

NCPC MISSIONS TEAM POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Adopted by the Session June 8, 2009

(Note: Many of the policies and practices below are adapted from MTW materials, from the Global Ministry Team Handbook of Policies and Practices of Briarwood Presbyterian Church of Birmingham, and from policy statements and practices of other congregations.)

PREFACE

This policy manual outlines the principles by which the NCPC Missions Team operates. It is intended to guide the committee in its work and deliberations but is not intended to dictate decisions. As with all ministry teams of NCPC, the Missions Team is under the oversight and supervision of the Session. Through its review, the Session may approve, disapprove, amend, or clarify actions of the Missions Team. This policy manual and any changes shall become effective upon approval of the Session.

SECTION A – VISION, VALUES, AND GOALS

A-1. VISION

A. Summary

The NCPC Mission Ministry Team seeks to glorify God by nurturing joyful obedience to the gracious commission of our Lord to make disciples of all nations.

B. The Gracious Commission

1. In fulfilling the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus (Matthew 28:16-20), we recognize that all people, including ourselves, are called into a life of discipleship marked by a biblical relationship with the Son of God, the Word of God, and the Church of God.

2. In fulfilling the Cultural Mandate (Genesis 1:28), we recognize that all of life is to be brought under the Lordship of Christ as we learn to glorify and enjoy God now and forever.

C. The Church's Mission

We therefore state the missionary goals of the church to be that of glorifying God by leading all the peoples of the earth to a saving knowledge of Christ and to obedience to Scripture in all of life as we demonstrate our commitment to the universal Church through an active and faithful relationship with the local church.

D. The Ultimate Purpose

The ultimate purpose of mission is to see God glorified through the worship given to Him now and in eternity by those who are gathered by the Holy Spirit and brought to Christ from all the nations, tribes, peoples, and languages of the world.

A-2. FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

A. The absolute truth, necessity, and sufficiency of Scripture (1 Timothy 3:15-16)

B. The singular, saving power of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12)

C. The necessity and role of the local church (Acts 2:42-47)

- D. The necessity of the proclamation of the gospel (Matthew 28:19-20)
- E. The totality of the gospel message as one of both word and deed (James 2:14-17)
- F. The reality of eternity, of heaven and hell (Matthew 7:13-14)
- G. The urgency of proclaiming the gospel message (Romans 10:14-15)
- H. The total and eternal victory gained by Christ (1 Corinthians 15:57)
- I. The grace of God as the foundation of missions (2 Corinthians 5:11,14)
- J. The glory of God as the motive of missions (2 Corinthians 4:6,15)

A-3. GOALS

- A. Develop and nurture a heart for missions, not merely a program of missions
- B. Send missionaries from our own number, short term and long term
- C. Increased and continual prayer support for missions
- D. Support and participate in local and international mission projects
- E. Support the mission work of the PCA
- F. Increased financial support of missions, both globally and within the United States

SECTION B - PURPOSE

B-1. DEFINITION OF MISSIONS

Mission to the World (Global Missions) is defined as any ministry aimed outside the United States or a cross-cultural international ministry within the United States. Mission to North America is defined as any ministry within the United States. At this time, the Missions Team coordinates the congregation's mission with both Mission to the World and Mission to North America. The primary purpose of both ministries is to fulfill the Great Commission by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism, discipleship, church planting, church development, church revitalization, and the training /equipping of church leadership. We also recognize that missions ministry is one of both word (proclamation) and deed (demonstration) in accordance with Christ's great commandment.

