

Missions Guidelines

for

Gentle Shepherd Community Church

September 4th, 2007

Missions Committee Policy and Procedure Guideline

Missions Policy

I. Definition of Missions:

Missions is defined by Gentle Shepherd Community Church as those ministries outside the local congregation for:

- a) Evangelism: fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20)
- b) Discipleship: nurturing and training members of the Body of Christ for ministry (Eph. 4: 12-16)
- c) Expressing Christ's love through meeting human needs (Matt. 10:42)

II. Mission Statement of the Missions Committee:

We exist to encourage, support, promote and help prepare, through the actions of Gentle Shepherd Community Church, those who are called to missions.

III. Belief Statements:

We believe that one of the primary responsibilities of the missions committee is to obey God's command to fulfil the Great Commission. This committee endeavours to accomplish this in part through GSCC's missions program. This committee believes that the congregation of GSCC will have a greater awareness of Missions through congregational education. This committee believes it has a responsibility to evaluate and facilitate ways in which our congregation can encourage, support, promote and equip our Missions partners throughout the world.

IV. Missions Committee Purpose:

The Missions Committee of Gentle Shepherd Community Church shall supervise the missions program of the church. The Missions Committee shall:

- Develop an annual Missions Operational Budget
- Disperse missions offerings as per the church envelope
- Plan an annual missions conference/workshop
- Follow the Mission Guidelines of GSCC
- Maintain contact with missionaries and other Christian workers supported by the church
- Foster missionary concern and involvement in the church
- Discipleship (ongoing development of Christian character) and Training of Short Term Missions Teams

V. Objectives of the Missions Committee

- To prayerfully seek guidance/direction of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-14)
- To be obedient to the entirety of the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20)
- To be dedicated to ongoing initiatives to plant and build churches that model and proclaim the good news through their words and works (1 Pet. 3:15-16)
- To live a life of personal holiness, to be more Christlike
- To establish alliances globally, combine and mobilize resources to spread the kingdom of God to the whole world
- To develop strategies to minister to all segments of society, especially the poor and infirm
- To ensure that evangelism is embraced and centred on empathy based on love, respect and willingness to serve others
- To restore the belief that God's people are co-labourers, created by God to carry out His works (1Cor. 3:9; Eph. 2:10)

Missions Guideline

Missions must be church centred while focusing on strengthening and empowering God's people. Every member of the church is urged to "collaborate in the work of the Gospel, each according to his opportunity, ability, charisma and ministry" (Bosch 471). Individual initiatives must give way to networking, where strengths are complemented as Christians think, work and pray together to extend the reign of Christ. Gentle Shepherd Community Church is active in missions but there is limited involvement of the laity beyond the parameters of the missions committee. The practical strategies listed below will enable the whole church to be involved and supportive of the missional initiatives of Gentle Shepherd Community Church.

Practical Strategies for the Church

- Send and receive missionaries
- Hear the voice of God calling by listening attentively to the Holy Spirit
- Prayerfully and financially support those who are sent and those who come
- Pray for the nations
- Pray for the work and the workers
- Listen to and act upon global concerns for the health and well-being of the world
- Listen to and act upon global concerns for the health and well-being of the people
- Advocate for all the oppressed
- Offer hope for the future through the saving grace of Jesus Christ
- Preach the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- In humility, seek to save the lost
- Live humbly in the likeness of Christ

Guidelines for Missions Ministry (National and International)

The Missions Ministry is subdivided into International Missions and National Missions. Each mission's ministry will be overseen by an elder, each with a responsibility for either national or international initiatives. Following are guidelines to assist the respective mission's ministries in their decision-making processes.

I. Selection of a Missionary for Support (Long Term)

Priority will be given to missionaries who:

- a) Are, or are planning to be, long term missionaries
- b) Expect to work with unreached peoples
- c) Plan to work in Africa, Thailand, Mexico or Israel

II. Criterion for Support

- a) Has a personal faith that Jesus Christ is Lord
- b) Agrees with GSCC statement of beliefs
- c) Shows evidence of maturity and spiritual growth
- d) Has been active in the ministry of a church body for a minimum of two years
- e) Will be involved in at least one of the following:
 - Evangelism
 - Discipling and training
 - Church planting
 - 'Tent-making'
 - Relief and health care programs with a Gospel emphasis
 - Bible translation and distribution
 - Overseas radio and television ministries
 - Prison ministry
- f) Is under the supervision of a mission agency or sending agency/church
- g) Has a written recommendation from GSCC (Elder, Pastor, or a member of the Missions Committee) and from the candidate's sending agency

