

FBC MISSIONS MANUAL 2020



How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in?
And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard?
And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written,
“How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Romans 10:14-15

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First Baptist Church Missions Manual—2020

Vision: To be uniquely used of God in missional efforts, foreign and domestic, to carry out the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 10:2; John 20:21; Acts 1:8).

Manual: We have created a missions' manual with the intent of providing a guideline for making decisions relative to FBC's engagement in missions. The manual will include the role of the missions' committee and expectations of missionaries, mission agencies and FBC as we join together in Kingdom work. Exceptions to this manual require agreement amongst the missions' committee and elders. Policies will be reviewed every 5 years.

Missions Committee:

1. The missions' committee will consist of at least 5 members of FBC who demonstrate spiritual maturity, an interest in missions, and dependability. At least one of the members will be an elder.
2. Members will be responsible to attend meetings of the committee; be familiar with the mission policy of FBC; pray regularly for our supported missionaries; attend missions-related services of the church, and assume and carry out roles as occasionally delegated.
3. The chairman of the committee and members of the committee will commit to a minimum of 3 years of service.
4. Committee members are not to initiate any major course of action without first consulting the rest of the committee.

Scope of Missions:

- A. Foreign missions: A priority for our missions' effort is to engage with unreached people groups where there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their own people without requiring outside (cross-cultural) assistance. We recognize that a wide variety of ministry opportunities exist (church planting, leadership development, medical missions, tangible helps, education, etc.). Our only stipulation is that the missions' effort contribute to the addition and growth of local churches.

We believe that people should be called out for His name from all the nations (Matt 28:19-20; Luke 24:45-47; Rev 5:9). "And repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning in Jerusalem." Luke 24:27.

- B. Local and U.S. ministries: We recognize there are opportunities to serve locally (more commonly through agencies), contributing to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of our community. We prefer to be involved in efforts where FBC members are already actively involved and which lend to evangelistic and/or discipleship opportunities. We recognize there are unique opportunities elsewhere in the U.S. which may be considered for support.

- C. Short term missions: We encourage FBC to participate in short term mission opportunities. These opportunities allow participants to learn about and experience missions first hand. We hope that participants develop a lifelong interest in missions, and that some might even feel the call of God to engage in missions full time.
- D. Tent makers: There is certainly biblical precedent for this strategy (II Thess. 3:8-9; Acts 18:1-3). Bi-vocational efforts may be a way of obtaining entry into “closed” countries.
- E. Nationals: Potential difficulties with direct support to nationals includes accountability, dependency and fiscal regulation (the IRS requires that financial support only be given through organizations with tax-exempt status in the U.S.). For these reasons, it would not normally be our practice to directly support national workers.

Missionary Candidates:

Persons interested in receiving support from FBC as missionaries will need to exemplify the following qualifications:

1. A personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Evidence of past commitment and dedication to Christ through works of service.
3. A satisfactory explanation of God’s leading and call upon their life.
4. Evidence of Christian character.
5. A personal desire and commitment to see individuals come to faith in Christ.
6. Acceptance by a mission agency recognized by the church (doctrinally in agreement with FBC, fiscally responsible, track record of providing adequate direction and resources for missionaries).
7. Evidence of the candidates’ passion and aptitude (education, spiritual gifts, motivation) for the proposed task. Availability and need do not in themselves create a fruitful ministry context or wise ministry investment.
8. Wise stewardship of financial resources.

Procedure:

1. Missionary expresses interest in partnering with FBC. Communication should be directed to senior pastor and chair of the missions’ committee.
2. Missions’ committee will review information and if interested in proceeding, will request more information about the missionary, ministry opportunity and mission agency.
3. If there is a desire to move forward the missions’ committee will obtain references from the sending church and sending agency and then interview the candidate.

4. The missions' committee and church elders will decide whether or not to recommend the missionary to the church for support.
5. If favorable, the missionary will come and present to the church.
6. After further assessment and sufficient time for prayerful consideration, the missionary may be voted on by the congregation.
7. Financial support for a missionary does not usually begin until the latter part of pre-field ministry.

