

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Mission Handbook**

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Missions Policy

I. PURPOSE

A. Definitions

Benevolence

Benevolence is defined as Good Shepherd Lutheran Church's tithe to our Lord Jesus Christ. The tithe is 10% of the congregation's giving to general fund. Benevolence will include not only helping to provide for the needs of the members within Good Shepherd (food, shelter, utilities), but also provide funding for missions as defined below.

Mission

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (GSLC) affirms the definition of missions to be any evangelistic endeavor that primarily benefits people outside our local congregation to fulfill the Great Commission by proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, making disciples and gathering these disciples into local congregations, while relating to the needs of the total person (spiritual, physical, emotional, and social).

B. Purpose statement

The goal of our mission effort is to win individuals to the Lord, equip them in the faith and establish churches that have the same aim in every tribe, tongue, people and nation. (Acts 14:21-23, Rev. 5:9). The mission team shall seek to guide GSLC in light of this purpose statement.

C. The Missions Policy

1. Purpose—The purpose of the missions policy shall be to:
 - a. Provide guidelines to stay on a straight course;
 - b. Avoid making important decisions on an emotional or haphazard basis;
 - c. Maintain consistency as team membership changes;
 - d. Insure good stewardship in the allocation of missions funds and benevolence.

2. Exceptions—This policy is a statement of principles, not a rigid set of rules. Occasionally, exceptions will need to be made. When that occurs, two-thirds of the missions team needs to be in favor of the exception. The Financial Trustee also must approve the proposal.
3. Revisions—The missions policy shall be reviewed and revised as often as needed, with a thorough review every odd numbered year. Revisions will then be submitted to the Financial Trustee.

II. THE MISSION COMMITTEE

A. Size and Selection

The mission committee shall consist of 5 to 8 members including the chairperson. The committee members shall be selected by the board of trustees and they will appoint a chairperson. The Financial Trustee will consult with the current mission chairperson on all selections.

B. Term of Office

Each member is to serve for a minimum one year term. Ideally the person will serve for many years.

C. Chairperson

This individual is responsible for the proper functioning of the mission committee. The chairperson will act as the communication liaison between the Pastoral Staff and the Board of Trustees. The chairperson will also provide evaluations of the mission committee members to assist the Board of Trustees in their appointment of the mission committee members.

D. Expectations

Members of the team are expected to:

1. Attend the meetings, with a minimum of two thirds of the meetings attended;
2. Serve on task forces as assigned;
3. Take an active role in the decision-making process;
4. Continue to learn about world evangelism;
5. Devote their energy to furthering the missions program at our church.
6. Participate in a mission trip.

E. Responsibilities

1. Pray—Encourage intercession from the congregation for world evangelism and for our missionaries.
2. Educate—Assist in providing a comprehensive missions education program for our entire congregation. This will include information about the world, our missionaries and the GSLC missions program.
3. Recruit/train—Select and assist in the equipping of members of our constituency to become missionaries.
4. Send—Support missionaries spiritually, financially and emotionally during their term of service.
5. Care—provide practical assistance to missionaries while they are on their field and home assignments.
6. Support—Prepare a missions budget and oversee the allocation of the funds throughout the year.
7. Represent—serve as a liaison between the church, its missionaries and mission agencies.
8. Evaluate—Review the missions program of the church and make changes as necessary. This includes evaluating the mission policy statement, as well as the continuation of support for a missionary and mission agencies.

III. STRATEGY

A. Goals

The mission committee shall seek to establish short and long range goals for their various responsibilities in dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

B. Priorities

Recognizing that there will always be more needs than we can fulfill, the following is meant to assist us in our decision making.

We have a two-fold mission strategy: mobilization and global evangelization. Mobilization includes our efforts to help our people become more missions active. This is primarily accomplished through cross-cultural ministry. Global evangelization includes our efforts to help complete the Great Commission. While there is overlap between the two, we have different goals for each category.

1. Mobilization Priorities

- a. Ministries sponsored by our church. This includes church short-term teams or any other cross-cultural ministries we initiate.
- b. Ministries sponsored by individuals from our church and endorsed by us.
- c. Other.

