

Missions Policy

LIVING HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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I. PURPOSE

A. Definition of Missions

Living Hope Presbyterian Church (“Living Hope”) defines missions to be any evangelistic 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 needs of the total person (spiritual, physical, emotional and social).

B. Purpose Statement

The goal of our missions effort is to win individuals to the Lord, equip them in the faith and establish churches that have the same aim in every tribe, tongue, people and nation (Acts 14:21-23; Rev. 5:9). The missions committee will seek to guide Living Hope toward the fulfillment of this purpose.

C. The Missions Policy

1. Purpose—The purpose of the missions policy is to:
 - a. Provide guidelines to stay on a straight course.
 - b. Avoid making important decisions on an emotional or haphazard basis.
 - c. Maintain consistency as team membership changes.
 - d. Insure good stewardship in the allocation of mission funds to Living Hope’s supported missions activities. This is in distinction to the Denomination’s missionaries selected by the Committee on Foreign Missions.
2. Exceptions—This policy is a statement of principles, not a rigid set of rules. Occasionally, exceptions will need to be made. Agreement of two-thirds of the missions comm. is needed to present exceptions for approval by Session.
3. Revisions—The missions policy will be reviewed and revised as often as needed, with a thorough review every three years. Before implementation, the **Living Hope Session** must approve all major revisions.

II. THE MISSIONS TEAM

A. Size and Selection

The missions team will consist of four to ten members including the chairperson. New members may be solicited from LHPC members with counsel from Session.

B. Term of Office

Each member is to serve for a renewable two-year term. Ideally, members will serve for many years. New members should be added to serve staggered terms.

C. Chairperson

The committee will select a chairperson each year from within the team. This individual is responsible for the proper functioning of the missions team and communication to the Session.

D. Expectations

Members are expected to:

1. Attend the meetings.
2. Assist on projects as necessary.
3. Take an active role in the decision-making process.
4. Continue to learn about global outreach. (*e.g.* by reading books and attending conferences).
5. Pray consistently for God to guide our efforts.

6. Devote much of their energy to furthering the missions program at our church.

E. Responsibilities

1. Pray—Encourage intercession from the congregation for global outreach and for our missionaries.
2. Strategize—Develop a missions philosophy with short- and long-range goals.
3. Educate—Assist in providing a comprehensive missions education program for our entire congregation and the missions team. This will include information about the world and our missionaries.
4. Mobilize—Utilize all the resources of the church (people, finances, contacts, facilities, etc.) to further the gospel. This includes offering short-term and other global outreach opportunities.
5. Recruit/Train—Select and assist in the equipping individuals from within our congregation to become missionaries.
6. Send—Support missionaries and nationals spiritually, financially and emotionally.
7. Care—Provide practical assistance to missionaries while they are on their field and home assignments.
8. Support—Prepare a missions budget and oversee the allocation of the funds throughout the year.
9. Represent—Serve as a liaison between the church, our missionaries and mission agencies.
10. Evaluate—Review the missions program of the church and make changes as necessary. This includes evaluating the missions policy statement as well as the ongoing support for missionaries, organizations and projects.

III. STRATEGY

A. Goals

Aware of our dependence upon the Holy Spirit, the missions team will seek to establish short- and long-range goals for our various responsibilities.

B. Priorities

Recognizing that there will always be more needs than we can fill, the following is meant to assist us in our decision-making. We have a two-fold missions strategy: 1.) Mobilization; and 2.) Global evangelization. Mobilization includes **our efforts to help our people become more missions active**. This is primarily accomplished through cross-cultural ministry. Global/local evangelization includes **our efforts to help complete the Great Commission. While there is overlap between the two, we have different goals for each category**.

1. Mobilization Priorities

- a. Ministries sponsored by our church. This includes church short-term missions (STM) teams or any other cross-cultural ministries we initiate.
 - i. Orthodox Presbyterian Church sent missionaries, as appointed by the Denomination.
 - ii. Local Church sponsored missions/missionaries.
- b. Ministries sponsored by individuals from our church and endorsed by us.
- c. Other.

