

**Missions Policy Manual for
Community Evangelical Presbyterian Church**

Original document ratified 1987

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Section A: Purpose and Authority of Community Church's Missions Policies

1. Purpose of the Missions Policy Manual

- a. To establish clear guidelines, responsibilities, and direction for the missions leadership of Community Church.
- b. To avoid making decisions about missionary efforts based on merely personal preferences or for haphazard reasons.
- c. To ensure good stewardship of missions funds.
- d. To permit thoughtful evaluation of mission-related issues.
- e. To ensure the cooperation and harmony between the Missions Committee and church-wide leadership .
- f. To orient and familiarize new Missions Committee members with the general direction and procedures of Community Church mission endeavors.
- g. To develop a loving accountability between Community Church and the missionary endeavors we support.

2. Authority of the Missions Policy Manual

- a. The Missions Policy Manual provides general guidelines for the Missions Committee and church-wide leadership about the wise use of missions resources and planning missions endeavors.
- b. Exceptions to the Policy

While the intention of the Missions Policy Manual is to be followed, exceptions can be made when approved by the unanimous approval of the Missions Committee. Exceptions should only be made after careful consideration. All exceptions and their reasoning must be recorded in the Missions Committee meeting minutes as exceptions to the Policy.

- c. Revision of the Policies
 - i. Proposed changes to the Missions Policy Manual may happen at any time.
 - ii. Official changes in the Policy must be unanimously approved by the Missions Committee and the Session.
 - iii. All copies of the Missions Policy Manual must be updated after the adoption of any changes. Amendments to the Policy must note the date of the revision.
 - iv. The congregation will be informed of any Policy changes.

Section B: The Missions Committee

1. Biblical Purpose of Missions

"Missions is the work of the Triune God, through His Church, of sending Christ's ambassadors to all nations to proclaim his whole Word, for the salvation of lost men, the establishment of indigenous churches, and the coming of God's Kingdom, all for the glory of God." (John M. L. Young, *Missions: The Biblical Motive and Aim*)

2. Purpose of the Missions Committee

The purpose of the Missions Committee is to aid in evangelizing, discipling, planting churches, and church growth and development ministries, both overseas and in United States subcultures, and to support endeavors outside our local congregation to fulfill the Great Commission by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, making disciples, and ministering to the whole need of mankind—spiritual, emotional, and physical.

The Missions Committee will be guided in these endeavors by Scripture with careful attention to God's Word in the following passages:

Matthew 28:19-20

Romans 10:13-15

Matthew 18:10-14

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Matthew 25:31-46

1 John 4:2-3

Luke 16:19-31

3. Size and Makeup of Missions Committee

- a. Missions Committee members must be members of Community EPC.
- b. The Missions Committee will include at least one elder, along with a minimum of five other members.
- c. If a vacancy occurs which brings the overall membership below six members, the Committee will make every effort to fill the vacancy.

4. Approval of Membership and Term of Office

- a. Members of the Committee will commit to serve for at least one calendar year, beginning January 1. They may renew their commitment to serve each year.
- b. Every year in before January 1, the Missions Committee chairperson(s) will communicate to the Session any changes to the member list for the next calendar year. The list must be approved by the Session.

5. Criteria for Member Appointees

Appointees for membership on the Missions Committee should display the following characteristics:

- A deep interest in missions
- A desire to learn more about missions
- A willingness to work diligently in a missions capacity
- A willingness to undergo initial training to learn the Missions Policy
- A commitment to serve on the Committee as one of his/her primary positions of service to the church

6. Basic Duties of the Missions Committee Members

- a. Attend regularly scheduled Committee meetings.
- b. Maintain a regular prayer life, Bible study, church attendance, and other aspects of Christian spiritual maturity.
- c. Be accountable for communication with and prayer for at least one supported missionary.
- d. Pray for supported missionaries on a regular basis.
- e. Maintain an interest in communicating with supported missionaries.
- f. Bear the burdens of other Missions Committee members in supportive fellowship.
- g. Be familiar with the Missions Policy Manual.
- h. Be willing to volunteer for specific initiatives, as is fitting of their particular duties.

7. Frequency of Meetings

The Missions Committee will meet at least bi-monthly, with a recommendation of once a month.

8. Appointment and Duties of Officers

- a. Chairperson(s)
 - i. By unanimous approval of the Committee, a chairperson or chairpersons will be selected. This selection and approval must take place before January 1 of each calendar year and be approved by the Session.
 - ii. Chairperson(s) responsibilities:
 1. Recruiting Missions Committee appointees.