2. Global Evangelization Priorities

- a. Missionary support: Priority will be given to members of GSLC first and missionaries from our region serving with the LCMC second.
- b. Strategic Partnerships: These ministries are more encompassing than primarily the giving of funds. Here, our church commits to be an active partner in a particular ministry. This may involve sending short-term teams, hosting or attending conferences, sending our pastor to a site on a yearly basis, etc.
- c. Strategic Ministry Support: This category is for those opportunities where we can make a difference for the kingdom of God, regardless of any relationship or benefit to our church. We assist because it is strategic. We might not have any involvement other than giving. We may never see the missionary or national we support. This support could be for people or projects that are outside of our congregation.

3. Church Priorities

- a. Priority will be given to church planting and to teaching of nationals.
- b. Priority will be given to those who have least access to the Gospel (traditionally called unreached peoples).
- c. Priority will be given to urban work.
- d. Priority will be given to the sending of missionaries from/or to other countries.
- e. Priority will be given to mission mobilization.

C. Future Missions Budget Projections

It is our desire over a period of years for the missionary support segment of our missions budget to approximate the following percentages:

USA 35%

Mono-cultural Evangelism/Church Planting 10%
Ethnic Evangelism/Church Planting 20%
Support Ministries 5%

OUTSIDE USA 65%

Evangelism/Church Planting 20%
Teaching Nationals 20%
Missions Mobilization 10%
Support Ministries 15%

1. Explanations

- a. **USA Mono-cultural Evangelism/Church Planting**
Ministries: The target group is the Anglo-English-speaking population. Ministries could include: evangelism and discipleship on college campuses, church planting executive outreaches, etc.
- b. **USA Ethnic Evangelism/Church Planting**
Ministries: The target group is people from a different language and/or cultural group other than Anglos. Ministries could include evangelism and discipleship of international students, church planting among Hispanics, etc.
- c. **USA Support Ministries:** These individuals are the support personnel who assist the previous categories of workers. This person may be a secretary, an accountant, a president, a mission representative of an organization that works only in the USA, etc.
- d. **Outside USA Evangelism/Church Planting**
Ministries: The target group is nationals who live outside the USA. Ministries would include church planting and evangelism.
- e. **Outside USA Teaching Nationals:** The target group are nationals who live outside the USA. This activity is one where an individual teaches a national either the Bible or ministry skills. This category would include Bible institute teachers, theological education by extension instructors, Bible translators, etc.
- f. **Outside USA Missions Mobilization:** Mission mobilizers are people (inside and outside the USA) who consult with churches, agencies and student groups to help them participate more aggressively and strategically in world evangelism.

- g. **Outside USA Support Ministries:** This person may be in the USA or overseas. The ministry is one that allows categories “d”, “c” and “f” to function. This person may be a secretary, a teacher for missionary children, a missions representative here in the United States, a pilot, etc. Their goal is to assist those who are overseas.

IV. SHORT-TERM MISSIONS

- A. Definition: Any mission’s activity of duration of one day to one year. For our Church it must be field driven. In other words, the primary benefits must go to those whom we are serving, not ourselves.
- B. Purpose: First, it is to strengthen believers and/or evangelize non-believers. Second, it is to mobilize and educate our constituency to be more missions active.
- C. Required Short-term Missions Criteria
1. The short-term mission must be in a subordinate partnership with a Christian church, a long-term missionary or mission agency.
 2. There must be a qualified leader for the ministry.
 3. Request prayer support from GSLC body and prayer ministry.
 4. There must be an interview completed, presenting a clear mission strategy and a testimony of purpose of service. The interview should provide information such as in a business plan, covering information like: projected costs, affiliations with mission agency, tasks to be preformed, outcomes to be expected, number of missionaries, transportation, etc.
 5. The mission must have open participation for the members of GSLC. The mission may use a screening /application process to limit the size of their group and assure a beneficial fit for the missionaries and the mission. The aim here is to prevent cliques from discriminating against members of GSLC.
 6. Foreign missions must obtain all necessary documentation, passports, visas, vaccinations and travel arrangements. They must establish a contact agency to coordinate the mission or a person in country to help coordinate mission support.
 7. There must be appropriate pre-field training.

