

Grace Community Presbyterian Church

Missions of Grace (MoG)

Policy Manual

A. Philosophy of Missions

A-1 Definition of Missions:

Vision:

That God be glorified through the proclamation of the Gospel regionally and globally through the outworking of our faith.

Mission:

The primary goal of missions in the Church, which is God's possession and the body of Christ, is to bring God glory (1 Peter 2:9-10) by the proclamation of the gospel to all peoples (Mt 28:18-20) and the building up of the saints (Eph 4:11-13).

A-2 Scriptural purpose of GCPC's involvement in Missions

1. The primary purpose of missions is the *glory of God*

Psalm 83:18 Let them know that you, whose name is the LORD-- that you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

Psalm 72:17-19 May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed. Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.

Habakkuk 2:14 For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Ezekiel 38:23 And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

Ephesians 1:9-12 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,

in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

1 Corinthians 15: 24-25, 28 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet... When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

2. The establishment and upbuilding of the Church is a part of the overall purpose of bringing glory to God.

Matthew 7:24-27 “Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Ephesians 1:22, 23 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Ephesians 2:20-22 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

James 1:22-23 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror.

3. The proclamation of the gospel and the conversion of the nations are a necessary part of the upbuilding of the Church.

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make

disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Colossians 1:13, 14 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

2 Corinthians 5:11 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

2 Corinthians 5:14, 15 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

A-3 Philosophy of Ministry

Mission Statement

Missions of Grace (MoG) exists to build deep and meaningful relationships with supported missionaries and create a vibrant, active, and informed culture of missions within our church body through an ongoing focus on local, regional, and global missions efforts.

Core Values:

- Missionary commitment to reformed theology
- Commitment to foundational doctrine and documents of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)

A-4 Definition of Missionaries

Every Christian is called in different ways to proclaim the gospel and build up the saints. A Missionary is someone who is sent by the risen Lord and the local church. MoG exists to support the following categories of missionaries:

- 1) Vocational missionary: Someone who receives substantially all of their financial support from donations
- 2) Bi-vocational missionary (AKA Tentmaker): Someone who receives most of their financial income from a secular vocation for the purpose of proclaiming the gospel
- 3) Short-term missionary: Someone who sets aside a determinate period of time (< 1yr) to proclaim the gospel

B. Authority, scope, and priorities for Missions of Grace (MoG)

B-1 Decision making

- Decisions requiring the Session approval:
 - All new support requests must be approved by the Session.
 - MoG will make the Session aware of the vote (# for & # against) on all recommendations. If there was meaningful disagreement, this should be explained to the session.
 - MoG will provide a summary to the Session of MoG discussion prior to the vote for Session consideration.
 - Any changes to current financial missionary support
- Decisions MoG can make without the Session approval:
 - Engagement with missionaries & ministries already approved
 - Exploration / contact of potential new missionaries/ministries
 - Engaging the congregation about approved missionaries & organizations

B-2 Responsibilities of MoG

- Making recommendations to the Session for new missionary support
- Setting specific sub-goals to accomplish the overall purposes of the Church regarding missions.
- Oversight of supported missionaries
- Promotion & education of Missions in the GCPC community
- Relationship building & continuance of supported missionaries
- Keeping the Session informed

- Making recommendations to support new missionaries and maintaining relationships with all local, regional, national, and global potential or supported missionaries including all ministries under MTW, MNA, and RUF

B-3 Priorities

Geographic priorities: We do not prioritize between global, national and local missions. While we don't prioritize location, we do prioritize support based on their home church in the order listed:

- 1) GCPC
- 2) Churches in the North Texas Presbytery
- 3) Churches in Adjoining Presbyteries
- 4) Other churches

B-4 Deep Relationships

GCPC seeks to have deep relationships with supported missionaries beyond financial support. One way to achieve deeper relationships is by sending members to visit our missionaries. Experiencing God's mission first hand also benefits our members' walk with God. Therefore, supporting missionaries where travel is feasible is a priority.

In addition, we should not support more missionaries than we are able to maintain deep relationships with.

C. Approval & support of missionaries

C-1 Approval of Mission Agencies

The Missions agencies of the Presbyterian Church in America are by definition approved mission agencies. Mission agencies with which Mission to the World has a cooperative agreement are also approved mission agencies.

For all other agencies the following procedure and criteria will be used for evaluation and approval:

1. The doctrinal statement of the agency will be examined. Where it is not in accord with the doctrinal position of GCPC, the agency should be asked to supply written explanations of its position. The agency should only be approved if GCPC can cooperate with them without compromising its doctrinal position.
2. The purpose and long-range plans of the agency should be reviewed. As far as the committee is able, it should evaluate whether the agency is actually accomplishing its purpose on the field.
3. Consideration should be given to whether the agency evidences good stewardship of its resources and whether it is financially accountable to an independent board.

