

**Chinese Church in Christ, Mountain View
Redeemer Bible Fellowship
Missions Philosophy and Policy**

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Introduction

The purpose of missions is to fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples through proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). Missions may occur locally in various subcultures in the United States, but at Chinese Church in Christ, Mountain View and Redeemer Bible Fellowship (“CCIC-MV” and “RBF,” respectively; the “church,” collectively) our primary focus when referring to “missions” is on ministries that emphasize evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and church strengthening beyond our local area.

In this document, you will find our missions philosophy and policy.

Missions Philosophy

Foundational to the missions work of any church is the biblical philosophy that undergirds it. It is essential that a church have a proper understanding of the tasks and principles of missions outlined in the Scriptures.

I. The Tasks of Missions

The tasks of missions are those that help to accomplish the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20). They can be understood to include the following:

A. Going to the Nations (Matthew 28:19; Acts 1:8)

Jesus was clear in his commission to his disciples that some manner of going was required. Whether to the other side of the world or to the other side of the street, "going" is necessary. This means that we must be intentional and extend ourselves beyond our normal patterns of life, beyond our usual circles of friends, and beyond our ethnic, cultural or geographic boundaries.

B. Proclaiming the Gospel (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8)

The centerpiece of missions is to spread the good news about redemption in Jesus Christ. The core content of the message, as Luke records in his Gospel, is repentance for the forgiveness of sins in Jesus' name. In Acts, Jesus tells his disciples to be his witnesses, ones who testify of the truth of what they know. Every activity of missions must serve to advance this central purpose. By our words and by our lives, we are to proclaim the gospel.

C. Making Disciples (Matthew 28:19-20)

The ultimate goal of missions is not just to make converts, but disciples. A disciple is someone who continues to learn from and follow after Jesus. This involves: 1) baptizing those who repent and believe in Christ and 2) teaching converts to obey all that Christ commands.

Once baptized, these new disciples gather together into local churches as an expression of their incorporation into the universal church, which is the body of Christ, in order that they might be well instructed in the whole counsel of God's word. Unfortunately, far too much that passes as missions today aims at making converts instead of disciples. Missions must include teaching unto obedience, for Christ demands nothing less. Implicit in this command is the necessity for churches to be planted wherever converts are made, and for leadership to be adequately trained and appointed in each church. Only then is the great end of missions attainable, which is to see God glorified, worshiped, and enjoyed by all peoples everywhere.

D. Sending Missionaries (Acts 13:1-3; Phil 4:14-20)

Implicit in "going" to the nations is the need for those going to be sent. Sending missionaries involves qualifying them, praying for them, and supporting them with adequate resources to enable them to accomplish their primary tasks.

II. The Principles of Missions

In deciding how to accomplish the tasks of missions we can make observations from how missions were conducted in the time of the apostles. While the descriptions of missions in that day are not necessarily normative for us in our day, they do provide us with valuable information. From our observations of biblical patterns, we may derive the following principles that will help us as we continue the Great Commission task today.

A. Missionaries Should Be Sent by Local Churches (Acts 13:1-3)

The church at Antioch sent Barnabas and Paul off on their missionary journey. In our day we also have missions agencies and societies that are involved in getting missionaries to the field and sustaining them there. The efforts of these organizations can be very valuable, but they should be in support of the local church, not in place of it. The ultimate responsibility of local churches to send and sustain missionaries should not be passed off to others.

B. Missionaries Should Be Among the Most Qualified People in the Church (Acts 13:2)

Barnabas and Paul were the most distinguished leaders in the Antioch church. Missionaries are ministry leaders in a difficult and often hostile environment, and thus, should be some of the spiritually strongest and most mature members of the church. At a minimum, a missionary should meet the biblical qualifications of a deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13), but in most cases, a missionary should meet all the biblical qualifications of an elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9).

C. Missionaries Should Remain Accountable to Their Sending Church (Acts 14:26-27)

Paul and Barnabas returned to the church at Antioch to report on their ministry. This indicates that the relationship between the missionaries and the church was ongoing. Missionaries are an extension of their local church's ministry in another geographic location or among a different people. The elders should continue to exercise oversight over the missionaries they have sent to ensure the maintenance of sound doctrine and ministry practice. This would imply that the church also remains responsible for the care of the missionaries they have sent in terms of prayer, comfort, encouragement, etc.

D. Missionaries Should Be Supported by Churches Through Prayer and Material Assistance

The Philippian church financially supported Paul's ministry (Philippians 4:15-16). Paul also requested that the Roman church aid Phoebe (Romans 16:1-2) and that the Corinthian church aid Timothy (1 Corinthians 16:10-11). Paul specifically asked for the Ephesian church to support his ministry in prayer (Ephesians 6:19). The apostle John exhorted the support of itinerant gospel preachers (3 John 8). Significantly, he also said that support should be refused to those who distort the gospel (2 John 10-11). It is evident then that it is right for those who cannot directly engage in missionary activity to provide material and moral support to those who have been called to that effort. This also implies that it is appropriate for non-sending churches to partner financially and prayerfully with a sending church in the support of a missionary.

E. Responsibility for Missions Resides at the Level of Leadership in the Church (Acts 13:1)

This principle follows from the fact that Jesus tasked his apostles, as the leaders of the church, with the Great Commission. Similarly, in any local church, the elders and pastors should shoulder the responsibility for one of its most central tasks. The church in Antioch modeled this principle in that the group listed in Acts 13:1 were the elders of that church. This does not mean that lay people and general church members should not take an active role in the conduct of the missions effort, but the elders should be the champions of the missions effort and should ensure that it is accomplished.

F. Missionaries Should Prioritize Those Activities that Most Directly Achieve Their Mission

The core task of the Great Commission is to make disciples. A missionary, therefore, prioritizes those activities that most directly achieve this end. By observing what activities Paul and his associates were involved in we can draw principles as to what should be the highest priorities today.