B-2. THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR MISSIONS

- A. Fulfilling the Great Commission of Christ (Matthew 28:19-20)
- B. Sharing Christ's heart for the world (Matthew 9:36-38; 18:10-14)
- C. Seeing sinners saved and brought to a knowledge of God (John 3:16; Rom. 10:13-15)
- D. Building up the body of Christ through discipleship (Ephesians 4:12-16)
- E. Demonstrating a ministry of word and deed (Matthew 22:37-39; 25:31-46)

B-3. THE PURPOSE OF THE MISSION POLICY

- A. To define and to increase the meaningfulness and purpose of the overall mission ministry of NCPC, giving clear direction to the missions ministry
- B. To create and cultivate vision
- C. To build confidence and cohesion in the total church ministry
- D. To permit thoughtful evaluation of critical issues
- E. To prevent decisions based on personal charisma or on a personal whim; it lets the

policy say “yes” or “no”

F. To define the specific responsibilities of the congregation, missionary, and agency

G. To communicate to the congregation what the mission team has in mind; it informs as well as builds trust

H. To insure accountability in the missions program

I. To work in close harmony with NCPC leadership

J. To facilitate partnerships between the local church and the field

K. To orient new Missions Ministry Team members to the work of the team

B-4. APPLYING THE MISSIONS POLICIES

It is intended that these policies be followed; however when it is advisable, exceptions may be made if approved by a simple majority of the total number of voting members of the Missions Team who are present.

B-5. REVISIONS TO THE MISSION POLICY

The policy should be reviewed every two - three years with any needed changes incorporated into the manual. Any changes may be adopted by a simple majority vote of the Missions Ministry Team, with all matters of substance or philosophy being referred to the Session of NCPC for approval.

SECTION C - MISSION TEAM STRUCTURE

C-1. QUALITIES NEEDED

A. A personal relationship with Christ, reflecting spiritual maturity and faithfulness

B. Active participation in the life and ministry of NCPC

C. A demonstrated interest in world missions

D. A desire to learn more about missions

E. Spiritual gifts supportive of and needed by the mission program

F. A commitment to prayer

G. An understanding and support of the missions policy of NCPC

C-2. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Attend all meetings as able

B. Be familiar with NCPC mission policy

C. Actively participate in missions as able; lead by participation

D. Help share and develop a vision for missions within NCPC

E. Participate in and encourage prayer for our missionaries and for our mission vision and program

F. Maintain active participation in the overall life and ministry of NCPC

C-3. MEMBERSHIP

- A. One or more elders appointed by the Session
- B. One or more deacons appointed by the Diaconate
- C. The Chairperson(s) of the WIC MTW and MNA Committee shall ordinarily be a member(s) of this committee.
- D. Other members of NCPC will be selected by the committee and Session as needed.
- E. The pastor of NCPC is an ex-officio member.
- F. The size of the committee is determined by the Session upon recommendation of the Missions Ministry Team.

C-4. TERM OF SERVICE

Team members serve one year terms on a calendar year basis and may serve consecutive years without limit as desired and needed by the team, so long as they are actively and willingly involved in the life of the church and in its mission program, subject to approval of the Session.

C-5. LEADERSHIP

- A. The Missions Committee is a joint committee of the Session and Diaconate; as such, its chairman may be either an Elder or a Deacon.
- B. Other leadership shall be determined and selected by the committee as needed (vice-chairman, secretary, mission conference chairperson, coordinators of various mission projects and trips, prayer coordinator, etc.).

C-6. MEETINGS

The Missions Committee shall meet as needed. Meetings are ordinarily called by the chairperson or pastor.

C-7. CONTINUITY

Preserving continuity of leadership through the Missions Ministry Team is important. For this reason, members are asked to serve in a manner and for a length of time that will provide the needed continuity.

D-8. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Members of the Missions Team and of NCPC are encouraged to participate in Presbytery and General Assembly mission committees and programs and to provide service and leadership to other mission agencies and organizations.

SECTION D - RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE

D-1. OVER-ALL PURPOSE OF THE MISSIONS COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Missions Ministry Team is to provide leadership, service, and coordination to NCPC in developing and implementing the congregation's mission vision, plan, and strategy.

D-2. GOAL SETTING

The Mission Committee should identify practical goals which challenge members to take a step of faith in their commitment to and participation in missions.