Specifically, does the agency belong to the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA)?

4. Information should be obtained about the history of the agency. This should include:
 - a. How long has the agency been in existence?
 - b. What ministries has the agency been involved in and where?
 - c. How effective have these ministries been?

C-2 Requirements for supported missionaries

Missionaries supported by GCPC must be committed to Reformed theology. If the missionary will be involved in teaching, preaching or church planting, he must subscribe to the same standards required of church officers. That is, he must respond affirmatively to the following questions:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine found in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to MoG the change which has taken place in your views?
3. Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of Biblical polity?
4. Do you accept your commission as a missionary sent or supported by this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the church of which God has appointed you a missionary?
5. Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
6. Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity, and edification of the church?

Additionally, if the missionary is to function in the capacity of Teaching Elder, he must be an ordained Teaching Elder in accordance with BCO 20-12 or BCO 20-13 or its equivalent.

If the missionary is to work in a supporting capacity, for example, in administration, maintenance or as a translator, they must respond positively to questions 1, 4, 5, and 6 above. They should also be able to state clearly their understanding of the gospel and the work of God in their lives. This statement should indicate a Reformed theological base.

1. Submit themselves to the provision of ongoing spiritual, financial, and prayer support.
2. To continue through MoG and in conjunction with the mission board to provide counseling, encouragement, and within their power, to monitor effectiveness on the field.

C-3 Missionary application process

Prospective missionaries shall complete and submit an application for support to MoG to be reviewed by the committee. The application is to aid in determining missionary fit to MoG's policy & priorities.

After approval of the application, MoG will schedule an interview with the candidate. The purpose of the interview is to assess the applicant's spiritual, financial, doctrinal, and philosophical fitness. In addition, the committee should also assess how GCPC members can be involved in the mission (see section B-4).

If approved for support, the support term will be fixed and support will be reviewed at the end of each term by MoG.

C-4 Missionary's relationship to GCPC

GCPC expects the missionaries that it supports to maintain regular contact with GCPC through MoG. This includes periodic news or prayer letters reporting the status of their work. When the missionary is in the United States on furlough, he is expected to visit GCPC at least once. The purpose of the correspondence and visits is to allow the congregation to know the missionary and his work better. This will encourage and enable the congregation to more faithfully support the missionary's work financially and in prayer.

MoG shall assign a liaison to each supported missionary for official communication purposes, including support decision(s). This does not preclude informal spiritual and emotional support from the congregation.

Failure to meet the communication expectations may result in discontinuation or reduction in support from GCPC.

C-5 Priorities for supported Missionaries

Based on the relationship of the Church at Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, and later Paul and Silas, we believe that the churches in a specific region (presbytery) are responsible for sending out missionaries from that region (see Acts 13-20).

In adopting this strategy, it is the express purpose of GCPC to encourage all the other churches in the North Texas Presbytery to take a similar position. The results of such a stand will be:

1. Missionaries on Home Ministry Assignment will not have to travel great distances to visit their supporting churches. This will reduce the funds and efforts that such extensive travel requires.
2. The presbytery will feel a sense of "ownership" and responsibility for the missionaries.
3. The missions' effort of the presbytery will be more focused and coordinated as all the churches will be involved with care for many of the same missionaries

C- 6 Priorities for Support of Church Planting

1. Daughter churches of GCPC.
2. Church Planting efforts by MNA in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex or Counties: Tarrant, Dallas, Wise, Denton, Parker, Johnson, Ellis, etc.
3. Church Planting efforts by MNA in our Presbytery.
4. Church Planting efforts by MNA in Texas.
5. Church Planting efforts by MNA in the U.S.

C-7 Priorities for support of additional domestic and foreign Missionaries

1. Members of GCPC seeking service with MTW, MNA, or agencies with which MTW or MNA have cooperative agreements.
2. Members of GCPC seeking to serve with other Reformed agencies.
3. Members of North Texas Presbytery seeking service with MTW, MNA, or agencies with which MTW or MNA have cooperative agreements
4. Reformed missions efforts/missionaries approved by MoG and the GCPC Session.

C-8 Financial considerations of an individual Missionary

1. If either the husband or wife of a missionary couple is a member of GCPC, they will both be considered as members for support purposes.
2. A financial support calculation table has been created in order to aid the committee in determining appropriate financial support of missionaries. In general, the closer aligned with GCPC, the higher the support level. It is a guide only, not a rulebook. The criteria places weight from the following categories:
 - a. Origin (home base geographic area)
 - b. Theology

- c. Mission
- d. Link to matrix calculator here:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1KOsVa7jsSQ7dQy7oP2gDg-0rh6ngdLND/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=102688534494257991708&rtpof=true&sd=true>

3. Because we desire for the mission activities of our church to be personal in nature, and because we desire to be good stewards of the resources of our congregation, as a general rule we will support fewer missionaries, but more substantially.
4. If a missionary visit to GCPC incurs incremental cost, GCPC will consider reimbursement and strive to defray cost of travel by providing meals and hosting when visiting GCPC.