1. The primary activities in which we see Paul engaged are:
 - a. **Preaching the gospel** (Acts 9:20, 28, 13:5, 16-49; 14:1, 7, 21; 16:10, 13; 17:2, 10, 17, 22-34; 18:4-6; 19:8; 20:20; 28:30-31): Paul preached in synagogues, from house to house, in an academic gathering on the Areopagus, and in the marketplace to all who would listen. The evidence shows that Paul took every opportunity to share the gospel, whether to individuals or to groups. Missionaries, therefore, are ideally those who are most able to faithfully proclaim the gospel and unfold its riches in any and every circumstance.
 - b. **Church planting** (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5): After people were converted to Christ, they were not left scattered, but were gathered into churches and leaders were appointed. This priority explains why there were churches in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, and Thessalonica to receive Paul's letters! It is important, then, that missionaries be qualified and able to establish churches for new converts.
 - c. **Church strengthening** (Acts 14:21-23; 15:41; 16:4-5; 18:11, 23; 20:2; cf. the Epistles): Related to planting churches is the need for their continued support and pastoral care. It is irresponsible to win people to Christ and yet leave them to languish apart from the necessary nourishment of God's word. Missionaries should be involved in shepherding, strengthening, encouraging, and teaching all that Christ commanded to fledgling churches.
 - d. **Leadership training** (Acts 14:23; 19:8; 20:17-35; 2 Tim 2:2; cf. the Pastoral Epistles): The New Testament associates up to 100 names with Paul, of which around 36 could be considered close partners and fellow laborers in gospel ministry. Church leaders and "co-workers" seemed to spring up around him wherever he went. Paul knew the ministry had to be passed on before he died, and so he trained a new generation of leaders to replace him. Missionaries should engage not only in planting churches and helping them start, but also in training up local leaders to replace them and carry on the gospel work.
2. We also see Paul engaged in a number of secondary activities which, in certain situations, served as helpful vehicles to achieve his Great Commission goals. They include:
 - a. **Mercy ministry** (Acts 11:29-30; 19:12; 28:9): Paul was involved in mercy ministries to provide relief to fellow Christians in difficult times and to authenticate the truth of his message as coming from God. Missionaries should have a heart to love the people they are ministering to in tangible ways and to adorn the gospel of Christ with good works.
 - b. **Other vocational work** (Acts 18:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 2:9): Paul occasionally engaged in other types of vocational work in order not to be not a financial burden to local believers and to be an example of industriousness to them. Thus, while taking a secular job or participating in business enterprises may be appropriate missionary activity in certain circumstances, it is essential that missionaries maintain their primary focus on making disciples of Christ.

Missions Policy

A missions policy is one way for a church to properly carry out its missions philosophy. Below are some of the objectives of our church's policy.

- To provide clear direction and guidance to the Missions Committee ("MC") so that arbitrary decisions are avoided.
- To promote and ensure stability of the missions ministry so that changes in the MC membership will not adversely affect the overall ministry.
- To establish accountability between the MC and any supported missionaries.
- To maintain the proper management and stewardship of church resources designated for missions.
- To coordinate and inform the church of the MC's activities.
- To encourage church members to be personally involved in the work of missions.

I. Missions Committee ("MC")

A. Qualifications of MC Members

1. Members must be baptized believers in Christ who demonstrate spiritual maturity in service.
2. Members must be current, regular attendees who have been actively involved in the ministries of the church, generally for at least two (2) years.
3. Members must have a desire and burden for missions and evangelism.
4. Members must adhere to the church's Statement of Faith.

B. Selection and Service of MC Members

1. Current MC members shall nominate and approve by two-thirds (2/3) vote a candidate who meets the qualifications for consideration.
2. The candidate then has the option to accept the invitation to join the MC as a member.
3. Members shall serve for a three (3) year term. Members can continue to serve another term at the invitation of active elders, pastors, and/or deacons serving on the MC.

C. Responsibility of MC Members

1. To support the biblical missions vision of the elders and pastors of CCIC-MV/RBF.
2. To help screen missionary candidates.
3. To act as the liaison between the church and supported missionaries, thereby keeping both sides informed.
4. To pray for and develop prayer support for missions and our supported missionaries.
5. To promote awareness of and participation in missions within the church by educating the congregation and providing appropriate resources.
6. To plan missions events (e.g., missions conferences, missions weekends, missions workshops).
7. To attend MC meetings on a regular basis.
8. To encourage interest and growth among MC members through sharing of ideas, trends, and changes in missions, as well as attending missions conferences and seminars.
9. To participate in one (1) or more missions trips during their term on the MC.

D. Size and Structure of MC

1. The size of the MC may vary but shall have a minimum of six (6) members including at least one (1) elder or pastor from the church, and a maximum of twelve (12) members.
2. At least one-third (1/3) of the MC members shall represent the Chinese congregation (CCIC-MV) and another one-third (1/3) the English congregation (RBF).
3. At least two-thirds (2/3) of the total number of MC members must be present to form a quorum.
4. Issue resolution shall be approved by at least two-thirds (2/3) of the committee members present at the meeting, unless specified otherwise.
5. There shall be two (2) members holding the following offices respectively: chairperson and treasurer.
6. The chairperson shall be an active elder, pastor, or deacon.

E. Allocation of MC Expenses

1. The missions budget shall be determined by the MC in conjunction with the elders and pastors of the church. As a general rule, missions expenses, not including expenses for short-term ministries ("STM"), shall be allocated as follows: up to fifteen percent (15%) for special projects; up to fifteen percent (15%) as emergency needs; and at least seventy percent (70%) for regular monthly missionary support. STM expenses shall be considered additional expenses that are to be budgeted each year depending on the number of teams being sent out.
2. Special projects include special ministry needs (see Section VI), as well as travel expenses, equipment, conference fees, training fees, and gifts.
3. Emergency reserves include requests for support due to medical and natural disasters and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
4. Monthly missionary support includes regular support for missionaries in the mission field and support for mission organizations. Mission organization support should not exceed thirty percent (30%) of the total missionary support budget.

