelregistration.state.gov. (In accordance with the Privacy Act, the Department of State may not release information on your welfare or whereabouts to inquirers without your express written authorization.)

Phones

There is a charge for all phone calls in the UK—even local calls from a land line phone, but they are not expensive. You may still find pay phones around and you can use them for only a few pence. Generally, a window on the pay phone will show you just how long you can talk for the coin[s] you have inserted. If it is a quick call within the UK, a 10 pence coin may be adequate.

To phone the USA from the UK you dial: 001+area code + number. There are free services such as Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp and FaceTime. You simply download the software, register and then look up others who have that service. You can arrange in advance for them to be on-line and click on their screen name and your computer or smart phone dials their computer or phone. The UK church should have the telephone and Internet services set up before you arrive but be sure to ask.

UK phone numbers usually have a 5-digit area code with the first digit being "0." The area code is followed by a 6-digit number. If you call long distance within the UK, you must dial the 5-digit area code including the "0" plus the 6-digit number. For example, to call the Thornaby manse from a local phone, you simply dial 673061. To phone the manse from outside the Thornaby/Stockton-on-Tees/Middlesbrough area, you dial 01642-673061.

If you phone that same number from the USA, you drop the "0" and use the last 4 digits of the area code plus the 6-digit number. To dial the UK from the USA you must first dial the international code, "011." Then you dial the country code for the UK, "44." We suggest that when you give Americans your UK phone number you write out the full dialing instructions. For example, to phone the Thornaby manse from the USA you dial 011+44+1642+673061.

Mobile phones are very popular in the UK. Your USA cell phone may not work there or if it does, it may be very expensive to use. Check with your mobile phone company before you leave the USA. The UK church should provide a mobile phone for youth workers.

Places to See

There is beautiful scenery and interesting things to see and do in all directions all over the UK. We recommend that you talk to church members about what may be interesting locally.

Planning for Ministry

The UK church may already have a process for planning youth ministry. The pastor and leadership team should be able to guide youth workers through the steps and assist with ideas and implementation. Accept all the help you can get!

Politics

British people are sometimes interested in the political views of American volunteers and we, of course, are interested in their perspectives. This can lead to some interesting discussions, but there are some serious implications. Of greatest importance is the reason we serve in Britain. Obviously, we serve to advance the kingdom of God and NOT to convert people to our political view regardless of how strongly we hold that view. There is great risk that a lost person may choose to not listen to a Christian talking about Christianity who is of a different political persuasion. Many British Christians hold political views quite different from many evangelical Christian Americans and they often hold their political views very strongly. So, treading very lightly around political issues seems good advice. When asked about the political situation either in the UK or in the USA, it seems advisable to say politely, "I know cultures differ greatly, so I generally prefer to not discuss politics." I strongly recommend that one not allow himself to be pulled off that position. One American never had a chance to present the Gospel to my lost friend simply because he mentioned that he liked a certain American politician.

Also important is the issue of restrictions on tax-exempt organizations regarding political activity. I think the British rules are like ours. My simplistic view of our rules is that

churches must NOT take sides in politics. That would be a good guideline for AIPM volunteers serving in Britain—DO NOT TAKE SIDES - YOU ARE A GUEST. The following was passed on to me by Rev. David Hunt, President of Gateshead International Ministries (GIM issues certificates of sponsorship so that AIPM volunteers can obtain visas for voluntary work in Britain):

"UK charity laws prohibit charities from favouring any particular political party. Here are some quotes from the Charity Commissions website:

http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Charity_requirements_guidance/Your_charitys_activities/Campaigning/elect.aspx

"The independent nature of the charitable sector is of fundamental importance to society, and is greatly valued by the public. The guiding principle of charity law in terms of elections is that charities should be, and be seen to be, independent from party politics. ... Charities should be especially wary of associating, or becoming associated in the minds of the public, with a particular candidate or political party. So, if (AIPM volunteers speak about British politics), it must be to present a *Christian* perspective on issues of interest... (The discussion must be....fair and balanced, not partisan).

In the UK, evangelical Christians are to be found in all the major political parties, which I (David Hunt) believe is a good thing. We are called to be 'salt and light' throughout society, and that means Christians getting involved.

The AIPM, Inc. official position: "If an American volunteer should get an invitation to speak to a political group, that invitation should be discussed with the UK church

leadership team to avoid surprises and get any guidance that may (1) help advance the cause of Christ and (2) avoid any comments that would be considered to breach UK charity laws.”

