

APPROVED MISSIONS POLICY AND MANUAL
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
December 1999

SECTION A - PURPOSE

A-1 Definition of Missions

Missions at First Baptist Church shall be any ministry which reaches beyond the ministry of our local church for the purpose of either directly or indirectly proclaiming the gospel, discipling believers, establishing churches and bringing them to maturity.

A-2 Scriptural Purpose for Missions

- a. To proclaim the gospel and disciple believers (Matt. 28:19,20; Mk. 16:15; Lk. 24:46-49; Jn. 20:21; Acts 1:8)
- b. To establish local churches and bring them to maturity (Acts 14:22-23; Eph. 4:11-16)

A-3 The Purpose, Flexibility, and Revision of Policy

- a. The Purpose:
 - 1. To inform the church of the principles and goals of the missions program.
 - 2. To help the Missions Committee achieve a clear sense of direction.
 - 3. To assist new committee members in familiarizing themselves with the policy and direction of the missions program and to maintain consistency as membership changes.
 - 4. To avoid making decisions on an emotional, haphazard or uninformed basis.
 - 5. To provide guidelines for financial administration.
 - 6. To determine responsibilities in the missions program.

b. Flexibility:

It is intended that the missions policy be followed. Changes will be made through revision of the policy.

c. Revisions:

Every five years the Missions Committee will make a thorough review of the policy for the purpose of making revisions. Annually, a brief review of the policy will be made by the Committee to re-acquaint themselves with the policy and to serve as an orientation for the new members. Revisions can be initiated at this time or any other time during the course of the year, but may not be voted on in the same meeting in which they are initiated. All revisions must be approved by the Deacons and the Pastoral Staff.

SECTION B - STRUCTURE

B-1 Manner of Selection of Members and Representatives of the Missions Committee

- a. As the Constitution provides: A pastor and a deacon member chosen by the Deacons are members of the Missions Committee; all other Missions Committee members, including not less than two men and three women, are selected by the Nominating Committee and voted upon by the Church membership.
- b. One non-voting representative from the senior high youth group will be selected by the Youth Pastor to serve a one-year term. If at any time the Missions Committee is discussing a sensitive issue, they may, at their own discretion, choose to dismiss the teen representative.

B-2 Criteria for Selecting Members of the Missions Committee

Members selected to the Missions Committee should:

- a. Have spiritual maturity.
- b. Have sound judgement and understanding of missions.
- c. Be dedicated to serve missions.

B-3 Size of the Missions Committee

As the Constitution provides: The Missions Committee shall consist of at least nine members. Any expansion is to be approved by the Deacons.

B-4 Term of Office

As the Constitution provides: Terms shall be three years in duration. No one shall serve more than two successive terms. In the event one is chosen to a partial term, he shall not serve more than two additional terms in succession.

B-5 Responsibilities of Members of the Missions Committee

- a. Attend all meetings of the Committee.
- b. Serve on a sub-committee of the Missions Committee (optional for Pastor and Deacon).
- c. Understand and support the Missions Policy.

- d. Keep informed about:
 - 1. The missionaries and agencies supported by First Baptist.
 - (a) Read their letters.
 - (b) Hear them speak.
 - 2. The functions of the sub-committees.
 - 3. World Missions.
- e. Maintain a binder readily available and up to date with the following:
 - 1. Minutes of the Committee and sub-committee meetings.
 - 2. A list of all missionaries and agencies.
 - 3. The Missions Policy.
 - 4. The current missions budget.
- f. Pray for the missionaries and for the mission activities of First Baptist.

B-6 Frequency of Meetings

The Missions Committee will meet monthly and for special meetings as called by the chairman.

B-7 Officers, Manner of Appointment and Duties

All officers are elected by the Missions Committee.

- a. Chairman--prepare agenda, moderate meetings, delegate work, appoint sub-committee chairmen, serve ex officio on all mission sub-committees, assist the pastor in developing, coordinating, and administering the overall missions program, be responsible for the annual missions budget, and be responsible for reviewing policies and recommending revisions.
- b. Vice-Chairman--preside at meetings in absence of the Chairman.
- c. Secretary--record and distribute copies of the minutes to Committee members, prepare meeting notices at the direction of the Chairman, maintain the official minutes of the Missions Committee, and maintain an updated master copy of the Missions Committee Policy Manual.