III. Application and Approval Procedure for Long Term Support

The procedure by which Gentle Shepherd Community Church approves long term missionaries for support is:

- a) A letter of application for support must be completed by June 1st to be considered for the upcoming calendar year.
- b) The missionary candidate shall be interviewed by the appropriate Missions Committee (International or National)
- c) The Missions Committee will present a letter to the Council of Elders listing the candidates' names, which have been approved for support.
- d) The Council of Elders will submit approved candidate(s) to the congregation at the next membership meeting (congregational meeting for members and adherents of GSCC held every two months).
- e) The Missions Committee will maintain copies of the letters of application and recommendations.

- f) Final approval of support for new long term missionaries is contingent upon receipt of adequate mission offerings

IV. Application and Approval Procedure for Short Term and Summer Missionaries

Short term is defined as not more than one year. Criteria for short term and summer missionaries will be the same criteria used in selecting long term missionaries.

Refer to section II parts a) to g).

In addition, the candidate must have written parental consent, if under the age of 18 at the time of application.

- a) Application should be made to the Missions Committee not less than six weeks, and preferably three months in advance of the candidate's proposed departure.
- b) Approval for short term or summer missionaries will be made by the Missions Committee in consultation with the Council of Elders. This will be reported at the next membership meeting.

V. Yearly Evaluation of Long Term Missionaries

- a) The purpose of the annual evaluation is to review the:
 - Ministry and the spiritual, physical and financial needs of the missionary
 - Progress and goals of the missionary and any anticipated changes
- b) Each missionary will be required to submit a written evaluation by June 1st, each year
- c) Failure to submit this evaluation will jeopardize support for the upcoming year.
- d) Failure to submit two consecutive evaluations will cause re-evaluation for support.
- e) Missionaries on furlough are encouraged to visit GSCC and to give an oral report to the church.

VI. Financial Guidelines

Money for Missions, both International and National, must be funded through the annual budget process. Each segment of the Missions Committee (i.e. International and National) would have a specific operational budget as part of the annual budget of GSCC. This would enable the respective committees to purchase items such as teaching tapes, and other materials that would support their purposes. In addition, International Missions will be supported through the weekly offerings as designated on the church envelope. These funds are dispersed quarterly to the long term missionaries being supported through GSCC.

Financial Guideline

Income for Missions (National and International Budget)

- a) The monies for both the Missions International Operational Budget and the Missions National Operational Budget will come from the annual budget allocation of GSCC.
- b) The respective committees (National Missions and International Missions) are responsible for developing their annual budget for the Council of Elders.
- c) The National and International Missions Committees have an ongoing responsibility to clarify to the congregation the process of "support for missions" and to encourage missions giving throughout the congregation.
- d) The monies for international missionary support will come from the weekly mission's portion of the offering envelope.

Distribution of the Missions (International) Budget:

- a) The International Missions Operational Budget will support expenses incurred for:
 - teaching or training workshops
 - cards, letters for missionaries
 - other forms of correspondence/communication/advertising as they relate to the purposes of the Missions Committee
- b) Missions International will disburse the funds from the offering envelope quarterly

Preparation and Approval of the Missions (International) Budget:

- a) The Missions International Committee will review the needs of supported missionaries on an individual basis as can be determined from the yearly evaluations, newsletters and personal letters.
- b) The Missions International Committee will review all applications requesting support from GSCC.
- c) The Missions International Committee will review the budget and will investigate new areas of need as part of the budget preparation process.
- d) The Missions International Committee will prepare a proposed budget as per the guidelines established by the Elders.
- e) The Missions International budget will be presented to the congregation for approval at the annual congregational meeting called for such purpose.

Special Expenses of Missionaries:

The Missions Ministry may consider assisting missionaries/mission organizations with special expenses by:

- a) Alerting the congregation about the need
- b) Accepting a special congregational offering
- c) Encouraging a special group within the church (i.e. Youth group, Sunday School, Women's Fellowship) to undertake these expenses as a special one time project

Funds Shortfall Guideline:

Should a shortage of mission's funds occur, the Missions Committee will discuss the situation with the Council of Elders to determine whether other funds may be available. In addition, the committee will inform the congregation as to the amount of the deficiency.

Review Process:

The Missions Committee will review their current practises as noted below:

- a) annually debrief and record the previous year's activities
- b) every three years review the missionaries to be supported
- c) at least every three years review the policy and procedure guideline

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