

MISSIONS COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

Medway Community Church

I General

A. Definition of Missions

All endeavors to further Christ's Great Commission which take place outside the local church program at Medway Community Church shall be considered "missions." These endeavors may consist of foreign and domestic ministries.

B. The Vision of our Missions Program

It is our vision that Medway Community Church be *a diligent laborer for foreign and domestic missions, building disciples for Christ, supporting our missionaries through regular prayer and giving, and sending from our own body those whom God calls into this missions work.* As a committee, we will rely upon God to provide us guidance and wisdom in carrying out our responsibilities.

C. Scriptural Basis of Missions

The Scriptural basis of missions is to:

1. Fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)
2. Save men and bring them to the knowledge of God (Rom. 10:13-15)
3. Disciple those who come to faith in Christ (Eph 4:11-13)
4. Minister to human needs as ministers of the Gospel encounter them. (Matt. 25:31-46)
5. Provide support for those preaching the Gospel (Acts 18:2-3; Acts 20:33-35)
6. Proclaim the Gospel so that people can be restored to a right relationship with God (Isa. 49:6; Matt. 9:37-38; Matt. 28:18-20)

D. Purpose of these Guidelines

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

1. Provide a clear sense of direction for the Missions Committee and supported or prospective missionaries.
2. Facilitate decision-making
3. Assist in the proper allocation of each missions dollar
4. Ensure consistency and continuity as committee members change

E. Exceptional Circumstances

In the event of exceptional circumstances and when appropriate, the committee may set aside these guidelines with a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) approval by the Missions Committee and approval by the Board of Elders.

II Organization of the Missions Committee

A. Purpose of the Missions Committee

The Missions Committee is the church's instrument for formulating and administering the missions program of the church. It shall establish and maintain clear policies and effective programs for supporting missionaries and mission's projects through prayer and funding. It shall also establish goals for growth and/or modifications in the mission's budget, programs, and church involvement.

B. Membership

The Missions Committee shall consist of at least 6 members, or as otherwise specified in the church Bylaws, elected at a duly-called Annual or Special Meeting of the church. Committee members shall be members of the church.

C. Officers

Chairman: Ideally will have served on the Missions Committee at least one year before assuming this responsibility

- Duties: Presides at meetings; presents, or delegates the presentation of, the budget to the church at annual meetings; attends or delegates a representative of the committee to attend all missions-related meetings; prepares and distributes an agenda in advance of regularly scheduled monthly meetings; presents the monthly missions financial report at meetings; and communicates the committee's financial votes to the church's officer in charge of preparing payments.

Vice Chairman:

- Duties: Assists chairman; presides at meetings in chairman's absence.

Secretary:

- Duties: Keeps minutes and provides members with electronic copies thereof; maintains a record of those who go/have gone on church-supported missions trips (see section III, herein, re church support for those taking part in short-term missions trips).

D. Meetings and Votes

1. Meetings shall be held at regular intervals, ideally monthly. All meetings shall be opened and closed in prayer.
2. Special meetings may be called by the chairman, or vice-chairman in the chairman's absence.
3. The chairman or vice-chairman must be present at the meeting.
4. A quorum is one-half of the total committee membership.
5. A simple majority carries motions except that (1) decisions to begin, increase, decrease, or terminate support of a missionary, and (2) one-time gifting, require a three-fourths majority of those present at a meeting called for that purpose (see Section IV.B., C. and E.); and (3) revisions to these guidelines require a three-fourths majority of those present at a meeting called for that purpose (see Section VII).

6. Email votes are discouraged, but may be allowed on occasion for time-sensitive matters which have previously been discussed at a meeting, or for matters of an emergency nature.