Following are some Scripture references of interest in such a situation from David Hunt:

Rom 15:1-7 for the responsibilities of those who govern. They are *God's servants for doing what's good* for the citizens they govern (v4) –

Gen. 50:20 for Joseph being a prime example from the Old Testament.

1 Tim. 2:1-4 for law and order and for praying for those in authority over us. A good example would be the church praying for the local Member of Parliament (wouldn't it be good if he or she visited the local Baptist church?)

The Christian Institute have produced some helpful materials which I would commend:

- Wayne Gruden's excellent presentation on Christians and political involvement: *Does political involvement distract from the Gospel?* (see <http://www.christian.org.uk/grudemtour/>)
- The Christian Institute's election briefing for the 2010 UK General election ([Election Briefing 2010 \(39327\)](http://www.christian.org.uk/resources/publications/)) – available as a pdf download; see <http://www.christian.org.uk/resources/publications/>)

Prayer

As soon as you are invited to serve a church, enlist a “Prayer Team” to lift your ministry and

the mission of the UK church to our Father in daily prayer. Communicate with them regularly, weekly or as a minimum monthly, your own needs and the needs of the fellowship you are serving and the needs of the community you are praying to reach for Christ.

Some UK churches set aside one morning each week for a gathering to pray. This will bless you greatly and produce spiritual results. Enjoy! Unlike many prayer sessions in USA churches that have continually audible prayers, British prayer circles will sometimes fall silent. This simply means the participants have felt led to pray silently and do not feel obligated to keep it audible.

School Work

The UK church and youth worker will want to have a good reputation in the community and helping at the local school can be great ministry. The pastor or leadership team might phone the school for an appointment with the head teacher to introduce the youth worker. During the visit, the youth worker could volunteer to help with religious education classes, school assemblies and in a role such as teacher's aide. For assemblies and RE classes, the topic to be covered may be assigned by the RE teacher or the head teacher. Be sure to follow their guidelines about topic and timing.

Be sure to check with the local Baptist Church and school officials about what is proper in their schools. Some things that come immediately to mind:

1. Ask the host teacher what topics are appropriate. For example, talking about Christianity is okay in religious education class but may not be in math class or on the playground.
2. Gum chewing is not allowed in school.
3. Denim or jeans may not be allowed in school.

Shopping

Most things that we have in the USA are available in the UK. However, if you require special hair shampoo, deodorant, etc. take a six-month supply.

Very few residences are very far from small shops. These are handy but may be high priced. Most towns have a large supermarket. Asda's (Wal-Mart), Morrison's, Sainsbury's and Tesco are well-stocked supermarkets and have most food items that we have in the USA. Ask church

members where the best values are—you won't be there long enough to learn by trial and error. Most bread in the UK does not contain the preservatives like American bread so does not last as long. We discovered that only keeping what you will use for two or three days out of the freezer means less wasted bread!

As in the USA, it pays to pay attention to prices as you go around. Many years ago, I paid about \$6.00 for a 9-volt battery at PC World and found the same one at Morrison's for about \$3.00.

Television

We expect the host home will have a TV and youth workers should be able to join the host in watching programs. Be aware that some TV material is not suitable for Christian viewing. Get the host or church members advise on what to avoid.

Terms of Reference

See the appendix for a sample "Terms of Reference. A document similar, but not necessarily the same as this one should be prepared by the UK church and reviewed and agreed to by the youth worker, GIM and AIPM, Inc. This should help clarify expectations and help reduce the chance for confusion, a misunderstanding or hurt feelings.

Things to take with you (this list has been reduced in scope due to weight limitations)

1. A small photo album with pictures of your family, home, church and interests so your new friends can get to know you better.
2. Your reference books for doing youth ministry. Beware, books are heavy. Take CD's or get electronic copies.
3. Any special medications that might be hard to find.
4. A spare pair of prescription glasses (your last Rx perhaps) and your current glasses Rx.

Transportation – local

The terms of reference stipulate that the UK church should provide for local transportation to and from church services and youth events where walking is not practical. This might include a bus pass and bus transportation works very well. Someone in the church might loan the youth worker a bicycle and that can be very useful.

Visas

The UK Government introduced a new scheme for visas at mid-2015. The new scheme has the British Consulate in NYC issue a "temporary" visa. That is, the passport comes back with a visa stamp that is only good for 90 days. The visa holder MUST get into the UK within that-90-day window. Within 10-days of arrival in the UK, the visa holder MUST go to the UK post office that is designated by the Consulate (larger town nearest the UK residence), present his passport with the temporary visa stamp and obtain their new Biometrics Residence Permit. Our most recent volunteer learned that as of 1 January 2025, all this will be online.