D-3. GENERAL AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

A. Mobilize the resources of the congregation for effective involvement in global evangelization

B. Educate the congregation in the work of missions, both locally and globally

C. Develop and oversee fund-raising programs for missions

D. Encourage and develop the congregation's intercessory prayer for missionaries and missions

E. Oversee and evaluate the mission ministry of the congregation

F. Update the mission policy as needed

G. Serve as a liaison between the congregation and its related mission organizations, agencies, associations, and missionaries

H. Coordinate mission trips and projects

I. Involve the congregation in intercultural ministries

J. Develop and oversee mission strategy of the congregation

D-4. DEVELOP PRAYER SUPPORT

The Missions Team will seek to develop intercessory prayer for world evangelization, using such means as:

A. Regularly presenting news and needs from the pulpit, in Sunday School, during other scheduled services and activities, and through usual means of communications such as the weekly bulletin, church newsletter, and the church website.

B. Encouraging interaction between missionaries and the congregation through letters and emails, by visits from missionaries on home assignment, and by arranging for missionaries to visit in the homes of members

C. Scheduling missionaries in various church events, ministries, and groups in order to develop more prayer awareness

D-5. PROVIDE MISSIONS EDUCATION FOR THE CHURCH

A. The Missions Ministry Team will seek to provide education for the congregation in the field of world missions for all age groups.

B. The team may use such means as an annual Missions Weekend / Conference, other missions emphasis times, special programs, informal meetings, bulletin inserts, displays, etc.

D-6. DEVELOP NCPC'S MISSIONS BUDGET

The Missions Ministry Team will make yearly budget recommendations for submission to the Diaconate and Session and will administer the missions budget subsequent to the approval process of the entire church budget.

C-7. DEVELOP AND UPDATE THE MISSIONS POLICE

The Missions Team will develop written guidelines for its own procedures and may enlist

other members of the congregation to assist in carrying out its duties. Missions policies should be reviewed periodically for revisions and / or additions as previously provided (see B-5).

D-8. EVALUATION OF MISSIONS AGENCIES

The Missions Ministry Team should provide evaluation of mission agencies as needed, particularly if those agencies fall outside of MTW and MTW-approved work. These agencies should be evaluated as to their doctrinal commitments, financial standards, and consistency with the over-all mission of the PCA and of NCPC.

D-9. COORDINATE AND OVERSEE THE MISSIONS CONFERENCE

A. A missions conference keeps missions before the congregation, brings missionaries from different areas of the world together, provides the stimulus for increased mission support, and introduces the work of missions into the lives of church members. Rather than depleting the local church, a missions conference strengthens the local church through an enlarged vision for Christ's kingdom. It should be planned in conjunction with the congregation's on-going missions program, rather than being viewed as an isolated event in the life of the church.

B. The committee will sponsor an annual Missions Weekend / Conference. It may also sponsor other mini-conferences and seminars as approved by the Session.

D-10. ENCOURAGE AND DEVELOP PARTICIPATION IN MISSIONS

A. Encourage visits to missionaries on the field

1. Encourage NCPC members to visit missionaries on the field when there is opportunity
2. Encourage and sponsor church staff to visit missionaries on the field

B. Encourage Short-term missionary workers

Place a high priority on helping NCPC members become actively involved in short-term mission work, summer mission trips, and other mission projects.

C. Encourage career missionary service

1. Encourage prayer for the purpose of raising up missionaries from NCPC
2. Conduct programs to involve members in short-term missions
3. Encourage and provide opportunities for intercultural ministry within the United States

D. Develop a relationship with other congregations and with denominational work

1. Maintain an active involvement and participation with MTW and MNA of the PCA
2. Consider and coordinate joint mission trips / projects with other PCA congregations

SECTION E - FINANCIAL SUPPORT POLICIES

E-1. FUNDING AND BUDGETING

A. Mission funds will be raised through regular giving (a percentage of which is designated for missions and ministries outside the local congregation), by designated gifts, and through “faith promise” funds committed during the annual Missions Conference.

B. NCPC will challenge members to not only give from known resources but to make yearly mission commitments above and beyond their regular giving, thus encouraging members to discipline their lives toward increased support of missions and to greater stewardship overall.

