



# HOW TO CREATE A MISSIONS COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

Every church has a unique calling, gifting and position to share the Gospel around the world. Because of that, it is hard to write a “one-size-fits-all” missions handbook, so instead of prescribing a certain set of ideals, the following pages are designed to guide leaders in your church in designing a missions committee ready to engage in what God is calling your congregation to accomplish.

There are four basic sections of this missions committee handbook: definition of missions, a missions committee’s purpose, a missions committee’s objectives and missions policies. The temptation is to get overwhelmed and feel like you have to come up with everything all at once, but we encourage you to take this one step at a time. At one meeting, discuss your definition of missions and how missions ties into the Church’s calling. Next time you meet, talk about the purpose of the committee, and so on.

## MISSION STATEMENT AND DEFINITION OF MISSIONS

By defining your church’s purpose and definition of missions, you are uniting the committee around what they have in common. They are pursuing God’s calling for your church, and will clearly be able to see what falls under the heading of “missions” at your church.

Every decision, from which missionaries to support, to what projects to bring before the congregation, to what to spend their time in meetings on, will flow from the definition of “missions” given to both the committee and the congregation.

To define your church’s view of missions, consider the following:

- ▶ How is missions defined in Scripture?
- ▶ What causes something to cross over from a “good deed” to missions work?
- ▶ Will your missions committee oversee both local and global missions?
- ▶ Does benevolence work fall under the missions committee’s jurisdiction, or is that separate?



## MISSIONS COMMITTEE'S PURPOSE

The missions committee's purpose is what they seek to accomplish. We recommend having a standing statement about what role a missions committee fills in the church and why it is important for them to lead the congregation when it comes to engaging in missions.

We generally like to define a missions committee's purposes in terms of the "3 E's": **education**, **encouragement** and **engagement**. Missions committees educate the congregation on what God is doing around the world, encourage missionaries through intentional missionary care and help the congregation engage in missions locally and globally.

## MISSIONS COMMITTEE'S OBJECTIVES

Objectives are the goals the committee hopes to accomplish over a set period of time. Without goals, meetings can simply become a rehashing of previous conversations. Setting objectives before the committee helps each member contribute to the church's vision and calling.

The missions committee has both of the important task of defining what God is calling your congregation to, as well as helping your congregation engage in that calling.

For instance, let's say that, after prayer, the missions committee feels like God is calling their church to go on its first mission trip. The missions committee has then put words to their church's calling, and now they can move toward planning and promoting the first trip.

To determine your objectives, prayerfully consider the following:

- ▶ How many missionaries would your church like to send in the next five years?
- ▶ In order to send those missionaries, how would your budget/missionary care plan/committee need to adapt?
- ▶ How can your church make an impact on your community over the next five years?
- ▶ How can your church make an impact in the global community?
- ▶ What would you like every member of your congregation to know regarding your missions goals?

## MISSIONS POLICIES

"Policy" can feel like a stuffy word, but setting missions policies as a church allows your congregation to use its resources responsibly. A great missions policy doesn't set a barrier between your church and missionaries. On the contrary, an effective policy will allow your church to engage on a deeper level with the organizations and missionaries it supports, and vice versa.



Another important role of a missions committee policy is to define what types of ministry your church will support. This can mean financial, emotional, and spiritual support as well as how ministries will be promoted within your church.

Some policies to develop may include:

### **Missions Partner Qualifications:**

- ▶ What organizations and individuals is your church connected to?
- ▶ What must be true of all of your church's missions partners?
- ▶ Will certain types of ministries be encouraged over others?
- ▶ Do missionaries you support need to be members of your church? Any other suggested requirements (i.e. a meeting with the pastor, a member of a small group, etc.)?

### **Missionary Care Plan:**

- ▶ How can you encourage your missionaries?
- ▶ How can you encourage your congregation to pray for missionaries?
- ▶ Can you set aside time and resources to visit your missionaries?
- ▶ When they are in the country, how can you facilitate your congregation in connecting with them?
- ▶ How can you involve the entire congregation in caring for your missionaries?

### **Financial Support Policy**

- ▶ How can you use your resources to fulfill the calling God has given your church?
- ▶ How long can you commit to financially supporting a missionary or organization?
- ▶ Is there anything you request from a partner in order to continue support, such as a monthly newsletter or yearly report?
- ▶ Is there anything that would make you discontinue support?

### **Short-Term Trip Policy**

- ▶ Who can attend a short-term trip through your church?
- ▶ Who can lead a short-term trip through your church?
- ▶ Are you able to financially support those going on short-term trips?
- ▶ What kind of training will be required for those attending a short-term trip?