II. Long-Term Missions (“LTM”)

A. Purpose

1. To send-out and/or support long-term missionaries as extensions of the local church to mission fields across the globe for the sake of making faithful disciples of all nations.
2. The purpose and plan of each LTM candidate and assignment must be reviewed and approved by the MC.

B. Definition

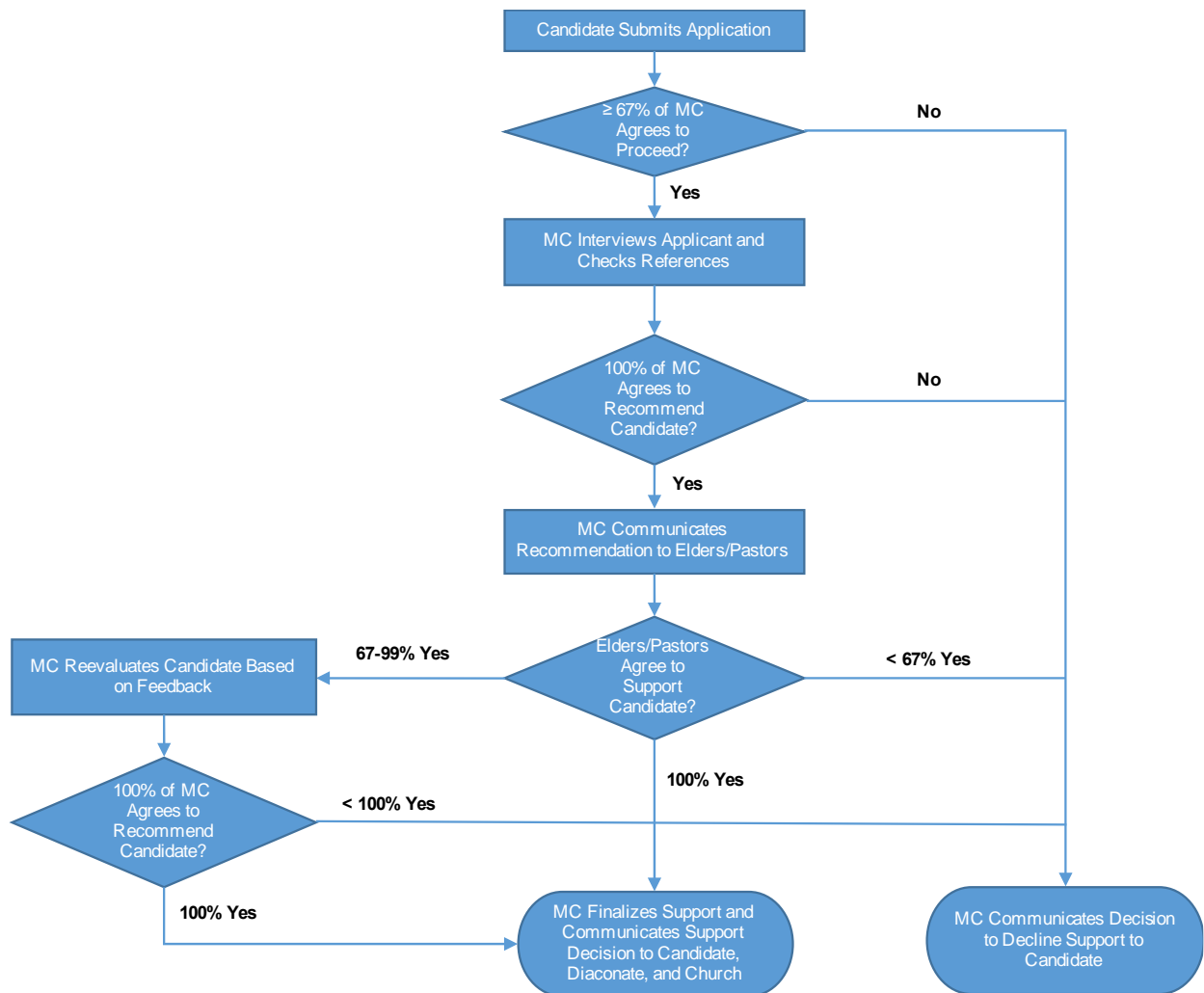
LTM shall be defined as those missions assignments which last more than one (1) year in duration.

C. Candidate Application Procedure

1. All potential LTM candidates shall submit a completed “Application for Long-Term Missions Support” to the MC for consideration of church support for a term of no longer than three (3) years.
2. The MC shall initially review the application and by two-thirds (2/3) vote decide whether to decline the support request or proceed to interview the potential candidate.
 - a. If the application for support is declined, the MC shall notify the applicant immediately. At the request of the applicant, the MC may reevaluate the application at a subsequent meeting, but only one request for reevaluation will be considered per calendar year.
 - b. If the application for support is initially accepted, the MC shall proceed to interview the potential candidate at a subsequent MC meeting. At least one elder or pastor should be present for the interview. In addition, the MC shall contact at least two (2) external candidate references.
3. After the interview and reference checks have been completed, the MC shall either recommend the candidate for support to the elders and pastors of the church or decline the candidate’s application for support. The decision to recommend a candidate should be made unanimously.
 - a. If the application for support is declined, the MC shall notify the applicant immediately. At the request of the applicant, the MC may reevaluate the application at a subsequent meeting, but only one request for reevaluation will be considered per calendar year.
 - b. If the decision is made to recommend the candidate for support, the MC shall communicate their recommendation to the elders and pastors of the church.
4. The elders and pastors shall review the recommendation and vote on whether to support the candidate. A candidate who does not obtain at least two-thirds (2/3) approval from the elders and pastors shall have his or her application for support declined. A candidate who obtains unanimous approval from the elders and pastors shall be approved for support. A candidate who obtains at least two-thirds (2/3) approval from the elders and pastors but less than unanimous approval shall have his or her application for support reevaluated by the MC. Only upon unanimous approval by the MC after reevaluation shall the candidate approved for support.
 - a. If the application for support is declined, the MC shall notify the applicant immediately. At the request of the applicant, the MC may reevaluate the application at a subsequent meeting, but only one request for reevaluation will be considered per calendar year.