C-9 Goals for Missionary Development

GCPC encourages members who are seeking the Lord's will in their lives regarding missions as a vocation to pursue that calling. GCPC will also encourage members to consider summer or short-term missionary service with approved boards. The Session and/or MoG provide information and counsel to prospective missionaries . As evidence of this support GCPC commits itself, through MoG, to prospective missionaries as follows:

1. To participate in prayer with any GCPC member seeking God's will in his or her life with regard to a missionary vocation.
2. To counsel, encourage, and provide opportunities to minister in ways designed to strengthen the candidate's abilities.
3. To assess and evaluate the candidate's gifts and calling to missions and to either recommend or discourage them in pursuing further assessment by an approved missions board. (For clarification of approved mission boards, see section regarding “Approval of Missions Agencies” above)
4. To assist an approved candidate, MoG will guide him/her in the application process to an approved mission board.
5. To commission the accepted candidate and to communicate regularly with them.

C-10 Termination/Reduction of support of Mission agencies or Missionaries

1. Reduction of support - If there is no wrong doing, careful consideration of the level of support that MoG provides should be taken into account. When reasonable, communication of the reduction in support should be made in advance prior to the reduction of support. Also, a gradual reduction in support may be

- considered over time. A target of six (6) months notice should be given. Notice should also be given to the Session.
2. Termination of support - If there is no wrong doing, following the reduction of support strategy stated above should be followed.
 3. Termination of support with cause - If there is wrong doing, then MOG should strive to ensure that proper care is in place for the missionary(ies) receiving support before support is removed. Once care has been considered, a plan for termination of support should be communicated. A target of six (6) months notice should be given. Notice should also be given to the Session. Future support will require reapplication.

C-11 Short-term missions

Supported missionaries on less than one year trips will not be permitted to date other members of their team. In addition, so that the individual can focus on their mission, short-term missionaries are discouraged from seeking to enter into new romantic relationships.

C-12 Financial support of missions teams

Whenever possible, GCPC will seek to fund the transportation costs and 50% of the direct fees for missions teams. Individuals are expected to pay the remaining 50% of the fees and costs; however, lack of funds should never be the primary reason for not participating in a trip and each trip and member can be handled on a case-by-case basis.

D. Committee Structure

MoG will be composed of a Chairperson, and members in good standing of GCPC, and will report directly to and under the oversight of the Session. The GCPC Session will appoint at least one Teaching Elder or Ruling Elder who will serve, ex officio, as the Elder Liaison between MoG and the Session.

D-1 The Chairperson of MoG will

1. Be primarily responsible for the overall management of MoG, as described in this policy. The Chairperson will be approved by the Session and will serve a 2-year term, which may be renewed with the Session's approval.
2. Chair the MoG meetings and provide oversight for any and all MoG sub-committees.
3. Together with the Elder Liaison, communicate with the Session on all missions-related topics or questions and will work in cooperation with them and be accountable to them.
4. Provide oversight and leadership of MoG, stimulate creativity and organizational efficiency in missions-related matters, and foster missions involvement at GCPC by working with MoG to carry out the responsibilities listed below:

a. Responsibilities to the missionaries:

- To set up a network within the church body for specifically and efficiently maintaining contact with our missionaries so we will know their status and needs at all times. This involves regular reading of prayer letters, media posts, and emails received and coordination of written responses sent. This also includes oversight of contacts made with the individual mission agencies under which our missionaries serve.
- To consider financial support commensurate with our missionaries' needs and our church's resources. We will seek to show good stewardship in determining our response to the many pressing needs of missionaries that arise in a given year and in consolidating support for missionaries in our presbytery and for those we currently support to help reduce their travel time during Home Ministry Assignment.
- To provide organizational oversight and formulate a coordinated network for stimulating intercessory prayer for missionaries by the church corporately and individually. This involves setting up a structure of informed people who can coordinate missionary prayer efforts through the appropriate channels in our church (bulletin prayer lists, submitting prayer needs for missionaries for our corporate prayer services, social media, etc.)
- To schedule interviews with viable missionaries.

b. Responsibilities to the congregation:

- To identify a variety of means of keeping the congregation informed of the progress and needs of the missionaries which GCPC supports.
- To foster the education of the congregation about missions--both the biblical mandate for it and the actual functioning of missions on the field.
- Develop in the congregation a spirit of involvement in missions, namely personal witness, a world vision for God's glory, and intercessory prayer.
- Identify opportunities for our members to participate in missions activities.
- To propose, oversee and manage the annual mission budget as approved by the Session; and to make any recommendations for needed changes to that budget.