Vocabulary

Bottom of the street is one end and top of the street is the other end and we defy you to decipher which is which--folk just know.

Cars have a vocabulary of their own. Bonnet is the hood. Boot is the trunk. Wing is the fender. Silencer is the muffler. Windscreen is the windshield.

Dual Carriage Way is a four or more-lane highway with a median.

Ground floor is the floor at street level and the next level up is called the first floor--go figure!

High Street is the main street.

Manse is parsonage.

Mind the _____--example: "mind the gap" means watch out for the gap between the platform and the car on the London Underground. Always "mind the step" when entering or leaving a British home--the threshold is often raised higher than ours and one can trip!

Minister is the title given to the ordained and called leader of the congregation, our "pastor."

Nearside on the highway is the side nearest the curb.

Pavement is a sidewalk.

Petrol is gasoline.

Post is mail

Postal Code is similar to our Zip Code but the format is different.

Spanner is wrench.

The toilet is the loo.

Trainers are what we call tennis shoes.

Vacations are called "holidays."

Vestry is the pastor's study or perhaps a multipurpose room since many British pastors do their study, sermon preparation and counseling in the manse. That's preferred for our volunteers as the church building is seldom occupied other than for services or meetings and being there alone and having a solo visitor could cause problems.

Words to avoid bloody, randy, piddle, fanny--they are not nice. Also, beware of regional differences, for example, we were told that bonny means pretty in Yorkshire, but means fat in Lincolnshire.

Weather

You'll be in the UK in both winter and summer, but you won't find a lot of difference in the weather (ha!). The UK is quite far north. For example, Middlesbrough (nearest big town to Thornaby) is at about the same latitude as the central parts of Canada--which should be a clue that it can get cold. But Britain is an island, and the surrounding ocean moderates the climate. In theory, the saying, "It never gets really cold, and it never gets really warm in the UK" is almost true. The summer of 2003 is clearly an exception—London saw 100 degrees F! It gets cold in January -March and doesn't really warm up until May. The wind blows across the island, and it is often damp, so it often feels very cold in the winter. The summer months of June-September are mild, but you probably won't feel hot very often.

It rains a lot in UK—remember it's an island! Someone once told us that it rains about 178 days a year there. That's about every-other day! Quite

often the rain is drizzle, and it comes and goes. People go on with their plans anyway!

Travel writer Rick Steves comments that there is no such thing as bad weather in England, just inappropriate clothing!

Appendix

Typical Terms of Reference For Volunteer Short-Term Pastors in UK Churches

To be Agreed to and to guide the UK Church, the volunteer religious worker(s), American Interim Pastor Ministries, Inc., and Gateshead International Ministries

interim pastor is not a church member; the latter will be by invitation of the Elders/Deacons.

BACKGROUND

The Interim Pastor Arrangement has been set up to provide visionary, mission-minded leadership and pastoral oversight to churches currently unable to afford or unable to locate a full-time pastor. It is envisaged that a series of suitable retired pastors or lay leaders from America will serve as volunteers in a church for a period of six months each.

The aim of this document is to express the formal relationship between volunteer Religious Workers and the churches which call them. This does not bring about a 'contract of service', but rather reflects good practice arising out of good relationships built on mutual trust.

STATUS

A volunteer Religious Worker will not be an employee of the church and no salary, stipend, or retention fee will be paid. However, because Certificates of Sponsorship are required to get visas to serve as volunteer Religious Workers, the issuer of the certificate is considered the "official employer" of our volunteers. Gateshead International Ministries (GIM) issues certificates so they are considered the "employer." The UK church is viewed as the "assigned place of work."

A volunteer Religious Worker will be accountable to the Church Members' Meetings and to any authority delegated to the Church Officers (i.e. elders and/or deacons) as well as AIPM and GIM.

In recognition of the short-term nature of the position, a volunteer Religious Worker will not be required to become a church member but may make application to do so.

The volunteer Religious Worker will be expected to attend Church Members' Meetings and Church Leadership Meetings (Elders/Deacons Meetings). The former will be by the consent of those present, if the

ROLE

The specific work a volunteer Religious Worker undertakes will depend on the needs of the church, but it is envisaged that it would cover the following:

Leadership - help the church cast its vision and establish a long-term strategy, to facilitate the vision being fulfilled. It may be useful for the church and volunteer Religious Worker to engage their association to lead a "mission consultancy" or "mission focus" to help them identify their potential and establish their vision and strategy.