- b. If the decision is made to support the candidate, the MC shall make the appropriate arrangements, finalize the amount of financial support to be provided, and communicate the decision to the diaconate boards, as well as the church congregation.
5. For current candidates seeking renewal of support in anticipation of the end of their term, a renewal application is required, but interviews and reference checks will be conducted only if requested by the MC or church leadership. The MC will be responsibility for reviewing renewal applications and making a recommendation to the elders and pastors. The decision to support current candidates for an additional term must be made unanimously by both the MC and the elders and pastors.

Figure 1: New Candidate Application Procedure



D. Candidate Assessment Criteria

1. Candidates should have the proper beliefs.
 - a. They should have a biblical understanding and a personal experience of salvation.
 - b. They should have biblical understanding of the local church.
 - c. They should have a biblical understanding of missions.
 - d. They should agree with the church's Statement of Faith.
2. Candidates should have the proper character.
 - a. At a minimum, they should meet the qualifications of a deacon as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
 - b. Those who desire to serve in pastoral ministry on the mission field should meet the qualifications of an elder as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.
3. Candidates should have the proper experience and training.
 - a. They should have a sense of being called to the ministry by God.
 - b. They should have the proper qualifications for their intended ministry.
 - c. They should have the proper ministry experience and training.
4. Candidates should have the proper goals.
 - a. They should be committed to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).
 - b. They should be involved in one or more of the following ministries (listed in general order of priority):
 - 1) Local evangelism and/or church planting
 - 2) Local training (this includes Christian education, seminary training, and local discipleship)
 - 3) Mass evangelism and/or training (this includes online, television, radio, and print ministries)
 - 4) Business as mission (this involves working a secular job in a foreign context for the purpose of Great Commission work)
 - 5) Mercy ministries (this includes orphanages, food distribution, medical ministries, etc.)
5. Candidates should have the proper relationship with the church.
 - a. Though not required, it is advisable that candidates spend at least three (3) months attending CCIC-MV/RBF to allow the congregation to get to know them.
 - b. Candidates who have attended CCIC-MV/RBF regularly for a minimum of three (3) consecutive months will be given first consideration for support. Other candidates will be evaluated based on their relationship to CCIC-MV/RBF. The chart below is presented as a general guideline to aid the MC in decision-making (1=highest priority; 10=lowest priority).

	Evangelism/ Church Planting	Church Strengthening	Leadership Training	Other Work	Mercy Ministries
CCIC- MV/RBF Candidate	1	2	3	4	9
Other Candidate	5	6	7	8	10

6. Candidates should have the proper support structures in place.
 - a. Since CCIC-MV/RBF is not able to meet all the necessary support needs (e.g., visa support, pastoral support on the field, donor support, etc.), candidates should partner with an established missions organization.
 - b. Candidates who have not partnered with an approved missions organization will not be considered for support.

E. Responsibilities of Missionary

1. Missionary must adhere to biblical standards of conduct.
2. Missionary must remain faithful in their ministry to their family and community on the field.
3. Missionary must maintain regular communication with the church and its MC. Missionaries should provide the church's MC with an update regarding their status and ministry at least every three (3) months and provide a written report of their work on an annual basis. This written report shall include the missionary's prayer requests, present and projected financial status, ministry and personal goals for the upcoming year, challenges and progress during the past year, and an evaluation of the support and guidance received from the sending agency.
4. Missionary must re-apply for support from the church at least every three (3) years. Note that the church's MC will reach out to missionaries when re-application is required.
5. Missionary must contact the church's MC for a possible in-person visit when back in the Northern California area on furlough. It is highly recommended that the missionary come back for an in-person visit at least once during their term of support for the sake of maintaining a healthy relationship with the church.
6. Missionary must participate in the church's annual missions emphasis activities when available.
7. Missionary must notify the church's MC regarding any changes in field of service, changes in sending agency or board, or significant changes in ministry as soon as possible, but no later than two (2) months after the date of change.
8. Missionary must notify the church's MC of any changes in key doctrinal beliefs.
9. Missionary must notify the church's MC of any changes in marital status.

Failure to abide by the responsibilities above may result in suspension or early termination of support by the church.

F. Responsibilities of MC

1. The MC will regularly pray for our supported missionaries and commit to encouraging the church to pray for our missionaries.
2. The MC will issue financial support contributions for our supported missionaries.
3. The MC will facilitate communication between our supported missionaries and the church.
4. The MC will help to arrange sharing opportunities at the church for our support missionaries.
5. The MC will help to organize short-term ministry trips to support our supported missionaries as is appropriate.
6. The MC will provide furlough assistance to the best of their ability by helping our supported missionaries with housing, transportation, and other need while they are home on furlough.

G. Support Guidelines

Supported missionaries shall be classified either as a “church” missionary or an “affiliate” missionary. “Church” missionaries are those missionaries for whom CCIC-MV/RBF is the official and sole sending church. To be considered a “church” missionary, the missionary must have regularly attended CCIC-MV/RBF for at least six (6) consecutive months immediately prior to submitting their initial application for support. All other missionaries are classified as “affiliate” missionaries. The level of support from our church will depend in part on a missionary’s classification.