B-8 Sub-Committees

The goal of the Missions Committee is to establish at least five sub-committees. The Chairman of the Committee will not chair any sub-committee, but will appoint the chairmen from among the Committee Members and will appoint all other Committee Members to the sub-committees. Each chairman will select at least two members from the church, approved by the Committee, to serve with him as needed. No person will serve as chairman of more than one sub-committee. The following list of sub-committee functions are vital for an effective missions effort, but the sub-committee names and the method of dividing functions may be modified as needed:

a. Communication Sub-committee

Functions:

1. Promote communication between missionaries and the church.
2. Encourage the church to pray for missionaries.

b. Conference Sub-committee

Function: Plan and coordinate the annual missionary conference.

c. Education/Recruitment Sub-committee

Functions:

1. Teach the church about missions for the purpose of encouraging participation.
2. Encourage volunteers for missions.

d. Finance Sub-committee

Function: Recommend and oversee expenditures on missions.

e. Supporting Sub-committee

Functions:

1. Provide the material needs of missionaries (other than basic support).
2. Provide their spiritual, social and physical needs.

SECTION C - RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE

C-1 Encourage Prayer for Missions

Goal

Have every member of the church "pray without ceasing" for our missionaries and for missions worldwide.

Means

- a. Emphasize the need to pray for missionaries.
 1. Sermons.
 2. Sunday School and Children's Church programs.
 3. Literature, films and tapes.
 4. Family devotions.
- b. Teach the church how to pray for missionaries.
 1. Write and circulate "A Guide to Pray for Missionaries".
 2. Have those who are leading in meetings for prayer teach people how to pray for missionaries.
- c. Encourage participation in prayer for missionaries.
 1. In pastoral prayer.
 2. At mid-week service.
 3. At least once a year at a special meeting to pray exclusively for missionaries.
 4. In family devotions.
 5. In private prayer.
 6. In one or more small groups whose primary purpose will be to pray for missions.
- d. Keep the church informed on matters of prayer for missionaries.
 1. Prepare sheets of missionary prayer requests updated every Wednesday to be used in prayer meeting, in small groups and in family devotions.
 2. Keep pastors informed of special requests of our missionaries and news of missions to announce at Sunday services.
 3. Include new requests in the Sunday bulletins.
 4. Inform the head of the prayer chain, pastors and group leaders of urgent requests.
 5. Publish an up-to-date list of answered prayer requests.

- e. Provide the church the maximum opportunity to know the missionaries for the purpose of a more effective prayer ministry.
 - 1. Have missionaries speak and fellowship in the church frequently.
 - 2. Have missionaries visit homes, establish friendships and correspond with individuals.
 - 3. Match up every missionary family with a small group or adult Sunday School class for mutual prayer, communication and fellowship. During furlough the missionary family should be encouraged to interact with that group or class.
 - 4. Make copies of missionary letters available to the church.

C-2 Missions Education in the Church

Goals

Teach the missionary mandate to all believers of all ages, inform them about missionary methods and activities, help them understand requirements for the work of missions, inform them of missions and missionaries supported by our church, and challenge and motivate everyone to participate to the fullest extent possible.

Means

- a. Monitor the educational process of the church programs and recommend changes regarding missions.
- b. Have missionaries speak.
 - 1. Have an annual missions conference in the church.
 - 2. Have missionaries speak often in church and Sunday School.
- c. Have a library of books, magazines, articles, reports, films, slides, cassettes and videotapes on missions.
- d. Encourage frequent communications from missionaries and make them readily available to the church membership.
 - 1. Have missionary letters available in a convenient location to read and/or take home.
 - 2. Answer letters from our missionaries.
- e. Have biographical material of our missionaries available for members to use.
 - 1. Have a brief biographical sketch of each missionary available to read and/or take home.
 - 2. Have a detailed biography of each missionary in the library.

C-3 **Missionary Recruitment**

Goal

Send people from our church to unevangelized people in our community, state, nation and the world.

Means

- a. Encourage the church to pray for God's hand in the recruitment process.
 1. That God will raise up missionaries from our midst.
 2. That God will direct our efforts to select and train them.
 3. That they will receive the encouragement and finances needed.
- b. Work with prospective candidates. (Dealing with people who say, "Yes, I am going to consider it.")
 1. Provide someone who can give them wise and thorough counsel and inform them of what the church can offer in helping them.
 2. Have available an up-to-date record of mission "job opportunities."
 3. Offer a guidance course.
 4. Have well defined short-term and summer-work programs and discuss how prospective candidates may participate.
- c. Help candidates (people who say, "I am sure God wants me to serve.") prepare for missionary service.
 1. See that the candidates get the counseling, training, schooling and experience required.
 2. Encourage their attendance at other missionary conferences.
 3. Advise them as to which mission boards to contact.
 4. Provide opportunities for them to minister within our church.
- d. The candidate and the Missions Committee will then communicate with each other (at the suggestion of either) that they begin the evaluation and approval process (C-9 and C-10).

C-4 **Caring for Missionaries**

Goals

Help provide for their spiritual, social, educational, material and physical needs; help in any way we can to make them more effective in their work and to make their lives more enjoyable.

