

Grace Community Church

Missions Policy

I. Purpose

- A. **Definition of Missions** - Grace Community Church of Pensacola, Florida affirms the definition of missions to be any endeavor outside our local congregation to fulfill the Great Commission by proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, making disciples and gathering these disciples into local congregations, while relating to the total needs of the person (spiritual, physical, emotional, and social).
- B. **Purpose Statement** - The Scriptures instruct that we are to “make disciples of all nations” (Matt. 28:19). This is accomplished as believers fulfill their role as ambassadors of Christ (2 Cor. 5:20) and as local churches recruit, train, and send individuals from their own constituency into the world (Rom. 10:13-15). The goal is to lead people to trust Christ as Lord, equip them for the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11,12) and establish churches who have the same goal in every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (Rev. 5:9). The Missions Committee shall seek to guide Grace Community Church to fulfill this purpose statement.
- C. **The Missions Policy**
 - 1. Purpose - The purpose of the Missions Policy shall be to:
 - a. Achieve a clear sense of direction;
 - b. Avoid making important decisions on an emotional or arbitrary basis;
 - c. Maintain consistency as committee membership changes;
 - d. Insure proper stewardship in the allocation of missions funds.
 - 2. Exceptions - This policy is a statement of principles, not a rigid set of rules. Occasionally, exceptions will need to be made. When that occurs, two thirds of the Missions Committee must be in favor of the exception. The proposal must be approved by the Elder Board.
 - 3. Revisions - The Missions Policy shall be reviewed and revised as often as needed, with a thorough review every odd numbered year. All revisions must also be approved by the Elder Board before implementation.

II. The Missions Committee

- A. Size and Selection
 - 1. The Missions Committee shall consist of five to ten members including the chairperson. The names of the members shall be approved by the Elder Board before they are asked to join the committee.
 - 2. Each committee member must have been an active participant at Grace Community Church. However, only members of GCC will be permitted to vote.
- B. Term of Office
 - 1. Committee members must commit to one year of service.
- C. The Missions Committee will nominate a chairperson each year from within the

committee for recommendation to and approval by the Elder Board. This individual is responsible for the proper functioning of the committee and to report to the Elder Board.

D. Expectations - Committee Members are expected to:

1. Attend the meetings;
2. Serve on the subcommittees as assigned;
3. Take an active role in the decision-making process;
4. Continue to learn about world evangelism;
5. Devote much of their energy to furthering the missions program at Grace Community Church.

E. Responsibilities

1. Prayer: Encourage intercessions from the congregation for world evangelism and for our missionaries.
2. Educate: Provide a comprehensive missions education program for our entire congregation. This will include information about the world, our missionaries, and the Evangelical Free Church of America missions program.
3. Recruitment / Training: Select and assist in the equipping of members of our constituency to become missionaries or to serve in short term mission projects.
4. Send: Support missionaries spiritually, financially, and emotionally during their term of service.
5. Care: Provide practical assistance to missionaries while they are on their field and home assignments.
6. Finances: Prepare a missions budget to submit to the Elder Board and oversee the allocation of funds throughout the year.
7. Recommend Support: Recommend additions to or deletions from the support list, which includes career missionaries, projects, and organizations. Final approval for any of these changes will be made by the Elder Board. Input from the congregation in regard to missionaries, projects, or organizations to support should be welcomed by the Missions Committee.
8. Represent: Serve as a liaison between the church and its missionaries.
9. Evaluate: Review the missions program of the church and recommend changes as necessary. This includes evaluating the Missions Policy statement, as well as the continuation of support for a missionary. Proposed changes will be submitted to the Elder Board for approval.

III. *Strategy*

A. Goals - The Missions Committee shall seek to establish short and long range goals for their various responsibilities in dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

B. Priorities

1. Recognizing that there will always be more needs than we can fulfill, the following is meant to assist the Missions Committee in decision making.
2. The primary objective is that our church support members of Grace Community Church who have demonstrated a pattern of faithfulness and active involvement in their commitment to our church. With the above objective in mind, the

following priorities should be evaluated when the Missions Committee considers someone's support.

- a. Priority will be given to members of Grace Community Church first.
- b. Priority will be given to overseas work.
- c. Priority will be given to church planting and to teaching of nationals.
- d. Priority will be given to translation work.
- e. Priority will be given to "unreached peoples." (Note: Unreached peoples are those segments of society where a people group can not hear the gospel and worship in a church in their own language and culture. (Muslims, by way of example are the largest group of unreached peoples.)
- f. Priority will be given to people, over projects and organizations.

USA 30%		OVERSEAS 60%	
Evangelism/Church Planting	25%	Evangelism/Church Planting	30%
Support Ministries	5%	Teaching Nationals	25%
		Support Ministries	5%

C. Future Missions Budget Projections - It is our desire over a period of years for the missionary support segment of our missions budget to approximate the following percentages:

10% yet undefined.

A certain amount of money should be set aside for short-term missions.