2. Representing the Missions Committee at Sessions meetings when needed and providing information and reports necessary for Session action.
3. Calling Missions Committee meetings, defining meeting agendas, and moderating meeting actions.
4. Appoint a meeting moderator in his/her absence and appoint a temporary secretary in the absence of the Secretary.
5. Be responsible for the missions portion of the church budget, to oversee the incurring of expenses or disbursement of funds to various missionaries or missions agencies according to the budget approved by the Session. The chairperson(s) will contact the church treasurer , giving him/her the necessary information for disbursing funds, paying bills, and recording financial information.

b. Secretary

- i. By a simple majority of the Committee, a Secretary will be appointed at the beginning of each calendar year.
- ii. The Secretary is responsible for taking meeting minutes and sending meeting minutes to interested persons.

c. Ad hoc chairpersons

Ad hoc chairpersons will be appointed by the committee when deemed necessary.

9. Missions Committee Responsibilities

- a. Develop and administer the missions budget for the support of missionaries, missions projects, and programs (see Section C).
- b. Encourage and facilitate fundraising for special missions projects. This could include:
 - i. Organizing special offerings for specific programs.
 - ii. Organizing or encouraging participation in fundraisers for specific programs.
- c. Update the Missions Policy Manual when needed (see Section A.2.c.)
- d. Serve as a liaison between Community church and its related missions organizations, agencies, associations, and missionaries.
 - i. As representatives of Community Church to mission agencies and missionaries, it is the responsibility of the Missions Committee to communicate the love, care, and encouragement of the church to them. Additionally, the Missions

Committee is responsible for communicating any pertinent information missions policies and expectations.

- ii. As representatives of missionaries to Community Church, it is the responsibility of the Missions Committee to share the experiences, stories, prayer requests, challenges, and advances of the gospel to the members of the church.
- e. Care for missionaries supported by the church, both on the field and on furlough. This could include:
 - i. Meeting specific needs of missionaries as they arise to the best of the Committee's ability.
 - ii. Sending special gifts to missionaries on specific occasions (year-end giving, special needs, Christmas, etc.).
 - iii. Send congregational representatives to the field to give personal encouragement and evaluate missions progress.
 - iv. Having a communications coordinator or multiple coordinators who are responsible for the continual and personal contact with missionary families.
 - v. Caring for or housing missionaries on furlough as the need arises.
- f. Carefully evaluate the doctrine, associations, and ministry philosophies of both prospective and currently supported missionaries and mission groups and communicate these evaluations to the Session when necessary (see Section C.2-8).
- g. Encourage interaction between missionaries and the congregation. This could include:
 - i. Encouraging letters, e-mail, social networking, or conference calls.
 - ii. Encouraging visits from missionaries to the church and the homes of church members.
 - iii. Creating an "adopt a missionary" program whereby individual families concern themselves with the spiritual and practical needs of one missionary family.
- h. Develop vibrant intercessory prayer within the congregation for missionaries and mission endeavors. This could include:
 - i. Presenting news and needs via the pulpit, bulletin, Sunday School classes, testimony times, and/or newsletter.
 - ii. Having a prayer coordinator who collects and distributes news and needs of missionaries and organized prayer groups and/or prayer chains.
 - iii. Encouraging interactions between church members and supported missionaries (see Section B.9.g.).

- i. Educate and excite the congregation about missions. This could include:
 - i. Targeting specific sectors of the church for special educational emphases (children, junior and senior high school, young adult, singles, married, elderly, etc.).
 - ii. Identifying specific education goals year by year after evaluating present church awareness and interest.
 - iii. Determining different methods of education (missions conferences, retreats, bulletin inserts, curriculum, speakers, films, library, special projects, etc.).
 - iv. Sending congregational representatives on short term missions trips to build enthusiasm about missions throughout the church.
 - v. Promoting interaction with missionaries (see Section B.9.g.).
- j. Encourage members of the congregation to be more personally involved in intercultural missions. This could include:
 - i. Having church leadership pray for God to raise up laborers.
 - ii. Encouraging participation in and sponsor short-term mission trips and programs.
 - iii. Encouraging and supporting attendance at missions conferences and other missions enrichment opportunities.
 - iv. Look to the discernment of church leadership to identify and confirm the calling and giftedness of persons within the congregation.
- k. Keep accurate records of supported missionaries and mission endeavors, including histories of our interactions with them, newsletters, updates, and other communications.
- l. Coordinate a yearly "missions emphasis" within the church.

At the beginning of each calendar year the Missions Committee will prayerfully review these responsibilities and set specific goals for Community Church for that year.