Short Term Missions:

1. Short term mission experiences are usually less than 3 months in duration. If the experience is to last longer than 3 months but less than 2 years (long, short term) the missions' committee will decide how to best handle the role of "sending church". Any experience over 2 years will be considered long term.
2. Candidates should show evidence of consistent Christian character and have a desire to learn more about missions. They should have an opportunity which will allow them to serve and learn.
3. Candidates will present their short term opportunity initially to the senior pastor and missions' chair. Subsequently, candidate will be invited to share their opportunity with the entire missions' committee. The missions' committee and church elders will then decide whether or not to support the short term mission.
4. FBC will provide financial support for any short term trip that we approve. The deacons will be asked to open a specific fund for contributions toward the trip. Members of FBC, friends, family, and the short termers themselves will be able to contribute to the trip through this fund.

Responsibility of FBC to missionaries:

- A. Prayer support. It is our responsibility to uphold our missionaries/agencies in prayer. The church is to be kept up to date with the needs of our missionaries/agencies so we can pray knowledgably. A portion of all missions' committee meetings will be allocated to prayer.
- B. Encouragement / Communication. We encourage attendees of FBC to get to know our missionary family. Examples might include: Making an effort to greet them when they visit, taking a prayer card and keeping it posted at home, and signing up for their prayer letters. One might send an encouraging note and inquire on an occasional basis about their ministry, family and general well-being. As a church, we will provide an update of our ministry annually to FBC supported missionaries, which is usually included with our annual Christmas card to them.
- C. Sending Church Role: FBC would serve as the sending church for any member of FBC who has successfully completed the steps of qualification. Such a person should develop a mentorship relationship with the senior pastor early in the discovery process of seeking a missions' opportunity. As a sending church, FBC would desire to supply 25% of the needed financial

support. This would apply to any mission experience extending beyond a 3 month commitment. For long term missionaries, FBC would also be responsible for providing tangible help with communications and furlough needs. A higher level of accountability would exist whereby the leadership of FBC is consulted regarding strategic decision making.

- D. Supporting church role. FBC will strive to provide up to 10% of the needed financial support for those missionaries who are sent by another church.
- E. Outfit and passage. Missionaries going to a field, particularly for the first time, may have additional expenses for language acquisition, housing and transportation. The missions' committee will consider how we can partner with other supporters in meeting those needs. Options include use of money from the missions' assistance fund and opening a specially designated fund for donations (with approval from FBC deacons).
- F. Missionary Reviews: The missions' committee will seek to review the ministry of our missionaries at least every 4 years. The review will include information obtained from the missionaries as well as their agencies. A personal interview will follow if feasible.

The missions' committee will also review any major changes in the missionary's status (location or role). A determination will be made as to continued partnership with the missionary.

A review of support levels (as reported by mission agencies) for our missionaries will take place before budget planning at the end of FBC's fiscal year. Adjustments in support will be considered as funds are available.

- G. Emergency Needs: The Missions' Assistance Fund is a budgeted item and provides for missionaries in special circumstances. Requests should be forwarded to the missions' committee.

Expectations of FBC missionaries:

1. As wise stewards of our resources, we expect our missionaries to be diligent workers (I Corinthians 15:58).
2. We view our relationship with our missionaries as a partnership. Partnerships require regular communication. We ask that our missionaries communicate to FBC ministry updates and prayer requests at least 3 times per year. We would hope that travel plans in the US would include sharing and fellowshiping with FBC.
3. Any major changes in role or location should be communicated to FBC before such changes actually occur.
4. We expect that missionaries are saving for retirement and will not be dependent on our support during retirement years. From our perspective, financial support from FBC is likely to cease at the time of retirement eligibility. Exceptions may occur.
5. Should an emergency need arise, please communicate with the missions' committee.

6. Inform the missions' committee of financial changes that effect regular support needs (increase or decrease).

Revision/Cessation of Support:

1. FBC reviews its missions' budget on an annual basis, and reserves the right to adjust levels of support in keeping with the mission and vision of FBC.
2. FBC will customarily cease support in the same year as retirement occurs.
3. Reduction in support from FBC may occur should missionary receive funds that reduce dependency on church/individual support (social security, inheritance, large donations).
4. FBC will consider discontinuation of support in the event that missionary is unable to continue in their role.
5. Should a change in role or location take place FBC will evaluate whether or not to continue support.