Mission - assisting a church to reach out into its local community through networking, special events, and 'Gateway' activities (i.e., activities which provide a way into church life for the un-churched - such as Toddlers groups, Seniors, lunch-clubs, Drop-in centers, etc.).

Evangelism- working on a one-to-one basis with church contacts to seek to bring them to faith in Christ.

Preaching and Teaching - enabling believers to grow in their faith and learn how to share it with others.

Discipleship – teaching groups and individuals so as to build people up in the faith. In particular, prepare people for baptism, marriage and parent/church ("infant") dedication.

Pastoral Care - ensuring that believers and contacts are cared for materially, emotionally, and socially as well as spiritually.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Specific responsibilities of the volunteer Religious Worker will be worked out with the local church, but it is envisaged that they would include:

Forming a strategy group – this would involve working with or alongside the deacons to plan the church's outreach and ministry and to execute the actions of the plan. Plans are called a variety of names such as "mission consultancy" or "mission focus." We will adopt "mission focus" for these comments. If a mission focus has not been done before the first American interim pastor arrives, it is hoped that a team will be formed, and a mission focus will be developed. The team should be representative of the mix within the congregation (male and female, ranging in age, where possible, from youth to seniors). The team will help the volunteer Religious Worker understand the local culture and provide input on how they can work together to accomplish the church's mission. Very often the local Association will have a program for doing "mission focus" and they should be contacted for guidance.

Preaching and leading worship at Sunday Services - the frequency would be by mutual agreement with the church but would normally be at least three weeks out of four. It is recognized that not every volunteer Religious Worker will feel competent (or comfortable) in leading the worship and praise portion of services. In that case, the volunteer Religious Worker and church leaders should look for an alternative that will meet the needs. This may be done by identifying suitably gifted members of the congregation to assist. The volunteer Religious Worker will normally conduct communion services and funerals. The volunteer Religious Worker may conduct wedding ceremonies provided that either the church's authorized person or the local registrar is present and handles the official records. The volunteer Religious Worker may be asked to lead funerals at the crematorium and committal of ashes services.

Leading mid-week Bible Study/Prayer Meeting - the frequency would be by mutual agreement with the church but would normally be at least three weeks out of four. Experience has shown that many British Baptists enjoy Bible studies in a home setting and volunteer Religious Workers have been very successful in leading men's, women's, and co-ed Bible studies on weeknights and/or weekdays.

Engaging in personal evangelism – this would be directed toward persons in the community and amongst church contacts.

Pastoral visiting - shared with the deacons and church members.

REIMBURSEMENT

Although no salary, stipend, or retention fee is payable, the church is expected to cover all reasonable out-of-pocket ministry expenses for the duration of the pastorate. It is envisaged that these will include:

Transportation: Reimbursement for airline tickets and surface transportation from home in the USA to the manse for interim pastor and spouse. Generally, reimbursement is made after the volunteer Religious Worker arrives at the church and may be distributed over a period, so that the volunteer Religious Worker does not have excess cash on hand. The church shall also reimburse the volunteer Religious Worker for the cost of any other approved travel and out of pocket expenses incurred on church business, including postage, stationery and attendances at Baptist Union and Association Assemblies and Area Ministers' meetings.

Housing: The provision of accommodation with basic furnishing and payment of utility charges including gas, electricity, water, TV and license, Internet and basic telephone rental and phone calls that are made for church business. A land line as well as a mobile phone is highly recommended. The church will pay council tax and provide insurance on the contents of the house or apartment. A specific member of the church should be designated as the person to handle all matters regarding the manse including repairs, insurance, and assisting a newly arrived volunteer Religious Worker in getting familiar with the operation of fixtures and appliances in the manse. It is normal for the volunteer Religious Worker to keep the interior of the manse and its garden in a clean and tidy condition, and it would be expected that the Religious Worker would fulfil this responsibility appropriately.

If the provision of TV and license and Internet service puts the UK church in a difficult financial position, this should be discussed with AIPM.