Section C: The Missions Budget

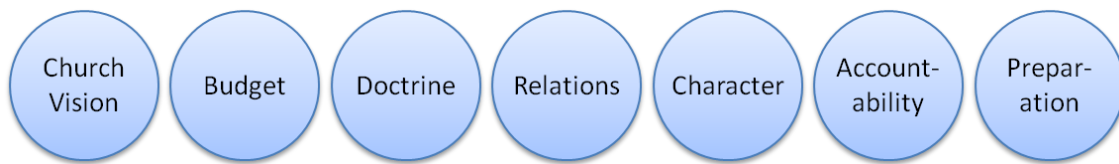
1. Setting of Missions Budget

It is the policy of Community Church to give 24% of its annual income to missions. This will be annually reviewed by the Session with an effort to increase the percentage. This percentage can only be changed by unanimous approval of the Session.

2. Considerations for Prospective Missionaries, Projects, and Agencies to Support

a. Definition of "support"

- i. "Support" refers to the sending of Community Church missions funds to missionaries or missions agencies directly (either budgeted funds or special giving), and/or it refers to the financial commitment (partial or total) involved in sending Community Church members and/or their families to the mission field (short-term or long-term).
- ii. "Regular support" refers to the committed, frequent, and habitual sending of Community Church resources (people and/or funds).
- iii. "Periodic support" refers to the occasional and irregular sending of Community Church resources (people and/or funds).



b. Vision and strategy considerations

It is the desire of Community Church to reach a balance in the overall strategy and direction of the church's focus. As such, missions and missionaries being considered for support should be examined in the light of the overall vision of the church's mission.

c. Budget considerations

It is the desire of Community Church to never overextend our regular support in a way that leaves us unable to minister to immediate/emergency needs and special projects. As such, budgeting more regular support must be considered in light of the overall missions budget and anticipated periodic support.

d. Doctrinal considerations

- i. Ministries or missionaries that do not at least agree with the EPC "Essentials of Our Faith" statement will not be eligible for any support. This statement defines core beliefs common to all true believers and churches throughout the world.

As such, disagreement with these essentials indicates a lack of commitment to the evangelical gospel. While organizations and individuals who do not agree with the Essentials might be eligible for other funds in the church (mercy ministry funds given to humanitarian efforts, etc.) missions support is set aside for gospel ministry specifically.

- ii. Ministries and ministers that will be given *priority* consideration for support are those that hold to Reformed doctrines and are in accord with at least one of the following:
 - 1. The Westminster Confession of Faith
 - 2. Baptist Confession of 1687
 - 3. The Belgic Confession
 - 4. The Helvetic Confession
 - 5. The Heidelberg Catechism
 - 6. The Canons of Dordt (i.e. the five points of Calvinism)
- e. Relational and organizational considerations
 - i. It is the desire of Community Church to maintain quality relationships with supported missions and missionaries.
 - ii. The following are examples of relational factors that would give missionaries and mission organizations higher priority for being considered for support:
 - 1. Church members: Are they Community Church members considering full-time service on the mission field or are they ministries led by Community Church members?
 - 2. EPC missionaries: Are they EPC/World Outreach commissioned missionaries?
 - 3. Working with supported missionary: Are they working in the same agency/ministry and geographical region as missionaries supported by Community Church already?
- f. Character considerations

It is the desire of Community Church to regularly support missionaries who have a clear indication of conversion and whose behavior, lifestyle, and temperament is worthy of the gospel they proclaim.

In considering new missionaries, the Missions Committee will be guided by Scripture with careful attention to God's Word in the following passages:

Colossians 3:1-17 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Galatians 5:16-26 1 Peter 5:1-5

Romans 7:14-25 James 3:1-12

Romans 12:9-21 Ephesians 5:22-33

- g. Accountability considerations
 - i. It is the desire of Community Church to regularly support ministries that maintain a system of accountability within their own organizations and to those with whom they partner.
 - ii. The following are examples of accountability factors that would give missionaries and mission organizations higher priority for being considered for support:
 - 1. Regular communication: They are accustomed to sending regular and detailed updates of their ministry activities to supporters.
 - 2. Team governance: They work within a team-ministry structure and do not display an autocratic leadership style.
 - 3. Answerability to an agency: They answer to a commissioning agency that is responsible for overseeing their labor, doctrine, lifestyle, and finances.
 - h. Preparation considerations
 - i. It is the desire of Community Church to regularly support missionaries that have a clear sense of their call to the ministry and have been trained or are being trained for the task.
 - ii. The following are examples of factors that would give missionaries higher priority for being considered for support:
 - 1. Training: They have undergone or plan to undergo necessary leadership, skill, linguistic training to accomplish their task on the mission field.
 - 2. Gifting: They have manifested a gift-mix in their local ministry settings that is useful in their intercultural mission service.
 - 3. Calling: They believe God has called them to intercultural missions.
3. Procedure for selecting missions and missionary candidates to support
- a. Step 1: Missions Committee does a thorough investigation of prospective missionary or mission based on established considerations (see Section C.2).