Support Type	“Church” Missionary	“Affiliate” Missionary
Prayer	The church shall regularly pray for the missionary on Sunday mornings and at prayer meetings.	The church shall regularly pray for the missionary on Sunday mornings and at prayer meetings.
Strategic	The church shall encourage all attendees to support their ministry on an ongoing basis.	The church shall encourage all attendees to support their ministry on an ongoing basis.
Financial	The church shall provide extensive and ongoing financial support, including regular support for special projects. Financial support shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the missionary’ total needs.	The church shall provide less extensive and ongoing financial support, including occasional support for special projects. Financial support shall not exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the missionary’ total needs.
Pastoral	The church shall provide regular communication (e.g., e-mails, phone calls, Skype) and regular field visits by church leaders.	The church shall provide regular communication (e.g., e-mails, phone calls, Skype) and an occasional field visit by church leaders.
Personnel	The church shall actively recruit and train people to assist with the missionary’s work to the best of its ability.	The church shall not actively recruit and train people to assist with the missionary’s work.
Furlough	The church shall provide furlough assistance to the best of its ability.	The church shall provide furlough assistance at its discretion.

1. Financial Support

- a. Financial support will begin as soon as the missionary receives authorization from their sending agency and is dispatched to the field.
- b. Financial support shall continue for at most three (3) years at which time the MC shall review and determine if continued support is warranted.
 - 1) Reasons for increasing financial support include: addition of spouse and/or children, rise in cost of living, and loss of support from other sources.
 - 2) Reasons for decreasing financial support include: change in assignment or location, taking a full or part time job outside of mission agency, and surplus support from other sources.
- c. Financial support shall generally continue while a missionary is on furlough as long as the furlough is in accordance with the missionary's sending agency and the church has been notified. However, a prolonged furlough of more than one (1) year may be cause for termination or the temporary cessation of financial support.

2. Termination of Support

- a. The MC may upon approval and in consultation with the elders and pastors of the church terminate support of a missionary after three (3) years at its discretion.
- b. The MC may upon approval and in consultation with the elders and pastors of the church terminate support of a supported missionary during the church's three (3) year commitment for the following reasons:
 - 1) Failing to abide by any of responsibilities listed above in E, which includes committing serious moral failure or deviating from the church's Statement of Faith.
 - 2) Changing assignments, fields of ministry, or sending agencies.
 - a) Generally speaking, a change in assignment, field, or agency will not result in immediate termination of support, but will first trigger a reevaluation of support.
 - b) If a missionary is forced to leave the field for personal or other reasons, financial support may continue until the church's three (3) year commitment ends, but may not extend beyond one (1) year from the date that the missionary departs from the field. The MC must approve exceptions to this unanimously.
- c. The following steps shall be taken once the decision to terminate support has been made:
 - 1) The MC shall notify the elder and diaconate boards of the decision and the reason(s) for termination.
 - 2) Within ninety (90) days of the elder and diaconate board notification, the MC shall notify the missionary of the church's intent to terminate support, in writing if at all possible.
 - 3) The written notification shall include the reason(s) for termination and the status of the missionary's relationship with the church.
 - 4) In the event of termination when the cause is not serious moral failure or doctrinal deviation, the MC may provide temporary financial support to allow the missionary to find other supporters for a period of no longer than one (1) year.

III. Mid-Term Missions (“MTM”)

A. Purpose

1. To lend assistance and support to missionaries on the field, especially long-term missionaries supported by the church.
2. To help the MTM participant gain a better understanding of the work of missions and to solidify his/her role and responsibility in the work of missions through direct involvement.
3. The purpose and plan of each MTM trip must be reviewed and approved by the MC.

B. Definition

MTM shall be defined as those missions trips which last at least three (3) months and not more than one (1) year in duration. Any exceptions must be approved by the MC.

C. Qualifications of Participant

1. Participant must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.
2. Participant must be a mature believer in Christ who has been baptized and is a regular church attendee actively involved in the ministries of the church.
3. Participant must agree to abide by the church’s Statement of Faith.
4. Participant must be willing to be used by God in evangelism and have the desire to grow in Christ.
5. Participant must be capable and willing to carry out assignments.
6. Participant must have adequate insurance to cover emergency medical expenses while traveling and while on the field.
7. Participant must complete and submit the “Application for Mid-Term Missions Support” to the MC for review and approval at least three (3) months prior to departure. The MC must approve exceptions to this deadline.

D. Responsibility of Participant

1. Participant must adhere to biblical standards of conduct.
2. Participant must adhere to the rules and regulations of both the MC and any applicable missions organizations. Failure to adhere may result in a withdrawal of support.
3. Participant must attend any applicable training sessions prior to their trip.
4. Participant must be prepared to provide a report of their trip, either verbally or in writing, to the congregation for the purpose of encouragement and to raise awareness of missions. If requested by the team leader, a written report shall be submitted within thirty (30) days upon return from the trip.
5. Participant must be prepared to make a personal financial commitment for certain travel and field expenses according to the financial support guidelines below.

E. Responsibilities of MC

For official church trips:

1. The MC will ensure that appropriate training is provided prior to departure.
2. The MC will help to coordinate activities with any relevant missionaries in the field.
3. The MC will help to coordinate a church send-off, if appropriate.

F. Financial Support Guidelines

1. Expense Responsibility Chart

Category	Trip Type	Transportation Expense	Field Expense
A	Official Church Trips Planned by the MC	Up to 50% Covered by MC	100% Covered by MC for the First Three (3) Months of the Trip and 50% Covered for the Duration of the Trip
B	Non-Church Trips Approved by the MC	Up to 50% Covered by MC	Up to 50% Covered by MC for the Entire Trip

Participant shall be responsible for all expenses not related to the missions plan

2. Transportation Expenses

- a. Transportation expenses refer to expenses required for a participant to get onto the field of service. This includes airfare, train fare, van rental expenses, gas, etc. Transportation expenses as so defined do not include local transportation costs, which are covered under field expenses below.
- b. For domestic MTM trips, the maximum initial MC reimbursement shall be the lesser of fifty percent (50%) of the total transportation expense or \$500 per team member.
- c. For international MTM trips, the maximum initial MC reimbursement shall be the lesser of fifty percent (50%) of the total transportation expense or \$1,000 per team member.
- d. Participant is encouraged to travel directly to and from the field. Those who desire to make alternative travel arrangements for personal reasons may forfeit their right to reimbursement if the length of their personal stay exceeds twenty-five percent (25%) of the length of their mission plan (e.g., if a participant on a MTM trip of 120 days decides to extend his or her stay for 35 additional days, he or she will forfeit any right to reimbursement for transportation expenses).