E. Responsibility of Missions Committee

It is the responsibility of the Missions Committee as a whole, to:

1. Increase missions awareness in the church by:
 - Public prayer
 - Information about our missionaries (oral and written).
 - Education about missions and world outreach efforts and the church's responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission given by our Lord Jesus Christ
 - Biennial Missions Conference
2. Pray for supported missionaries, agencies and organizations
3. Encourage correspondence with missionaries from church.
4. Stimulate interest in, and recruit and send out missionaries for full- or short-term missionary service.
5. In coordination with the Board of Elders, prepare the annual budget (guidelines in Section VI)
6. Communicate regularly with the missionary, organization or agency, for determining spiritual and financial needs and to provide encouragement. (Generally, each missionary is assigned to one of the committee members).
7. In coordination with the Board of Elders, interview and determine support level of candidates.
8. Establish and maintain relationships with missions leaders and/or organizations outside MCC.
9. In coordination with the Board of Elders, establish and maintain a missions strategy for MCC.

III Missions Strategy

A. Overview on full-time Missionary Support

The following sections should be considered annually for the purpose of establishing financial goals for full-time missionaries, consistent with the desires of the church and vision of the Missions Committee.

As the committee considers which missionaries to support, and the extent to which they should be supported, at least three factors should be considered:

1. Background
 - Whether the missionary has a mature relationship with a gospel-teaching church
 - The type of work the missionary is engaged in (e.g., church planting, evangelism, literature outreach, administration, mobilization, etc.)
2. Membership
 - Since it is our goal to be a sending church as well as a supporting church, priority of support should be given to members of MCC and former members who attended the church for many years, who are called into short-term or career missions.
3. Training and Qualifications
 - Priority of support should be considered for those who have been trained or have significant experience in the geographical area and/or type of work in which they are serving, such as indigenous missionaries and indigenous churches, or those who already have a significant background or understanding of the culture.
 - Support for missionaries who wish to be sent to a foreign culture to plant churches where the church already has an established witness should be reviewed carefully, because of the time and expense involved in their training, and the cultural challenges which they will have to face. On the other hand, missionaries from North America may have unique abilities to provide support and training for indigenous works, and may be the only ones available to reach currently unreached people groups.

Level of Support

The committee should seek to support financially each missionary to the greatest practical extent within the following guidelines, and within the context of the overall missions budget. The committee's preference is to provide greater support to fewer missionaries than minimal support to a large number of missionaries. This approach allows the committee and church to be a more significant participant in the ministry of each of the missionaries, with the hope of receiving a larger proportionate share of his/her time while home on furlough.

The following guidelines apply to new missionaries supported by MCC:

1. Home church missionary – significant % of minimum monthly needs
2. Outside applicants – up to but not exceeding 50% of minimum monthly needs.

The committee shall request of each missionary a reasonably-detailed budget describing his/her "minimum monthly needs."

Missionaries currently supported by MCC are not affected by these support percentages, but consideration should be given to increase their support levels as they express the need, and as missions budget resources may be available. Missions agencies (e.g. a pregnancy counseling service) are not covered by the above support percentages.

B. Short-term Missions Trips (also see section V)

One of the most effective means of exposing church members to missions is through short-term projects. Short-term missions trips should be prioritized toward visiting and working with full-time missionaries whom MCC is supporting financially.

The missions committee should encourage, and plan to support as needed, members called into short-term missions. Through short-term missions exposure, some members may become missionaries, while others will grow in their understanding of their personal responsibility to spread the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Priority for short-term trip financial support shall be given to church members.

The following guidelines will be used when determining the level of support offered to active members of MCC and those currently undergoing the membership process (Inquirers Course, elder interview, etc.) who wish to participate in a short-term MCC mission trip:

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|----------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. First Trip | 50% contribution if funds are available |
| 2. Second Trip | 25% contribution if funds are available |
| 3. Third Trip | 10% contribution if funds are available |

The following guidelines will be used when determining the level of support offered to non-member regular attendees of MCC who wish to participate in a short-term MCC mission trip:

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|----------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 1. First Trip | 15% contribution if funds are available |
| 2. Second Trip | 0% contribution |
| 3. Third Trip | 0% contribution |

Additional support for non-member regular attendees of MCC may be considered on a case by case basis, but will require a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) approval by the Missions Committee and approval by the Board of Elders.