Car: A fully insured car with the volunteer Religious Worker named as the main driver and the spouse listed as a driver if the spouse will be driving the car at any time. In the UK insurance industry, the main driver is the person who uses the car most. Listing anyone else as the main driver could make the policy null and void. The insurance policy must note that the car will be kept at the manse. If it will be kept in a garage, this should be noted as this could impact premiums. The place where the car is kept is important because premiums are based on risk assessments in different neighborhoods. In recent times, it has appeared that money can be saved if the car is "owned" by the American volunteer Religious Worker. This might be facilitated by a nominal payment to the church to "purchase" the car with the plan to sell the car back to the church or to the next volunteer Religious Worker. Photocopies of the car insurance certificate will be given to the volunteer Religious Worker and will be sent to AIPM, Inc.

The following will be provided for each person who will drive the car and may be helpful in obtaining an insurance policy:

1. Date of birth.
2. Number of years a driver's license as been held.
3. A list of all claims over the past 5-years from the insurance company on their letterhead.
4. A list of all traffic violations over the past 5- years from the State's Department of Public Safety.

The cost of MOT, road taxes and repairs will be paid by the church. Mileage for church business will be reimbursed at the rate of 25 pence per mile. The church will be responsible for maintenance and repairs of the car. A specific member of the church should be designated as the person to handle all matters regarding the car including insurance, inspections, road taxes, and repairs and assisting a newly arrived volunteer Religious Worker in getting familiar with the car and the local roads. Ideally, that person should also be listed as an insured driver of the car.

Other Expenses: Receipted expense claims for purchases made in support of the church's mission should be submitted to the Church's Treasurer for reimbursement. It is always appropriate to get approval before any major expenditure.

UK Visas: Because of security concerns, the British government has changed the rules regarding entry clearance. Volunteer Religious Workers and their spouse are now required to obtain visas as Religious Workers. The first step in the process is for AIPM to collect information from the volunteer Religious Worker and spouse. Note: the spouse will also be considered a volunteer Religious Worker. This is submitted to GIM. GIM is a Registered Sponsoring Agency (RSA) and is authorized by the UK Border Agency to issue Certificates of Sponsorship or "licenses." When GIM issues the license number from the UK Border Agency, the volunteer Religious Worker and spouse use this information in their application for visas.

The application is done on-line, but paper copies must be sent to the British Consulate in the NYC. Instructions for this effort are available from AIPM, Inc. For a few years now, the visa application process has required applicants to have biometric checks done. Essentially, these are electronic fingerprints. The visa web site will give the location of biometric check stations nearest to the postal zip code of the applicant. The applicant selects the most convenient site and makes an appointment for the biometrics check. The check station will stamp the appointment slip with date and time and that document must be submitted to the British Consulate in NYC along with other paper copies and the original passport.

The UK church reimburses GIM for their cost of applying for the certificate. The UK church also reimburses the volunteer Religious Worker and spouse for the visa's application fee. The fee in 2023 is GBP 259.00 (about \$345.00 with exchange rate of \$1.335 per GBP 1.00) per person. We elected to obtain a Religious Worker's visa for the spouse to ensure there would be no restrictions for the spouse in teaching, leading group meetings, etc.

The protocol for issuing Certificates of Sponsorship worked out with the UK Border Agency requires weekly reports be submitted to Rev. David Hunt, Chairman of Gateshead International Ministries with copies to and Chuck McComb. If a representative of the UK churches wishes to have copies of these reports, he or she should let the volunteer Religious Worker know. These reports are required from all volunteer Religious Workers including the spouse. David provides each volunteer with a template for the weekly reports.

Early in the assignment of AIPM volunteers, a member of GIM's Board of Trustees must visit the volunteer(s) to check passports, visas, and place of residence to ensure that all are the same as in the official GIM records.

Visas issued by the British Consulate for volunteer Religious Workers are stamped with, "no recourse to public funds." In the past, our volunteers were required to ensure that their existing medical insurance policy covers them while they are overseas, or they have had to purchase medical insurance for overseas travel before they leave the USA. The recently introduced Immigration Health Surcharge has made travelers' medical insurance unnecessary.

In July 2015, the UK Government established a new "Immigration Health Surcharge" (IHS) that must be paid as part of the visa application process. Payment of the fee is unavoidable. The fee in 2023 is GBP 624 per year per person. At the exchange rate of 1.335, this amounts to \$833.00 per person. Typical of governments since the inception of the Immigration Health Surcharge the fee has tripled. A publication by the UK Home Office describing IHS indicates that NHS services can now be accessed free of charge just as British citizens do. Prescriptions, dental care, and eye tests are not free, however.

We will monitor happenings with National Health Service care and the experience of AIPM volunteers closely and communicate anything that would alter the assessment we have given. With 3 of our volunteers having already served under the new IHS arrangement, it seems clear that our volunteers can legitimately access National Health Services care.