D-2 Missions Committee Government

All officers are elected by MoG from members of MoG with the exception of the elder liaison:

1. The Chairperson's responsibilities are:
 - a. preparing the agenda for all MoG meetings
 - b. directing recruitment of people to serve on MoG and its sub-committees
 - c. appointing the sub-committee chairpersons, coordinating and overseeing the work of the sub-committees and serving as an ex-officio member of all sub-committees
 - d. overseeing the review and maintenance of the MoG Policy Manual. This includes assuring that the updated master copy is maintained in the church office.
2. The Recording Secretary's responsibilities are:
 - a. taking minutes at meetings
 - b. submitting the typed minutes to the Chairperson prior to the next meeting.
 - c. Submitting approved minutes to the Session.
3. The Treasurer's responsibilities are:
 - a. Preparing the budget to submit to the Session
 - b. Tracking actual expenses compared to the approved budget and reporting on a periodic basis to the committee
4. Elder Liaison – Appointed by the Session. The Elder Liaison's responsibilities are:
 - a. To be as consistent as possible in attending scheduled MoG meetings
 - b. Advising the Chairperson and MoG on the Session direction/views, or where the Session input/approval is needed
 - c. Together with Chairperson, updating the Session on MoG regularly in person no less than once per year.

D-3 MoG Members

The number of persons serving on MoG shall be set by the Committee according to need. MoG is responsible for nominating members to serve on MoG. The members of MoG should be representatives of various ages, backgrounds and both sexes. Nominees shall be only those members of GCPC who have demonstrated:

- a. Spiritual maturity
- b. Active church participation
- c. Understanding of Reformed theology
- d. Authentic interest in missions' activities

The Session shall approve all nominees for MoG membership.

D-4 Term of MoG membership

Each member of MoG agrees to serve a term of two years, which is renewable upon the approval of the Session. MoG membership may, at MoG's discretion, be divided into groups with overlapping terms of service to assure continuity on MoG.

Members are expected to attend at least 75% of monthly meetings in a calendar year. Failure to attend the minimum number of meetings will result in being considered for disqualification by MoG.

D-5 MoG Meetings

Meeting frequency

MoG will meet no less than once a quarter, on a day suitable for members of MoG. Members shall be notified in advance by the Chairperson.

Quorum

A quorum consists of 50% or more of active MoG members.

Voting

A quorum must be present at a meeting to hold a vote.

MoG should strive for approval by as close to unanimity as possible. Major decisions, such as decisions relating to the beginning or ending of a relationship with a missionary or church plant, should be approved by significant majority (75 percent or more) of MoG. If the opposing members desire to send their concerns to the Session, the MoG recommendation shall include a brief statement from the opposing members.

D-6 Sub-Committees

Any GCPC member in good standing may serve on one of the sub-committees of MoG or assist MoG in a volunteer capacity. The purpose of any sub-committee is to establish a group whose specific focus is fulfilling one of the duties of MoG (for example, "communications" or "missionary hosting"). Each sub-committee may have as many members as is necessary for the efficient performance of its assigned functions. Sub-

committees will be formed as needed. MoG shall report to the Session members of sub-committees no less than once per year.

E. Mission Speakers

Mission speakers should be Reformed in theology, but if their missiological contribution is outstanding and God's blessing on their work is obvious, then non-Reformed, but evangelical, speakers will be considered. However, if the speaker is to proclaim the Word of God at a regularly scheduled worship service, he must be an ordained teaching elder or have an equivalent position in another denomination.

Each mission speaker will be reimbursed for his own and his family's travel expenses and be paid an honorarium for their services.

GCPC is not obligated to the ongoing support of a missionary just because that person is allowed or requested to present their work to the congregation.

F. Policy interpretation & changes

F-1 Flexibility of Policy Interpretation

It is our intention that these policies be followed. However, we recognize that the complexities of mission work in the modern world may warrant exceptions. Such situations will be considered on a case by case basis by the Session, considering the recommendation and counsel of MoG.

F-2 Policy Changes

This Policy was adopted by the Session of GCPC and is current as of 10/24/2022. The Session may, at any time, make changes to this policy and communicate such changes to MoG. MoG may recommend changes to this Policy to the Session, by describing in a written communication to the Session any such recommendations, and the reasons why such changes are necessary or advisable. The Session of GCPC will consider such recommendations, and communicate its decision and any approved changes.