Means

- a. Keep informed of the needs of our missionaries.
 - 1. The Missions Committee should communicate with them frequently.
 - 2. Matched families, individuals or groups (C-1,e,3) assigned to specified missionaries should be urged to keep the missions committee informed.
- b. Provide their needs.
 - 1. Food, clothing, medicine, mechanical parts, tools, etc.
 - 2. Books, magazines, cassettes, educational materials.
 - 3. Church publications: bulletins, newsletters, directories.
 - 4. Counsel, articles on spiritual problems, Christian resource material.
 - 5. Friendship and fellowship with members of our church.

C-5 **Missionary Conference**

Goal

Hold an annual missionary conference to motivate the church in missions.

Means

- a. Publicize the conference well in advance to encourage attendance.
- b. The length of the conference should be a minimum of three days.
- c. Include in the conference:
 - 1. At least two missionary speakers.
 - 2. A program that encourages interaction with the missionaries.
- d. Evaluate the conference and take appropriate action.
 - 1. Significant concepts should be written down.
 - 2. Worthy proposals should be carried out.
 - 3. Prospective candidates should be counseled. (See C-3).

C-6 **Ongoing Education of the Missionary**

The need for educational training will be determined by the agency. In the event we support a missionary 25% or more we will evaluate their need for education and consider what financial support we will provide.

C-7 Visitation of Missionaries on the Field

The Missions Committee will seek to encourage and send any staff or qualified member to visit our missionaries and agencies whenever possible. There should be consideration given to subsidizing all or a portion of such trips and the goal should be to assist in the ministry, to evaluate effectiveness, to offer encouragement in the work, and to bring back to the Church a greater understanding of what God is doing through the missionaries.

C-8 Responsibilities of the Missionary to the Church

- a. The missionary will be encouraged to make his financial needs known to the Missions Committee and asked not to solicit funds from individuals within the church.
- b. The missionary will be encouraged to correspond with the church at least quarterly.
- c. The missionary will be encouraged to minister in our Church proportionally to the level of our support.

C-9 Evaluation of the Missionary

The Missions Committee will evaluate prospective candidates, all missionaries at 5-year intervals, and any missionary who changes his ministry or field of ministry, to determine if he has the following qualifications:

- a. The missionary's character is above reproach.
- b. The missionary is acting in the will of God.
- c. The missionary is effective in ministries which are in accord with the Definition and Purpose of Missions in A-1 and A-2.
- d. The missionary is in agreement with the doctrinal statement of First Baptist Church.
- e. The missionary is serving with an agency approved by First Baptist Church.

C-10 Selecting New Missionaries to Support

- a. Criteria for considering a candidate:
 1. Highest priority will be given to the candidate who has been an active member of our church.
 2. Preference will be given to the candidate whose sending church is in the Mid-Michigan area.
- b. Procedure for approving a candidate:

At any step, those involved may terminate the process.

1. The chairman of the Missions Committee and at least one member of the pastoral staff will select potential candidates and they will be sent an Application for Support and a copy of this Policy Manual. This application will include questions pertinent to the material in Section C-9.
2. The chairman and the pastoral member will evaluate the completed application and seek as many references as needed.
3. The application will be given to each member of the Missions Committee prior to an interview.
4. The Missions Committee will interview the candidate.
5. The candidate will be required to have a minimum of two church wide visits with the congregation. His presentations should include the following:
 - (a) The story of his life.
 - (b) His training and experience.
 - (c) A description of the field to which he is going.
 - (d) The nature of the work he will be doing.
6. The Missions Committee will recommend the candidate to the Deacons for presentation to the church.

C-11 Sending Church Responsibility

- a. The Missions Committee should make every effort to be closely involved with the candidate during the entire recruitment (See C-3) and sending process.
- b. The Missions Committee will work through the evaluation (C-9) and selection process (C-10) with the candidate.
- c. After the missionary has been approved, the church will provide a letter of recommendation for the missionary.
- d. The church will hold a special commissioning service for the missionary when clearance has been given to leave for the field.

C-12 Procedure for Ceasing to Support a Missionary

- a. After evaluation (C-9), if the Missions Committee concludes that the church should discontinue supporting a missionary, they will submit their recommendation to the Deacons for presentation to the church.
- b. The Missions Committee will at once inform the missionary that the church will cease to support him at the most appropriate time.

C-13 Short-term and Summer Workers

Short-term Workers are individuals who are making a commitment to a mission work of six months or longer, but who are not choosing to make it a career.

Summer Workers are individuals, from our own church, who plan a commitment of less than six months.

- a. Evaluation of the candidate will be the same as for the career missionary (C-9).
- b. The candidate will complete a questionnaire and be interviewed by the Missions Committee. The Committee will recommend the candidate to the Deacons for presentation to the church.
- c. The candidate will present his ministry to the church prior to his ministry and will report back to the church after his ministry.