D. Explanations:

1. **USA Evangelism/Church Planting Ministries:** Ministries in the United States could include: church planting, evangelism and discipleship on college campuses, executive outreaches, etc.
2. **USA Support Ministries:** These people are the support personnel who assist the previous category of workers. This person may be a secretary, an accountant, a president, a missions representative of an organization which only works in the USA, etc.
3. **Overseas Evangelism/Church Planting Ministries:** The audience is nationals who live outside the USA. Ministries would include church planting and evangelism.
4. **Overseas Teaching Nationals:** The audience is nationals who live outside the USA. This activity is one where an individual teaches a national either the Bible or ministry skills. This category would include Bible institute teachers, theological education by extension instructors, Bible translators, etc.
5. **Overseas Support Ministries:** This person may be in the USA or overseas. The ministry is one that allows categories "d" and "e" to function. This person may be a secretary, a teacher for missionary children, a missions representative here in the States, a pilot, etc. Their goal is to assist those who are overseas.

IV. *Financial Policies*

A. Annual Budget - the Missions Committee shall prepare an annual budget each year which is to be submitted to the Elder Board for review and approval.

- B. Evangelical Free Church of America - As part of a denomination, Grace Community Church will make an effort for Evangelical Free Church missionaries to be a priority in its missionary support.
- C. Minimum/Maximum - Monthly support shall be a significant sum, up to fifty percent (50%) of a person's total need.
- D. Monetary Support - Support for a missionary may be given as a one time gift or on a monthly basis covering a full term on the field and furlough. In order to help with outfitting expenses, it is suggested that up to three months of a monthly commitment be given to this need.
- E. Ministry Evaluation - A missionary will be evaluated approximately every three years when he/she is on home assignment or as needed.
- F. Changes - If there is a major change in either the ministry and/or location or if the person joins a different missions agency, then the Missions Committee will immediately re-evaluate its commitment to the person. Grace Community Church requests advance notice of any significant changes in the ministry of the missionary.
- G. Missionary Support Reassignment - Termination of financial support for a missionary is the exception with Grace Community Church. However, when it is to occur both the Missions Committee and the Elder Board need to be in favor of the decision. Reasons for termination would be if missionaries did not fulfill the responsibilities asked of them in this policy statement.
- H. Review - Each year an evaluation will be made to see if more money can be given to a currently supported missionary (such as to cover inflation or other increased expenses) as well as adopting new missionaries for support.
- I. Priorities - The expenditure of funds will be in light of the priorities mentioned earlier.
- J. Budget Items - The missions budget will not only include missionary support but also other items as they are needed to fulfill the goals of the committee. Examples might include: missions conferences, finances for the pastors to travel to mission fields, books, short term projects, contingency fund, training materials, etc.
- K. Special Offerings - Special offerings may be received for persons or projects upon recommendation of missions committee and approval of Elder Board.

V. Selection Policies

- A. Qualifications
 - 1. All applications **must be in agreement** with Grace Community Church's Statement of Faith.
 - 2. They must be going out with a **missions agency approved** by the committee. Tentmakers and nationals may be an exception in special situations.

3. They need to be willing to spend **quality and quantity time at Grace Community Church** in order to develop a meaningful relationship with our church family.
4. They must have a **proven track record in ministry**.
5. They must demonstrate the character qualities found in I Timothy 3:1-10, “Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?). He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil’s trap. Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.”
6. Their home church must be in agreement with their decision and provide written endorsement.

B. Procedures

1. **Fill out an application** for support.
2. **Spend time in Grace Community Church** developing relationships.
3. **Meet with the missions chairperson** or a subcommittee of the Missions Committee.
4. **Meet with the full Missions Committee**. The committee will then make a request for support to the Elder Board if there is **2/3 vote** of the committee.
5. Be available to **meet with the Elder Board**.
6. Missionaries must **meet the above criteria** before making a “presentation of their ministry” to the congregation even if it is just for prayer.

C. Responsibility of Grace Community Church to its Missionaries

1. To remember the missionary in prayer.
2. To communicate at least quarterly, preferably every two months.
3. To keep the church informed of the work and needs of the missionary.
4. To encourage the missionary.
5. To send the money that has been designated in an orderly fashion.
6. To assist in securing housing and furniture while they are on home assignment.
7. To work toward a partnership relationship with the missionary and his or her agency.

D. Responsibility of the Missionary to Grace Community Church

1. To communicate at least once a quarter, preferably every two months.
2. To inform the committee of any significant change in ministry and/or location.
3. To spend quantity and quality time with the church during home assignments.
This is requested so we can deepen our relationship with missionaries by exposing them to our people in a variety of ways, i.e. in home Bible studies, Sunday School classes, in front of the church, Missions Conferences, etc.
4. To solicit funds only from family members and close friends from within the church. While “close friends” is an elastic description of relationships, our policy is that a missionary not contact individuals from within our church whom he/she barely knows.
5. To provide the committee with a brief written summary of yearly goals and a written appraisal of the previous year’s activities.
6. To send to the committee updated support figures for each year specifying required monthly support level and current support level. A supervisor’s signature (of the mission agency) is needed verifying the new amount.
7. To develop and maintain a partnership relationship with Grace Community Church.

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