

Missions Policy

Article 1: Definitions

A. Missions

The essential mission is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world to those not being reached by an existing local church, so that men and women may be led to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and may be incorporated into the church for worship, fellowship, and service. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8)

B. Missionary

A missionary is one who has as their primary or part-time paid ministry the spreading of the Gospel message for the purpose of winning the lost to Christ and edifying the saints to the glory of God. Disciple-making should be the overall goal of the missionary.

Article 2: Qualifications of Missionaries

A. Mission Board Affiliation

LBC will only support those missionaries that are associated with and responsible to an organized missionary board or church.

B. Doctrinal Agreement

The individual missionary, their spouse (if applicable) and their missionary board, as well as any agency we support must be in doctrinal agreement, both in position and practice with LBC and must not hold to any other doctrines which are inconsistent with those stated our doctrinal statement.

C. Education

The missionary candidate should be fully trained and educationally prepared for his particular mission. Vocational experience will also be considered.

Missionary candidates anticipating full-time work in church planting or Christian education will be expected to have completed at least two years of formal Bible and theology training from an evangelical Bible college, Bible institute or seminary.

D. Mission Agencies

Referral from church members:

The Elder Board will consider likely candidates referred by a member of the church and who have been previously accepted by an approved mission agency. NOTE: Non-members should be active members and workers in their local church whose statement of faith is compatible with that of LBC.

Article 3: Application for Support

A. Formal Application Submission

Applications will be given to all prospective candidates who meet minimum qualifications (Article 2). This application will request the following as is appropriate in each case:

1. Statement of Salvation experience.
2. A letter of acceptance by a sending agency.
3. A letter of referral from the senior pastor or governing board chairman of their local church.
4. Complete agreement with our doctrinal statement.
5. Statement as to adequate education and preparation for the chosen field of ministry.
6. Personal data: age, marital and family status, church affiliation and health.
7. Request for financial need including summary of need and also a breakdown of support base as to number of churches and number of individuals providing support.

B. Review by Elder Board

If the Elder Board agrees that the candidate is qualified, the candidate will be invited to meet with the Elder Board. Candidates not invited will be sent a letter of explanation, or in some cases, a letter indicating possible reconsideration at a later date.

C. Congregational Approval

Upon final approval by the Elder Board the candidate may be presented to the church membership for approval.

Article 4: Support Policies

A. Determination of Support Level

Types of Ministry

Church Planting and discipleship are priorities. Other possible examples:

- Bible Translation and Distribution
- Broadcasting
- Medical
- Personal Evangelism

B. Field of Ministry

The number of already supported missionaries in a certain region may determine whether or not a specific candidate will be considered at any given time.

C. Term of Support

The support of the missionary will be for one normal term of service as prescribed by the mission organization, not to exceed five years. This policy relates to stateside missionaries as well. If there is no regular term of service, the Elder Board will consider the term of

appointment to be five years. At the end of the term of service, the Elder Board will evaluate the missionary and determine if support will be continued. NOTE: If for some reason, it is decided by the Elder Board to terminate support of the missionary, a minimum of three months notice will be given.

D. Support during Furloughs

The support of a missionary will continue for a furlough period of up to 15 months as prescribed by the mission organization. Any extensions of the furlough period will be reviewed by the Elder Board for continuation or termination of support with a recommendation to the membership for approval.

E. Support during Education Leave

A missionary may retain regular support from the church provided that:

1. The education is related to their ministry.
2. The sponsoring mission board fully supports the additional education.
3. Their ministry not be interrupted for more than one furlough year.

F. Commencement of Support

Support will begin when the missionary concludes deputation and is directed by the mission agency to regular missionary activities. If this includes formal language study or other training or preparation specifically required by their board, the support would begin upon arrival at the designated training center. Support may begin sooner under extenuating circumstances under recommendation by the Elder Board.

G. Transportation Expenses

Assistance with the cost of transporting the missionary and their belongings to the field of service may be given, if needed, by means of the special love offering.

H. One-Time Gifts

One-time gifts may be given to missionaries or mission agencies for special projects by means of a special love offering.

I. Missionary Re-assignment/Change of Mission Board

Any change in the status of a missionary will necessitate immediate re-evaluation by the elder board to determine possible change or termination in support level. The missionary is expected to notify LBC immediately when any such changes occur or are contemplated.

