

# Rope Holding Teams



William Carey, an 18<sup>th</sup> century Baptist missionary, is well-known for a statement he made to his Christian brethren living in England. Having decided to plant his life in India as a missionary, Carey said to them “I will go down into the pit, if you will hold the ropes.” Rope holding, in Carey’s mind, signified fellow Christians locking arms to support missionaries fulfill their life’s calling. Every missionary needs a rope holding church and that is why we have Rope Holding Teams at Ninth & O. Rope Holding Teams (RHT) consist of members committed to ministering to those missionaries connected to our church family.

- **RHT Structure**

- RHT consist of 6 to 15 members committed to ministering to their team’s missionary.
- RHT will generally gather every other month for updates and prayer. Ongoing communication between the missionary and RHT will also occur through a secure app, such as WhatsApp or Signal.
- RHT are led by a person who possesses a close relationship to the team’s missionary, and he or she provides oversight for the team’s ministry to the missionary.
- RHT will receive guidance and maintain consistent communication with Pastor Blake and/or a Missions Team representative.

- **RHT Ministry**

- Prayer
  - RHT are “first responders.” They are always connected to their missionary via an app so they can pray for specific needs as they arise.
- Advocate
  - RHT act as advocates for their missionary with those inside and outside the church. They help bring awareness to the good work God is doing through their ministry. The shape of this advocacy is determined by each specific RHT and may require coordination with the Missions Team.
- Care
  - Care takes on different forms. Care may manifest itself in tangible ways such as a mission trip, care packages, or letters. But more often than not care will take on the form of spiritual encouragement and accountability. The expectation is that RHTs would visit their missionary every 3 to 4 years.
- Stateside Furlough
  - RHT are to be “first responders” when their missionary comes back stateside. Responding may mean providing a temporary car or place to stay. Or it may mean providing a ride from the airport or organizing meals. The RHT coordinates and helps with these types of activities.

- **RHT Member Expectations/Commitment**

- Members are expected to commit to their RHT for a minimum of one year.
- Members are to demonstrate a high level of faithfulness to their RHT through strong attendance to prayer meetings and consistent interaction over the RHT’s app.
- Members are to prayerfully consider visiting their missionary for the purpose of encouragement and service.

*I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. - Philippians 1:3-5*