E-2. DOCTRINAL REQUIREMENTS

All supported ministries and missionaries must be in agreement with the doctrinal standards of NCPC as outlined by the Presbyterian Church in America. (See the summary of doctrinal standards as listed in the appendix.)

E-3. GENERAL PRIORITIES FOR SUPPORT

A. It is the intent of NCPC to strongly and actively support the missions program of the Presbyterian Church in America and to give a high priority to supporting those who are going out under Mission to the World.

B. It is the usual practice of NCPC to provide assistance to missionaries who are working under a responsible mission board or agency rather than providing support to those who are independent of such sponsorship and lack oversight and direction. It is our policy to support missionaries who serve under boards having a reputation for integrity and stability, whose doctrinal statements are true to Scripture and in agreement with those of NCPC, who are sound and open in their financial policies and practices, who operate under clearly defined and generally accepted principles and practices, who demonstrate good management, and whose staff members are provided sound training and supervision.

C. All mission projects and agencies must be approved by the Session prior to support being solicited or given.

E-4. GUIDELINES FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. Consideration for financial support will ordinarily be given to the following types of ministries:

1. Evangelism / Discipleship
2. Church Planting
3. Church Revitalization
4. Equipping and Teaching
5. Support or Technical (technology, etc.)
6. Administration

B. Consideration for support of individuals and ministries will ordinarily be given in the following order of priority:

1. Members of NCPC or of other PCA congregations who are serving with MTW
2. Members of NCPC or of PCA congregations who are serving with Session-

approved agencies that are not PCA or PCA / cooperative agreements

3. Those with a family relationship or other connection with NCPC and who are serving with MTW or with Session-approved agencies that are not PCA or PCA / cooperative agreements

4. Other missionaries and ministries

5. Special support projects and one-time gifts

E-5. AMOUNT OF SUPPORT

A. It is the policy of NCPC to set a minimum level of support for short-term missionaries (1-3 years) and long-term missionaries (4 years or more) that we support. Support ordinarily begins at the minimum amount except where a higher level of support is urgently needed, and when the missionary and/or sending agency indicates that the minimum level of support is unnecessary.

B. The minimum support level target for short-term and long-term missionaries is currently \$1,000.00 annually.

E-6. DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS

Distribution of funds are generally made quarterly or on the scheduled determined most suitable by the church treasurer.

E-7. MAINTAINING A RELATIONSHIP WITH NCPC

A. NCPC shall receive regular correspondence from its supported missionaries.

B. Supported missionaries are encouraged to visit NCPC during regular furlough when possible. Opportunities will be given to report to the congregation during worship services, Sunday School classes, prayer meetings, or on other occasions.

E-8. SPECIAL FINANCIAL NEEDS AND GIFTS

A. Crisis Events

The Missions Ministry Team may from time to time present crisis projects, above the ordinary budget, to the congregation and encourage giving to those projects, both for the benefit of the project and as a means of stewardship training and challenge for the congregation. Such needs should be done only after approval of the Deacons and Elders.

B. One-Time Gifts

The Missions Ministry Team, or the Diaconate and Session of the church, may determine that funds above stated support are needed or that one-time gifts to ministries and missions not regularly supported by the congregation are needed. On such occasions, the Missions Team may approve a one-time gift, in consultation with the church treasurer and deacons. Such gifts may be made from church funds or from a special offering for that purpose.

C. Designated Giving by Individuals

Designated gifts for organizations or for the ministry of persons in such organizations can be forwarded only to such organization and ministries that are first authorized by the Session or the Diaconate. It is the responsibility of the donor to follow applicable tax laws in such procedures.

D. Ministries and Missionaries Lacking Adequate Support

In the event a missionary lacks adequate support, the NCPC Mission Team will:

- A. Pray for this need
- B. Investigate the possibility of increasing regular support
- C. If increasing regular support is not possible, will consider providing a one-time extra contribution in addition to the regular support amount
- D. Will commend the missionary to other congregations for support if considered advisable

E-9. DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

Discretionary funds come from unexpended world mission funds at the end of the fiscal year and may be administered by the Mission Team through consultation with and approval of the Diaconate.