J. Termination of Support

The following actions will warrant consideration by the Elder Board for possible termination of support.

1. Change of mission board
2. Change in field of service
3. Leaves the field to engage in further study
4. Any changes in type of ministry

5. A failure to correspond with and visit LBC
6. Leaves the field because of illness or age

K. Terminal Leave Policy

Upon retirement or resignation, support may be terminated after 3 months or after it is determined that the support is no longer needed.

Article 5: Short Term Missions

- A. Application for short-term projects should be made to the Elder Board at least three months before departure date.
- B. The following general guidelines will be used when considering persons for short term missionary support:
 1. Generally, only members of LBC will be considered.
 2. Candidates must have been accepted by an approved mission board or organization.
 3. Reports will be required upon completion.
 4. Special consideration will be given to those who are attending or have completed Bible school or seminary training.
 5. Short-term missionaries will be expected to provide at least one-half of the necessary funds.
 6. It is expected that the candidate will be devoting their efforts on a full-time basis to the particular project or assignment.

Article 6: The Missionary's Responsibility to LBC

A. Communication

The Elder Board recognizes that communication is vital to the ongoing interest of the members of LBC. Accordingly, all missionaries will be expected to keep the church apprised of their work at least quarterly. Absence of communication from the missionary may be grounds for termination of support.

B. Furlough or Visitation Time:

All missionaries are expected to visit LBC at least once during furlough. As soon as furlough times are known, the church should be notified so that visitation can be scheduled on the church calendar.

C. Insurance for Missionaries

The sending agency will be responsible for providing insurance for the missionary and we will assist in this only as a part of our regular support.

Article 7: Financial Management

A. Transmittal of Funds

All support funds shall be transmitted monthly to the mission agency under which the missionary serves.

B. Annual Budget

The Elder Board shall prepare and recommend the missionary budget to the Finance Committee for approval.

C. Insufficient Funds

In the event there are insufficient funds available at the end of any month to meet missionary support obligations, the church treasurer shall prorate the available funds among the members of the missionary family on the basis of the amount pledged to each, under the direction of the Elder Board.

D. Honorarium and Expenses for Missionary Speakers:

1. Love Offerings – will be taken for mission presentations, reports, or special needs.
2. Pulpit Supply – will be offered for pulpit needs during Pastor's absence.

Article 8: Organization of Missions Committee

A. Responsibilities of the Missions Committee

1. Initiate and promote programs within the church to increase knowledge of and stimulate interest in world-wide missionary activity.
2. Maintain communication between the church and its missionaries and keep the church informed concerning the welfare and ministry of its missionaries.
3. Administer and evaluate the missions program
4. Report as needed to the church on matters of missionary interest
5. Stimulate the intercessory prayer of the congregation for world evangelism and for our missionaries.
6. Help stimulate and recruit volunteers for mission service.
7. Care for our missionaries on furlough.
8. Plan the annual Missions Conference.

B. Membership on Missions Committee

The Missions Committee shall consist of a chairman and at least two other members appointed by the Pastor, with the approval of the Elder Board. The Missions Secretary shall be a member of this committee.

C. Criteria for Appointment to the Missions Committee

The following guidelines will be considered when appointments are made to serve on the Missions Committee:

1. A member of LBC in good standing.
2. A commitment to missions as being a primary plan of service in the church
3. A desire to learn more about missions
4. Past experience or knowledge
5. People with a vision for missions
6. A willingness to work hard in a missionary capacity

D. Responsibilities of the Missions Committee Members

1. Attend regular and special meetings as called by the chairman
2. Pray for missionaries that the church supports on a regular basis
3. Maintain interest in communication with supported missionaries
4. Bear the burdens of the other Missions Committee members in supportive fellowship
5. Be familiar with the missions policy of the church and take an active role in the decision-making process.
6. Be responsible for overseeing the ministries of certain missionaries and organizations.
7. Be willing to accept leadership in some of the administrative aspects of our missions program (such as fellowship, hospitality, conferences, etc.)

E. Authority of the Missions Committee within the church leadership

All actions and recommendations of the Missions Committee will be subject to the approval of the Elder Board.