- b. Step 2: Missions Committee establishes recommendations based on these considerations and submits a detailed report to the Session. These recommendations should include: (1) if the mission should be supported, and if so (2) how it should be supported (sending funds, financing short-term trips, etc.) and (3) how often (periodically or regularly).
 - c. Step 3: Session returns the report with specific questions (if any). Steps 1 and 2 repeat as necessary.
 - d. Step 4: Session decides to accept or reject the Mission Committee recommendations.
 - e. Step 5: If rejected, Missions Committee can choose to make changes to the original recommendation. Repeat steps 1-4 as necessary.
 - f. Step 6: If accepted, the Missions Committee reengages with the missionary or agency and establishes details for beginning support.
4. Procedure for sending support
- a. The Community Church treasurer will keep detailed records pertaining to all funds dispersed.
 - b. Community Church will keep a detailed file on every missionary or mission supported, including all contact information, database of important accountability relationships (sending agencies, financial accountability networks, names and contact information of superiors, etc.), and mission updates (official reports, e-mails, newsletters, etc.).
 - c. The Missions Committee will work alongside each missionary or mission to determine the proper method of support.
5. Procedure for evaluating missions and missionaries and changing support level
- a. As it is the responsibility of the Missions Committee to keep continual communication with missionaries and mission endeavors, periodic review should be a natural outcropping of these communications.
 - b. During its regularly scheduled meetings the Missions Committee will formally discuss and reflect upon the periodic support given to missionaries or for the funding of short-term trips. These discussions and any decisions will be recorded in the minutes.
 - c. Any missionary or mission receiving regular support should be formally evaluated by the Missions Committee every time a change in support is being considered. The evaluation should include:
 - i. A formal interview with the mission or missionary (either in person or via electronic communication)
 - ii. A review of missionary updates

- d. At the end of a formal evaluation, a summary report should be written and placed in the mission's or missionary's official file. The summary report should include:
 - i. Overall impressions of the mission's or missionary's character and fruitfulness
 - ii. Any changes (positive or negative) in the mission's or missionary's life or situation that pertains to considerations for their continual support (see Section 3.C.)
 - iii. Recommendations for changes in support (increasing, decreasing, or termination)
 - e. By unanimous approval, the Missions Committee can raise, lower, or terminate support of a missionary based on a formal evaluation. In the case of termination, the Session must approve of the decision.
6. Procedure for terminating support
 - a. Support can be terminated when changes in the original considerations for support occur (see Section C.3).
 - i. In the case of changing vision or budget considerations (see Section C.3.b-c), the church will give at least three months notice prior to termination.
 - ii. In the case of a change in doctrine, organization, character, accountability, or preparedness (see Section C.3.d-h), the church will give at least one month notice prior to termination.
 - b. By unanimous approval, the Missions Committee can terminate support of a missionary based on a formal evaluation. The Session must approve of the decision.
7. Procedure for supporting mission endeavors of elders
 - a. At times the pastors or elders of Community Church could be called upon to be involved in intercultural missions. In each instance the Session should decide the level of involvement. This decision should be made in the light of a elders' or pastors' unique mix of gifts, relationships, and responsibilities.
 - b. In the event a pastor is not approved to travel, other qualified individuals can be sent in his place as representatives of Community Church. The Session should make recommendations to the Missions Committee about fit replacements.
 - c. Once approved for travel, elders' traveling expenses for missions should be fully funded by the missions budget. On longer trips, funding for travel should also include the elder's wife.
8. Procedure for supporting mission endeavors of church members and their families

- a. Missions Committee desires Community Church members to experience intercultural missions.
- b. The Missions Committee will make a formal written application available to Community Church members seeking support.
- c. The following percentages are recommendations for support for trips endorsed by the Missions Committee.
 - i. 75% of expenses for a church member's first CEPC mission trip
 - ii. 50% of expenses for a church member's second CEPC mission trip
 - iii. 25% of expenses for a church member's third and subsequent CEPC mission trips
 - iv. Percentages may be decreased if the number of church members desiring to go make support cost prohibitive.
 - v. These percentage recommendations do not apply to non-CEPC mission efforts.