Because many of the UK churches we serve are financially stretched to provide housing, transportation

and airline tickets and visa fee reimbursement, we do not plan to pass along to the UK church the IHS fee. If this produces an excessive hardship on our volunteers, we may be able to raise funds. We trust our Lord to provide.

APPOINTMENT and WORK HOURS

It is anticipated that the volunteer Religious Worker will serve for a period of six months. Longer or shorter periods of assignment may also be arranged. The start and finish dates for assignments will be by agreement with the church, the volunteer Religious Worker and AIPM.

AIPM's preference is to have the 6 months assignments from early January to late June/early July and from late June/early July to mid-December. There is no spiritual reason for this preference. But it would allow couples that serve in a calendar year to have some summer and some winter months. Most folk would like to spend Christmas with family in the USA. That suggests an early January start and a mid-December finish before airline tickets rise for the holiday season.

During a six-month period, the Volunteer Religious Worker will be entitled to three weeks leave and any UK Public Holidays falling within the period. A volunteer Religious Worker serving twelve months would be entitled to six weeks' vacation. British Baptist pastors typically receive 5 weeks' vacation and 1 week study time each year.

The nature of the appointment is such that it is not appropriate to specify fixed hours of work, but the church should ensure that the volunteer Religious Worker is able to retain one day a week free of all church duties for relaxation and refreshment.

It is expected that each volunteer Religious Worker will enjoy favorable relationships within the church fellowship. However, if problems arise and if a simple majority of the church should vote that the volunteer Religious Worker(S)' performance is unsatisfactory, AIPM and GIM will work with the UK church to resolve problems if possible. If resolution is not possible, AIPM and GIM will arrange for the volunteer(s) to return to the USA as soon as practicable.

THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITY

In agreeing to this arrangement, a church recognizes its own responsibility to be seriously committed to mission under God, with guidance from the volunteer Religious Worker. It is expected that every church member will play his/her part in fulfilling the church's mission, according to the gifts God has given.

The committed involvement of church members will enable the fellowship to capitalize on the valuable contribution a volunteer Religious Worker can make

To help ensure the long-term viability of the church's evangelical outreach, the church members and leaders should be willing to work faithfully with their volunteer Religious Workers and their association in doing studies and developing and implementing vision and strategy. Someone has wisely said, "If we keep on doing what we have always done, we will keep on getting what we have always gotten." It is the hope and prayer of the Board of Directors of AIPM, Inc. and the Trustees of GIM that each church served will have a mindset to plan and strategize for a spiritually healthy church for the decades ahead.

Note 1: The Church Secretary or other designated person will be responsible for arranging for others to conduct services when the volunteer Religious Worker is absent.

Note 2: The volunteer Religious Worker and Church Secretary will be asked to produce a report including vital statistics at the end of each quarter-year. This report is to be passed to AIPM, Inc. The report is intended to help ensure continuity of vision, strategy, and any action items from a mission consultancy plan for the work within the church and its local community.

GETTING STARTED

A document titled, "Process to get Volunteer Religious Workers to UK Churches" has been written to guide the UK church and all concerned through the elaborate but critically important steps in starting-up this partnership ministry between the UK church, the volunteer Religious Workers, AIPM and GIM. Another document, "Living and Serving in the UK," provides practical helps for settling in and serving within the British culture.

All of this may seem daunting! Sorry! But we have sent 38 interim pastors to help 18 UK churches and 3 to help a church in Spain so we are able to provide guidance for each step of the process. And we pray hard!

Summary of Financial Arrangements:

American Volunteers:

- Receive no salary or other form of remuneration.
- Pay for Groceries in the UK.
- Pay Immigration Health Surcharge (about \$833.00 per person per year).
- Pay dependent travel other than spouse to/from and inside the UK if any dependents accompany the volunteer.

UK Church:

Provides furnished house or flat with bills paid.
Provides car with repairs, insurance, MOT, and road taxes paid. Reimburse for fuel for church business at 25 pence per mile.
Reimburses for airline tickets and visa fees for married couple, but not dependents.
Contributes to GIM overheads at GBP 100.00 per year plus GBP 21.00 per certificate issued.
Reimburses GIM Trustee for initial visit to evaluate suitability of AIPM/GIM partnership at

BUGB mileage rate (Skype or Zoom may substitute for visit).
Reimburses, at BUGB mileage rate, GIM Trustee's travel to verify passport, visa, and residence to meet UKBA requirements.

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