2. Global/Local Evangelization Priorities

- a. Missionary support: Priority will be given to members of Living Hope Presbyterian Church.
- b. Strategic Partnerships: These ministries are more encompassing than merely giving funds. In these cases, our church commits to be an active partner in a particular ministry. This may involve sending short-term teams, hosting or attending conferences, sending our pastor to a site on a yearly basis, etc.
- c. Strategic Ministry Support: This category includes those opportunities where we can make a difference for the kingdom of God, regardless of any relationship or benefit to our church. We assist because it is strategic. We

might not have any involvement other than giving. We may never see the missionary or national we support. This support could be for people or projects.

3. Church Goals

- a. Church planting and to teaching of nationals.
- b. Those who have least access to the gospel (traditionally called unreached peoples).
- c. Urban work.
- d. Sending of missionaries from other countries.
- e. Missions mobilization.

C. Future Living Hope Missions Budget Projections

The following section applies to future decisions and planning concerning the **local church's Missions budget**. This is in distinction to the Denomination's selected missionaries, of which we do support financially (via annual Presbytery giving). We submit to the wisdom of the Denomination leadership in regards to which fields globally/domestically are supported; as such, the **local** missions budget projections below do not apply to Denomination supported missionaries.

The goal, over a period of many years, is to allocate of our local Missions Fund/budget will strive to approximate the following percentages:

DOMESTIC 30%		FOREIGN 70%			
25%	5%	25%	25%	10%	10%
Evangelism & Church Planting	Support Ministries	Evangelism & Church Planting	Teaching Nationals	Missions Mobilization	Support Ministries

Explanations

1. **Evangelism/Church Planting Ministries:** Domestic ministries could include such things as evangelism and discipleship on college campuses, church planting, executive outreaches, etc.
2. **Domestic Support Ministries:** These individuals are the support personnel who assist the previous categories of workers. This category includes workers such as secretaries, accountants, administrators, and mission representatives of organizations that work only in our country.
3. **Foreign Evangelism/Church Planting Ministries:** The people ministered to are nationals who live outside our country. Ministries would include church planting and evangelism.
4. **Foreign Teaching Nationals:** The people benefited are nationals who live outside our country. Activities include teaching the Bible or ministry skills. This category would include Bible institute teachers, theological education by extension instructors, Bible translators, etc.
5. **Foreign Missions Mobilization:** Missions mobilizers are people (inside and outside our country) who consult with churches, agencies and student groups to help them participate more aggressively and strategically in world evangelism.
6. **Foreign Support Ministries:** This person may be in our country or overseas. The ministry is one that allows categories "3", "4" and "5" to function. This category includes secretaries, teachers of missionary

children, missions representatives here in our country, pilots, etc—anyone whose goal is to assist those who serve overseas. This may include organizations that provide theological training and resources for those in the field.

IV. SHORT-TERM MISSIONS (STM)

A. Definition

Any missions activity of one day to one-year duration. It must be field driven—and beneficial to those whom we are serving, along with ourselves.

B. Purpose

Our primary purpose is to strengthen national believers and/or evangelize non-believers. Our secondary purpose is to mobilize and educate our constituency to be more missions active.

C. Short-Term Missions (STM) Criteria

1. The STM must be in a subordinate partnership with a national church, a long-term missionary or mission agency.
2. There must be a clear long-term strategy in place.
3. There must be a qualified leader for the ministry.
4. There must be appropriate pre-field training.
5. There must be appropriate debriefing and follow-up plans for those who ministered.

D. Priorities

1. It is a key part of our strategic plan.
2. The ministry is sponsored or endorsed by our church.
3. The ministry will help a person evaluate a long-term missions ministry.

E. Support

Our church may provide support for STM. We will use the order of priorities mentioned in "IV. D" as a guide in determining how much to give. Financial policies for STM are given in Section V.

Raising support for a STM project is part of the faith journey. Support encompasses both financial aspects and, more critically, prayer. Paul, a model missionary, both worked as a tent-maker and raised support from the churches he planted (1 Cor 9:1-22, 2 Corinthians 6:3, Philippians 10-20) to support his missionary work. The church encourages fund-raising based on this model. Practically, this means the individual should raise support from friends, family, and the church. It is important that missionaries build partnerships with their community and provide opportunities for their community to get involved. Because of this, all short-term missionaries seeking support are required to write and distribute support letters describing the mission trip and requesting support. Again, support is not limited to monetary support.