3. Field Expenses

- a. Field expenses include lodging, ground transportation (insurance for rental cars is not provided), travel insurance (if deemed necessary), visa expenses (but not passport expenses), and food.
- b. For all trips that fall under category A above, the MC will support one hundred (100%) of the field expenses for the first three (3) months and fifty percent (50%) of the field expenses thereafter.
- c. For all trips that fall under category B above, the MC will support up to fifty percent (50%) of the field expenses.

4. Fundraising

- a. Participant is encouraged to solicit prayer and financial support from family and friends.
- b. Personal funds raised can be used at the discretion of the participant. However, no tax-deductible receipts will be provided by the church for these funds. Tax-deductible receipts will only be provided to supporters who give directly to the church's missions fund and consent for the funds to be used at the MC's discretion.

IV. Short-Term Ministries (“STM”)

A. Purpose

1. To lend assistance and support to missionaries on the field, especially long-term missionaries supported by the church.
2. To help the STM member gain a better understanding of the work of missions and to become aware of his/her role and responsibility in the work of missions through direct involvement.
3. The purpose and plan of each STM trip must be reviewed and approved by the MC.

B. Definition

STM trips shall be defined as those ministry trips which last at least five (5) days and not more than three (3) months in duration. Any exceptions must be approved by the MC.

C. Qualifications of Team Members

1. Team members must be over twelve (12) years of age by the date of departure. Those between twelve (12) and seventeen (17) years of age must submit written consent from a parent or legal guardian. Participants on STM trips outside of the USA must be eighteen (18) years of age or accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
 - a. Certain STM trips may be designated by the MC as “family STM trips.” On family STM trips, children of parents or legal guardians who do not meet all the qualifications outlined herein may be allowed to join the team if they are approved by the team leader and the MC according to the guidelines set forth under Section I.D.4.
 - b. Unless they meet all the qualifications of team members outlined herein, children on family STM trips will not be considered official team members but may help with various team tasks approved by the team leader. These children will be eligible for financial support as outlined below in Section F given that the team leader and MC have approved their participation on the trip.
2. Team members must be believers in Christ who have been baptized and are regular church attendees who are actively involved in the ministries of the church.
3. Team members must agree to abide by the church’s Statement of Faith.
4. Team members must be willing to be used by God in evangelism and have the desire to grow in Christ.
5. Team members must be capable and willing to carry out assignments.
6. Team members must have adequate insurance to cover emergency medical expenses while traveling and while on the field.
7. Team members must complete and submit the “Application for Short-Term Ministries” to the MC or team leader for review and approval by established deadlines.

D. Responsibilities of Team Members

1. Team members must adhere to biblical standards of conduct.
2. Team members must adhere to the rules and regulations of both the MC and any applicable missions organizations. Failure to adhere may result in expulsion from the STM team and its activities.
3. Team members must attend any applicable training sessions prior to their trip.

4. Team members must be prepared to provide a report of their trip, either verbally or in writing, to the congregation for the purpose of encouragement and to raise awareness of missions. If requested by the team leader, a written report shall be submitted within thirty (30) days upon return from the trip.
5. Team members must be prepared to make a personal financial commitment for certain travel and field expenses according to the financial support guidelines below.
6. Team members must travel with the team to and from the field. Any exceptions must be approved by the team leader prior to departure.

E. Responsibilities of MC

For official church trips:

1. The MC will ensure that an appropriate leader is designated for each team.
2. The MC will ensure that appropriate training is provided prior to departure.
3. The MC will help to coordinate activities with any relevant missionaries in the field.
4. The MC will help to coordinate a church send-off, if appropriate.

F. Financial Support Guidelines

1. Expense Responsibility Chart

Category	Trip Type	Transportation Expense	Field Expense
A	Official Church Trips Planned by the MC	Up to 50% Covered by MC	100% Covered by MC
B	Non-Church Trips Approved by the MC	Up to 50% Covered by MC	Up to 50% Covered by MC

- a. Elders or ministers on all STM teams that fall under category A above shall have one hundred percent (100%) of both their transportation and field expenses covered.
 - b. Team members shall be responsible for all expenses not related to the missions plan.
- ##### 2. Transportation Expenses
- a. Transportation expenses refer to expenses required for a team member to get onto the field of service. This includes airfare, train fare, van rental expenses, gas, etc. Transportation expenses as so defined do not include local transportation costs, which are covered under field expenses below.
 - b. Team members shall be prepared to pay for the entire amount of their transportation expenses shortly after they submit their application form. If a team member has a financial hardship, the MC will gladly consider requests for financial assistance. Transportation expense reimbursements will be processed after the completion of the trip in accordance with the policies herein.
 - c. For domestic STM trips, the maximum initial MC reimbursement shall be the lesser of fifty percent (50%) of the total transportation expense or \$500 per team member.
 - d. For international STM trips, the maximum initial MC reimbursement shall be the lesser of fifty percent (50%) of the total transportation expense or \$1,000 per team member.

- e. Team members are encouraged to travel with their team to and from the field. Those who desire to make alternative travel arrangements for personal reasons may forfeit their right to reimbursement if the length of their personal stay exceeds twenty-five percent (25%) of the length of the team's stay (e.g., if a team member on a STM trip of 10 days decides to extend his or her stay for 3 additional days, he or she will forfeit any right to reimbursement for transportation expenses). In addition, team members who choose to make additional personal travel arrangements that are not part of the team's itinerary may be disqualified from receiving any additional reimbursement for transportation expenses due to surplus funds raised.