C. Mobilization

Critical to the success of achieving the goals of the Missions Committee is the education of our Church about missions, our missionaries and organizations, and how church members can become involved personally. The Missions Committee should communicate with the church via missions conferences (see below), reports during Sunday worship services, news and prayer requests presented in the *Connector*, housing missionaries on furlough, etc. Involvement of the Pastoral staff and Elders should be actively sought.

D. Missions Conference

The purpose of the biennial missions conference is to heighten the church family's awareness of, and commitment to, missions. To this end the biennial conference should seek to inform and stimulate action toward increasing missions involvement at Medway Community Church. Each

conference should provide a challenge to the church membership to give sacrificially to support missions through the unified budget, and also should seek to stimulate church members to become personally involved as missionaries. Each conference should also strengthen the bonds between our congregation and the missionary efforts we support.

IV Full-time Missionaries

A. Definition

A full-time missionary is one who has been called by God to commit his or her life to serving Him on a mission field in some capacity. A full-time missionary is distinguished from a short-term missionary by a commitment of involvement in a ministry for a period of 13 months or greater.

B. Qualifications for support by the church

1. Gives a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, has confidence in that salvation, and has been baptized. Assents to the MCC Church Covenant and the doctrinal statement of the Medway Community Church as stated in the By-laws Article IV (which includes agreement with evangelical convictions and vitals of the Reformed Confessions). All potential missionaries under consideration for ongoing MCC support – regardless of whether their primary work is teaching, administrative, or other – must be reviewed and approved by the MCC Board of Elders.
2. Has demonstrated an active participation in the ministries of his/her local church and an open and willing boldness to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Is a candidate or is affiliated with a missions board approved by Medway Community Church Missions Committee, or is an indigenous missionary, affiliated with or otherwise vouched for by a recognized missions agency or church body.
4. Will agree to provide ministerial and financial accountability statements to the Missions Committee as requested.
5. If an indigenous or foreign missionary is unable to comply with items 3 and 4 above, then the Missions Committee may, after careful consideration and prayer, override these criteria.
6. Completes the evaluation process set forth in section C, below.

C. Selection

Prior to recommending to the Board of Elders selection of a candidate for full-time support as a new missionary, the committee will engage the missionary in a thorough and careful evaluation process, ordinarily including the following:

1. Applicant's completion of the committee's application form
2. An in-person interview or interviews
3. Review of the potential missionary partner's planned work
4. Review of the missionary's sending agency
5. Qualifications (practical and spiritual), experience, and call to missions
6. Theological training and convictions
7. Description of how partnering with the potential missionary fits in with the committee's vision and goals
8. Review of the financial needs and request of the potential partner
9. Determination of 1, 2, or 3-year commitment to the partner
10. Clear communication of expectations regarding ministry updates, visits to MCC, responses to survey requests, etc.

Upon completion of the evaluation process, if the committee votes in favor of recommending support of the missionary (see Article II, section D for voting requirements), the committee shall make a full presentation of the above items, including its recommendation, to the Board of Elders for the Elders' review and approval of such support.

The chair of the missions committee may appoint a sub-committee for the purpose of screening and processing missionary applications, and making suggestions to the committee.

D. Responsibilities

1. Prayer for the church universal
2. Regular correspondence to keep the church advised of victories, prayer needs, financial needs.
3. Biannual report to the church of the progress of the ministry
4. Immediate advisement of any change in status (in type of work, location, missions board, financial needs, or beliefs with regard to the doctrinal statement of the Medway Community Church).

E. Increasing/Decreasing/Termination of Support

1. Any change in type of work, location, missions sending agency, or beliefs with regard to the doctrinal statement of the Medway Community Church, as stated in the church By-laws, Article IV, shall require a re-authorization of the missionary by the Missions Committee.
2. If a significant change in status occurs, or if a missionary fails to file any report requested by the committee, a decrease or termination of support may occur.
3. Termination or decrease of support will not occur for a period of at least 90 days, except for cause.
4. If the cause is deemed serious enough (e.g. abandonment of the mission, unethical practices, etc.) termination will occur immediately upon our becoming aware of the situation.
5. In all cases, the chairman, or designee, will notify the missionary of an increase, decrease or termination of support as soon as practical.
6. When the committee decides to support a full-time missionary, it shall determine the length of time, not to exceed three years, that such financial support shall continue before potential renewal (e.g. 1 year, 2 year, 3 years). Support shall terminate at the end of such time, unless renewed by the committee.