Short-term missionaries should apply for funding from the LHPC's short-term mission budget. Upon review and approval by the Mission Committee, the Missions Committee will contribute financial support. The general guideline is 1/3 of applicant's need, with recommendation that the 2/3 remainder be fund-raised—with no more than half of this amount from the individual's own savings. In cases of exceptions to the general guideline, a maximum of 2/3 of applicant's need may be covered.

Short-term missionaries should target no more than 1/3 of the total cost of the trip from their own funds. One's financial situation should never prevent him/her from considering mission. Though the committee feels it is a blessing to be able to partially support one's own mission trip, it is never seen as a requirement. The missions committee recognizes that most STM have no experience with raising of support and will partner with prospective short-term missionaries, giving them resources to properly approach raising support.

This model of distributing the support of the trip 3-ways encourages the short-term missionaries' faith journey, sense of accountability and responsibility and allows the church family and friends to be blessed via participation through the whole process of the trip. Short-term missionaries will meet with the Missions committee for de-briefing and consider manners to share their experience with the church community.

V. FINANCIAL POLICIES

A. Annual Budget

The missions team will prepare an annual budget each year to be submitted to the Trustees to be approved by Session.

B. Minimum/Maximum Support

Long-Term Missions Support. Monthly support will be decided by the Missions Committee and may represent a significant sum, up to fifty percent (50%) of a missionary's total need. See section V. H.

Considerations that the Missions Committee will weigh include: member of LHPC, non-member LHPC but long standing relationship with congregation, alignment with LHPC missions priorities (See section III. B and III.C)

C. Monetary Supports

Support for a missionary will be given on a regular basis.

D. Outfitting Expenses

At the discretion of the MC, with presentation to the Session, in order to help with outfitting expenses, a one-time gift equivalent to up to three months of monthly support may be given to help meet these needs.

E. Ministry Evaluation

All missionaries and ministries will be evaluated at least once every five years. For missionaries, this will occur when they are on home assignment.

F. Ministry Changes

If there is a major change in either the ministry and/or location or if the missionary joins a different mission agency, the missions team will immediately re-evaluate its support commitment. The Missions Committee requests advance notice of any significant changes in ministry.

G. Support Termination

Termination of financial support for a missionary should be a rarity. For it to occur, Session on recommendation from the missions committee needs to approve the decision. Reasons for termination include missionaries' failure to fulfill the responsibilities stipulated in this policy. If we terminate support, we will strive to do it in such a way as to limit the negative effects on the missionary.

H. Support Review

Based on available funds, and priorities (See Sections III. A thru C) each year the missions team will review the support needs of currently supported missionaries and consider initiating support for additional missionaries.

I. Funding Priorities

The expenditure of funds will be consistent with the priorities mentioned earlier. (See Sections III. A thru C)

J. Budget Items

The missions budget consists of the a) "Missions Fund" which is used for direct support, and b) the administrative budget line-item to fulfill the goals of the missions team (*for example*: missions events, books, short-term projects, etc.).

VI. MISSIONARY SELECTION POLICIES

A. Qualifications

1. All applicants must be in agreement with LHPC's Statement of Faith.
2. **They must be accepted for service with a mission agency approved by the missions team.** Tentmakers and nationals may be an exception in special situations.
3. They must have a proven track record in ministry.
4. Their home church must be in agreement with their decision.

B. Application Procedures

Applicants must:

1. Complete a written application.
2. Meet with an ad-hoc committee comprising of representatives of the missions committee alongside at least one Session member to review the application and qualifications.
3. If there is consensus among the ad-hoc committee, the Missions team will present the application to the Session.

C. Responsibility of LHPC to Its Missionaries

1. Remember the missionary in prayer.
2. Communicate with each missionary on a routine interval.
3. Promote the work of each missionary within the church.
4. Encourage the missionary.
5. Send pledged funds in a timely fashion.
6. Assist in securing housing, furniture and a vehicle for the missionary's home assignment.
7. Work toward a partnership relationship with the missionary and his/her agency.

D. Responsibility of the Missionary to LHPC

1. Communicate on a regular interval.
2. Give the missions team advance notice of any significant changes in ministry and/or location.
3. Make an effort to visit with LHPC during home assignments.
4. Provide the team with written yearly goals and an appraisal of the last year's activities.
5. Send the missions team updated support figures for each year.
6. Work diligently in team building/maintenance with all supporters.
7. Work toward a close partnership relationship with LHPC.