3. Field Expenses

- a. Field expenses include lodging, ground transportation (insurance for rental cars is not provided), travel insurance (if deemed necessary), visa expenses (but not passport expenses), and food.
- b. For all trips that fall under category A above, the MC will support one hundred percent (100%) of the field expenses.
- c. For all trips that fall under category B above, the MC will support up to fifty percent (50%) of the field expenses.

4. Fundraising

- a. All teams are encouraged to solicit prayer and financial support from family and friends.
- b. Specific team fundraising activities (e.g., bake sales, lunches, car washes, etc.) should be approved by the MC and church staff.
- c. Funds raised are designated to one account shared among the team members.
- d. Surplus funds are those funds raised for STM trips above and beyond the initial MC transportation reimbursement and the total field expenses. These funds will be handled at the discretion of the MC and can be used for any of the following purposes: 1) distribution to team members for unreimbursed transportation expenses; 2) donation to STM partner organizations; and/or 3) retainment by the MC.

5. Reimbursement Example

There are six (6) members, including one (1) pastoral staff member, on STM Domestic Trip A. No alternative travel arrangements are planned. The total cost of the trip is \$800 per person, which includes \$500 for air transportation and \$300 for field expenses. The MC will guarantee reimbursement of at least \$250 per team member for air transportation as well as all \$300 in field expenses for a total of \$550. In addition, the total trip cost of \$800 for the pastoral staff member will be reimbursed. However, each team member will be required to pay for their \$500 air transportation cost upfront and will be encouraged to solicit prayer and financial support on behalf of the team. Reimbursement of that initial \$500 payment to individual team members will vary depending on the total amount raised by the team.

- a. **Scenario 1:** The team raises \$3,200. Since the total raised is less than the total initial MC transportation reimbursement and field expenses $[(\$550 \times 5) + \$800 = \$3,550]$, all non-pastoral staff members will be reimbursed \$250 each for transportation expenses, while the pastoral staff member will be reimbursed \$500.
- b. **Scenario 2:** The team raises a total of \$5,000. Since the total raised is greater than the total cost of the trip $(\$800 \times 6 = \$4,800)$, all team members will be reimbursed \$500 for their air transportation costs after the trip. The additional \$200 in surplus funds may be donated to the STM partner organization or retained by the MC.

- c. **Scenario 3:** The team raises a total of \$4,000. Since the total raised is greater than the total initial MC transportation reimbursement and field expenses [(\$550*5)+\$800=\$3,550] but less than the total cost of the trip (\$800*6=\$4,800), all non-pastoral staff members will be reimbursed at least \$250 each for transportation expenses, while the pastoral staff member will be reimbursed \$500. The additional \$450 (\$4,000-\$3,550) in surplus funds will be allocated to team members based on their individual fundraising efforts and at the discretion of the MC and team leader. Efforts will be made to allocate those surplus funds as equitably as possible.

V. Leadership Trips

A. Purpose

1. To lend assistance and support, as well as to provide pastoral care, to missionaries on the field, especially long-term missionaries supported by the church.
2. To help elders and ministers gain a better understanding of the work of missions and to become aware of his/her role and responsibility in the work of missions through direct involvement.
3. The purpose and plan of each staff trip must be reviewed and approved by the MC and the timing of trips must be planned in conjunction with church ministry needs.

B. Definition

Leadership trips shall be defined as ministry trips taken by church elders or ministers which last at least five (5) days and not more than thirty-one (31) days in duration. Any exceptions must be approved by the MC.

C. Types of Trips

Leadership trips may include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Trips to visit and encourage long-term missionaries supported by the church.
2. Trips to better understand a missions ministry that our church might consider supporting.
3. Trips to train leaders internationally.

D. Qualifications of Elder or Minister

1. The elder or minister must agree to abide by the church's Statement of Faith.
2. The elder or minister have adequate insurance to cover emergency medical expenses while traveling and while on the field.
3. The elder or minister must provide the following to the MC at least two (2) months prior to departure. The MC must approve exceptions to this deadline.
 - a. A description of the trip and its relation to missions.
 - b. A general itinerary.
 - c. A budget for transportation and field expenses.
 - d. A description of the anticipated benefit from the trip.

E. Responsibilities of Elder or Minister

1. The elder or minister must adhere to biblical standards of conduct.
2. The elder or minister must adhere to the rules and regulations of both the MC and any applicable missions organizations.
3. The elder or minister must attend any applicable training sessions prior to their trip.
4. The elder or minister must be prepared to provide a report of their trip, either verbally or in writing, to the congregation for the purpose of encouragement and to raise awareness of missions.

F. Financial Support Guidelines

1. General Policy

- a. Elders and ministers shall have one hundred percent (100%) of both their transportation and field expenses covered up to the limits expressed below.
- b. Staff elders and ministers shall be allowed up to seven (7) working days per calendar year for leadership trips. If the trip length exceeds seven (7) working days, then any additional working days will be considered paid time off. Leadership trips may also be taken during staff sabbaticals, but the two (2) month sabbatical length will not be extended.
- c. Elders and ministers shall personally pay for their expenses up front. If there is a financial hardship, the MC will gladly consider requests for financial assistance. Expense reimbursements will be processed after the completion of the trip in accordance with the policies herein.

2. Transportation Expenses

- a. Transportation expenses refer to expenses required for a team member to get onto the field of service. This includes airfare, train fare, van rental expenses, gas, etc. Transportation expenses as so defined do not include local transportation costs, which are covered under field expenses below.
- b. For domestic leadership trips, the maximum MC reimbursement shall be the lesser of the total transportation expense or \$100 per elder or minister.
- c. For international leadership trips, the maximum MC reimbursement shall be the lesser of the total transportation expense or \$2,000 per elder or minister.
- d. Elders and ministers are encouraged to travel directly to and from the field. Those who desire to make alternative travel arrangements for personal reasons may forfeit their right to reimbursement if the length of their personal stay exceeds twenty-five percent (25%) of the length of the ministry trip (e.g., if an elder or minister on a trip of 10 days decides to extend his or her stay for 3 additional days, he or she will forfeit any right to reimbursement for transportation expenses).