V Short-term Missionaries

A. Definition

A short term missionary or missions project is one in which a person or group is called to a service to God in a missionary outreach for a period of less than 13 months. The outreach may involve evangelism or service to others, but clearly should involve a selfless and sacrificial act for the furthering of God's Word.

B. Qualifications for support by the Church

1. Missions-minded; an interest in foreign and/or domestic missions.
2. Faithfulness to a balanced Christian life which includes church attendance, prayer, commitment to a Bible study or daily devotion time, and a willingness to be discipled.
3. Parental support and approval if under age 18.
4. Initiative and willingness to help raise the needed funds.
5. Understanding that all funds paid to MCC by the individual will become non-refundable to the extent that MCC is unable to recover funds advanced on behalf of the individual (e.g. flight tickets, application fees, transportation services, etc.)

Note: These five qualifications do not include MCC Youth Ministries sponsored missions trips, which have their own guidelines for participation.

C. Selection

1. Individuals interested in a missions trip or project should apply to the Missions Committee for review of proposed plans, and approval of financial assistance as may be needed. The applicant should be prepared to explain what his/her role will be in the project as well as what the candidate expects to gain from the experience.
2. The project must be in the nature of a missions outreach, but could take the form of a project to help others, an evangelistic project to witness to unbelievers, and/or a ministry to support full-time missionaries.
3. The Missions Committee should usually not provide 100% of the funds required for any single project and we recommend personal commitment as evidenced by a self-sacrificial spirit on the part of the project participants. However, when the trip participant is a full-time member of the MCC staff, any related trip expenses, either in part or in whole, may be covered by MCC within the discretion of the Committee.
4. The committee may override the guidelines as it sees fit, however, to encourage short-term missions in the church

D. Responsibilities of the Missionary to the Church

The returning short-term missionary should report on the project to the Missions Committee and, if possible, to the church during a worship service, missionary dinner, biennial missions conference, or other all-church gathering.

VI Budget

A. Preparation

One of the Missions Committee's primary responsibilities to the church is to prepare and present, in close consultation with the Associate and/or Senior Pastor, the annual budget. The annual budget should reflect the overall missions strategy of the Church. Each year the Missions Committee should prayerfully consider reasonable adjustments to the missions budget, based upon existing circumstances at the time. The budget should be as specific as possible, by means of descriptive line items, or otherwise.

Before setting the budget, the committee should inquire of our supported missionaries as to their financial needs for the upcoming year. This should be done at least two (2) months prior to the end of the church's fiscal year to ensure that data is available to make informed decisions.

B. Allocations

1. Recommended additions, deletions, or adjustments from the missionary support list should be consistent with the strategies developed by the Missions Committee year by year, bringing the allocation in line with the overall strategy.
2. Every effort should be made to encourage at least one short-term missions trip or project each year for the church.
3. Other allocations should include items such as one-time gifts, dinners and events, missions conference, educational items, training, missions map, publicity, etc.

VII Guidelines Review

These Missions Committee Guidelines may undergo a revision process at any time that a simple majority of those present at a called meeting feel the action is warranted. In such event, a subcommittee shall be appointed by the chairman to prepare the proposed revisions, and approval of the drafted document shall require a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) "yes" vote of those present at a meeting called for that purpose, together with approval by the Board of Elders.

The entire document shall be reviewed no less than once every three years by a subcommittee appointed by the chairman. Three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) approval of those present at a meeting called for that purpose is required to accept the proposed revised guidelines, together with approval by the Board of Elders.

In both cases, the revised Guidelines shall be presented to the Board of Elders to confirm that the strategy and direction of the Missions Committee is consistent with the desires and goals of the Elders and the Church.

- unanimously approved by Missions Committee 10/2017
- unanimously approved by Board of Elders 10/2017