E-10. SHORT TERM MISSIONS

Short Term Missions are those consisting of a one to three years. The standards and criteria for support of short term missions are the same as for those of long-term missionaries (four years or more).

E-11. SUMMER MINISTRIES AND SPECIAL MISSIONS

A. General.

1. The Missions Team will encourage members of NCPC to consider summer and special mission ministries with approved agencies. Such ministry opportunities (1) Often develop a “world vision” and a heart for mission, (2) Provide an opportunity for the Lord to give definite leading for a career overseas ministry, and (3) Provide meaningful and needed ministry alongside that of the missionary and ministry.

2. The Missions Team, acting through the Session and Diaconate, will give oversight and direction in selecting mission agencies, ministry opportunities, and procedures to be followed for summer missions and special ministries.

3. The Missions Team will assist in developing and encouraging financial support for such trips.

B. Criteria for Selecting candidates for Special Ministries

- 1. Evidence of a Christian walk
- 2. A demonstrated interest in missions
- 3. Parental support and permission, if a minor
- 4. Qualifications to do the work anticipated
- 5. Willingness to follow standards of conduct and testimony expected of those who participate in all NCPC sponsored mission trips and activities.

C. Approval Procedure for Special Ministry Participants

Priority for financial support of special mission trips and projects will be given first to members of NCPC and their children, and then to those having a relationship of ministry or friendship with the congregation.

E-12. GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. Evaluation of Support

Evaluation of support should be conducted annually by the Missions Committee. Revisions in supports are usually determined when the annual budget is prepared. In the event a missionary lacks adequate support, the Missions Team will pray for this need, investigate the possibility of increasing support, consider a one-time contribution in addition to the regular amount, or commend that person to other congregations for support, if advisable.

B. Revision of Support

Increase in support will be determined by the need of missionaries and the ability of NCPC to meet that need in light of the overall mission of the congregation and of its total mission support. Increases in support, when given, will usually be determined as the annual budget is prepared. Reasons for increasing support may include additional cost of living, addition of spouse or child, loss of support from other sources, effectiveness of ministry, etc. Reasons for decreasing support include over support from other sources, a change in assignment of location, or taking employment outside the mission agency.

C. Termination of Support

Support may be terminated for causes such as a change of assignment or agency affiliation, deviation from the NCPC doctrinal statement, specific incompetence, moral issues, or lack of accountability for support.

D. Maintaining a Relationship with NCPC

1. NCPC shall receive regular correspondence from its supported missionaries.
2. Supported missionaries are encouraged to visit NCPC during regular furlough when possible. Opportunities will be given to report to the congregation during worship services, Sunday School classes, prayer meetings, or on other occasions.

**SUMMARY OF DOCTRINAL BELIEFS
(From the NCPC By Laws)**

We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are inspired of God, inerrant in the original writings, and are of supreme and final authority in faith and life.

We believe in one God existing in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, co-equal and eternal.

We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also the spiritual death which is separation from God; and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature.

We believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the womb of the virgin Mary, and born of her, yet without sin.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice and that all that believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood.

We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension to heaven and in His present life for us as High Priest and Advocate.

We believe in that blessed hope, the personal and visible return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We believe that when Christ had completed His work of salvation upon the cross and ascended into heaven He sent the Holy Spirit to live in the heart of each believer. The Holy Spirit comes to call, comfort, regenerate, enlighten, equip, and empower each one for the works of service which God has prepared beforehand for His people to do.

We believe that all who are born again of the Holy Spirit receive by faith the Lord Jesus Christ and thereby become children of God.

We believe in the eternal security and everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the eternal conscious punishment of the lost.

We believe that Christ instituted the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper to be observed until He comes.

We believe the Church is the people of God. There is no other head of the Church than the Lord Jesus Christ. The invisible Church consists of all those living around the world today who profess the true religion of Jesus Christ, together with their children. All believers should confess their faith by joining with a local expression of the body of Christ that seeks to proclaim and follow the inerrant word of God.