3. Field Expenses

- a. Field expenses include lodging, ground transportation (insurance for rental cars is not provided), travel insurance (if deemed necessary), visa expenses (but not passport expenses), and food.
- b. The MC will support one hundred percent (100%) of the field expenses for up to fourteen (14) days subject to a \$3,500 maximum.
- c. Field expenses should be reasonable. In general, they should not exceed the "Per Diem Rates" published by the U.S. General Services Administration (<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877>) or the "Maximum Travel Per Diem Allowances for Foreign Areas" published by the U.S. Department of State (https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp). Field expenses for spouses travelling with the elder or minister will also be reimbursed, subject to the maximum. Any exceptions must be approved by the MC.

VI. Special Projects

A. Purpose

The purpose of providing financial assistance for special projects is to help support long-term missions ministries who have specific project needs.

B. Procedure

1. The MC will solicit and receive requests for special projects from church-approved missionaries, missions organizations, or missions ministries in writing.
2. The MC shall make a final decision by unanimous agreement whether to grant financial support for a particular project.
3. As a general rule, the total financial support for each missionary or missions ministry shall not exceed \$5,000 per calendar year. However, exceptions to this rule can be considered for select projects. Note that this does not preclude supporting multiple missionaries serving in different missions ministries under the same mission organization.
4. The MC shall inform the church elder and diaconate boards accordingly regarding all special projects funded.
5. The MC shall strive to the best of their ability to obtain updates regarding the special projects supported.

VII. Finances

A. Executive Summary

The MC was established in 1993 and has been operating with a budget separate from the church's general funding since late 1990. In order to provide guidelines and references for the church's missions-related projects and processes, the MC first published the Missions Policy in September of 2002, and continues to update it to meet the latest requirements. However, transactions, checks and reports were manually processed prior to September of 2006. The MC finance team began to organize all of its accounting responsibilities and processes by using QuickBooks in 2007. The purpose of this section is to specify the scope of responsibility of the MC's finance team and to illustrate the processes and procedures for keeping track of all transactions and reports of the MC.

B. General Guidelines

The MC operates on a separate budget from the church. Congregation members can contribute either regularly, or with one-time offerings designated to the MC, and the church finance secretary forwards the amount of the designated funds to the MC account monthly.

All transactions and requests, such as missionary support, STM costs and reimbursements, etc. require unanimous approval from all MC members, and are expensed through the church check process with two (2) authorized signatures.

1. Signatures

There is a two (2) authorized signature requirement for requesting MC checks.

- a. All MC checks require two (2) authorized signatures. The check signatories are designated by the church governing board and cannot be the MC chairperson or the MC finance lead.
- b. A separate page that explains the usage of a list of to-be-signed checks should be attached if the total amount of all checks is over \$500. This page also requires a signature from one (1) of the signatories.

2. Check Request Policy

In general, all MC checks are processed at the beginning of the month. Check request forms can be obtained at the church office, and are to be submitted to the MC finance lead for processing prior to the end of each month.

C. Scope of Responsibility

The general responsibilities of the MC finance team are listed below.

1. Prepare missionary monthly support checks.

- a. Generate a list of missionary recipients on a monthly basis.
- b. Obtain approval signature of the list from one (1) of the signatories and file this list in the MC financial binder.
- c. Print checks and obtain signatures from two (2) authorized signatories.
- d. Mail checks to the corresponding mission organizations.

2. Manage non-recurring check requests.

- a. Review and audit non-recurring check requests.
- b. Obtain approval from signatories for reimbursement.

3. Record monthly contributions.
 - a. Obtain monthly contribution totals from church finance secretary through e-mail. Enter this amount as an accrual contribution in the records.
 - b. Print this e-mail out as a supporting document and file in the MC financial binder.
 - c. When money is transferred to the MC checking account from the church General Fund, make deposit entry to clear the accrual account.
4. Perform monthly bank reconciliation.
 - a. Obtain bank statement from church secretary and perform bank reconciliation.
 - b. File bank statement and reconciliation reports in the MC financial binder.
5. Recognize and record CD interest income when CDs mature.
6. Generate monthly financial reports.
 - a. Generate P&L, Balance Sheet and other supporting reports.
 - b. Export these reports in EXCEL format and e-mail to elders, MC members, and church secretary for review and distribution purposes.
7. Update annual budget figures in accounting system.
8. Prepare ad-hoc reports for annual meetings, missions conferences, etc.
9. Maintain archived copies to meet IRS auditing requirements.

D. Finance System Requirements

MC finance is using QuickBooks to keep track of all transactions and records. The software package runs on a Microsoft Windows platform and should adhere to general security requirements. Such effort is dedicated to achieve the following:

1. Minimize human errors in manual processing.
2. Improve accounting data and cycle integrity.
3. Improve efficiency and productivity.
4. Enforce GAAP guidelines in bookkeeping.
5. Maintain transparency of MC financial activities to the congregation.

E. Conclusion

The MC is chartered to help support the vision of the church missions program by working with the church governing board closely. At the same time, the MC plays the gatekeeper role in distributing God's funding to His global ministries prudently and swiftly. It is critical for the MC finance team to define procedures and processes that adhere to IRS regulations and policies. These assist the MC in streamlining the MC ministry and minimize delay of MC projects caused by confusion or lack of communication.

Appendices

I. Appendix A: Revision History

- A. February 1, 2008: Missions policy drafted
- B. November 19, 2015: Missions policy revised (special projects policy added)
- C. February 13, 2017: Missions policy revised (philosophy and leadership policy added)
- D. December 11, 2017: Missions policy revised (STM policy amended)
- E. April 9, 2018: Missions policy revised (STM policy clarified)
- F. June 10, 2019: Missions policy revised (special projects policy amended)
- G. June 14, 2022: Missions policy revised (reimbursement limits for transportation increased)