C-14 Mission Agencies

- a. Evaluation:
 1. The agency must have a doctrinal statement which is in agreement with the doctrinal statement of our church.
 2. The agency must operate with integrity, wise management and sound financial policies.
 3. The agency must be effective in ministries which are in accord with the Definition and Purpose of Missions in A-1 and A-2.
- b. Responsibilities to our church:
 1. Provide information upon request concerning candidates, missionaries, principles and practices, and financial reports.
 2. Oversee the training of candidates and the ministry of missionaries in cooperation with our church.

SECTION D - FINANCIAL POLICIES

D-1 Preparation and Approval of Missions Budget

The Missions Committee will prepare the missions budget and present it to the Deacons for presentation to the church.

D-2 Funding of Missions Program

Mission funds will be a percentage of the overall church operating budget. The Deacons will decide the percentage to be allocated for missions each year and the goal will be never to go below the 25% level. The Deacons will do everything possible, even in an extremely difficult financial year, to meet the church's committed financial support for each of the missionaries and agencies.

D-3 Distribution of the Missions Budget

- a. The Missions Committee must reserve at least 5% of the Mission Budget for non-committed support.
- b. Distribution between home and foreign missions, geographical areas or type of mission work will be flexible and shaped primarily by people and agencies that God leads us to support.

D-4 Amount of Support for our Missionaries

- a. Percentage giving.

The support level committed to each missionary will be set at a percentage of each missionary's total need as determined by the agency.

- b. Support level.
 1. The goal will be to support new missionaries not from our own church at 10% of their total need.
 2. The goal will be to support new missionaries sent out from our own church at 25% of their total need.
 3. The goal will be to increase our present missionaries to 10% of their total need. Since some of our present missionaries are supported at less than 10%, we will seek to increase their support level when all three of the following guidelines are true:
 - (a) The budget permits.
 - (b) An evaluation (C-9) indicates they are worthy.
 - (c) They are lacking in support.

D-5 When Support Begins

- a. The Missions Committee will determine the appropriate time to submit to the Church a proposal for missionary support.
- b. Support will begin immediately upon approval by the church.

D-6 When Support Ends

- a. Refer to C-12.
- b. Support will end upon effective date of the missionary's resignation or retirement, unless otherwise stated in the proposal by the Missions Committee.

D-7 Provisions for Missionary Families, Insurance, Education and Retirement

- a. It is expected that the missionary's agency takes these types of expenses into consideration when setting support levels.
- b. Special consideration will be given when unexpected situations arise, based upon the merits of each case.

D-8 Revision of Support

Any time the Missions Committee deems it wise to consider revising a missionary's support level they must follow the guidelines of D-4.

D-9 Outgoing Expenses of Missionaries

- a. This covers such expenses as initial expenses in getting to the field and return to the field from regular furloughs.
- b. We will provide the same percentage of the missionary's outgoing expense need as we do his monthly support needs. For the new missionary on deputation, this percentage will be based on the need at the time their monthly support needs are met.

D-10 Special Needs and Projects

Any special needs or projects brought before the Missions Committee for consideration shall be researched and evaluated by the Committee. If they consider a need warranted, they may choose one or both of the following avenues to help meet that need:

- a. The Missions Committee may fund the project through a portion of the non-committed missions budget.

- b. The Missions Committee may recommend to the Deacons a specific amount for the church to raise through individual giving above and beyond regular giving to the church.

D-11 Support of Students Preparing for Missionary Service

- a. We will not support students preparing for missionary service, with the possible exception of a member of our church who may need specialized training.
- b. The student must qualify under the criteria of C-9 and C-10.
- c. Upon approval, financial amount and time allotted will be determined and recommended to the Deacons for presentation to the church.

D-12 Support of Short-Term and Summer Workers

- a. The support level for short-term workers will range from 25-100% of their total need.
- b. Although the Missions Committee may recommend a one-time gift from the mission budget as the exception, ordinarily the church family will be encouraged to contribute one-time gifts for the summer worker.

D-13 Handling of Designated Giving

- a. The church policy does not allow for designated giving except in case of a church-sponsored project.
- b. Donors of designated giving must contribute directly to the missionary or their agency.

D-14 Bequests and One-Time Gifts

The Missions Committee will decide how to use such funds, in cooperation with the donor, to fill either immediate or long range needs of one or more missionaries, projects or agencies.

D-15 Shortage of Funds

If funds fall short of support pledged to missionaries and agencies, we will cut back support proportionally to all.

D-16 Expenses of Attending Conferences

The Missions Committee may provide expenses for approved delegates to attend acceptable mission conferences.

D-17 Honorarium for Visiting Missionary Speakers

Honorarium for speakers for missions conferences and other meetings sponsored by the Missions Committee will be allocated to the missions budget. The amount given will be in accordance with established budget policy.