8. There must be appropriate debriefing of the mission for an evaluation to help determine level of continued support and to help strengthen the mission in the future. The mission leader should be able to provide testimony of the mission's impact in the lives of the people they served and how the mission changed the lives of the missionaries. There should be a follow-plan for those who ministered in order to help grow and continue the mission.
9. Provide accounting of money received from GSLC in the form of a financial statement or/and receipts.

D. Priorities

1. It is a key part of our strategic plan.
2. The ministry is sponsored or endorsed by our church.

E. Support: Our church may provide support for the short-term ministry. We will use the order of priorities mentioned in "IV D" and guidelines in "IV C" to determine how much to give. A notification will be given to the mission leaders in response to funding request. Positive or negative, the response will be given in a loving manner. Also, there will be assigned a point of contact person in order to help the mission leader; review funding, create publicity and awareness, encourage volunteerism, support leadership in completing GSLC mission requirements and reporting.

V. Long Term Missions

- A. Definition:** Any mission activity for a duration longer than a year and the missionary or agency can demonstrate a better use of their time and finances, by forgoing meeting with the mission committee. The mission must be field driven, benefiting those who GSLC serves outside our congregation.
- B. Purpose:** evangelize non-believers outside the reach of the community of GSLC.
- C. Required of long-term missions.**
 1. Meet the criteria of a short-term mission where applicable.
 2. Provide correspondence of mission update to the mission committee every two months.
 3. Notify mission committee of any change in either the ministry and/or location or if the person joins a different mission agency. The mission committee will then immediately re-evaluate its commitment to the person. GSLC requests 30 day advance notice of any significant changes in the ministry of the missionary.
 4. When missionary or agency is in country they will make arrangements to meet with the committee for Q and A and evaluation for continued support.

D. Priorities

1. It is a key part of our strategic plan.
2. The ministry is sponsored or endorsed by our church.

- E. Support: GSLC may provide support to a long-term mission for an extended period of time in order to eliminate missionaries from traveling in and out of country for fundraising efforts. Long-term missions will take priority for funding over short-term missions. Long-term missions may be limited in fund raising abilities once in the field and more vulnerable than a short-term mission. Support will be based on GSLC strategic mission plan and endorsements by GSLC members.

VI. FINANCIAL POLICIES

A. Annual Budget

The missions committee shall prepare an annual budget each year that is to be submitted to the Board of Trustees and presented at the GSLC annual meeting.

B. Minimum/Maximum

Monthly support shall be up to fifty percent (50%) of a person's total need.

C. Monetary Support

Support for a missionary shall be given each quarter or as a one time gift.

D. Outfitting Expenses

In order to help with outfitting expenses, it is suggested that up to three months of a monthly commitment be given to this need.

E. Ministry Evaluation

A missionary will be evaluated approximately every two years when he/she is on home assignment.

F. Missionary Support Termination

Termination of financial support for a missionary is the exception with GSLC. However, when it is to occur both the mission committee and the Board of Trustees need to be in favor of the decision. The Board of Trustees reserves the right to veto any actions of the mission committee and terminate support. Reasons for termination would be if missionaries did not fulfill the responsibilities asked of them in this policy statement. If we decide to terminate support, our desire would be to do it in such a way as to limit the negative effects this could cause a missionary.

G. Parameters

No more than twenty-five percent (25%) of our missionary support budget will go to a single mission's agency.

H. Review

Each year an evaluation will be made to see if more money can be given to a currently supported missionary as well as to the taking on of new missionaries for support. Long-term missions are exempt from such evaluations until the missionary or agency is in country and can meet with the mission committee.

I. Priorities

The expenditure of funds will be consistent with the priorities mentioned earlier.

J. Budget Items

The mission budget will not only include missionary support but also other items, as they are needed to fulfill the goals of the mission committee. Examples might include: missions festivals, money for the pastors to travel to mission fields, books, short-term projects, etc.

VII. SELECTION POLICIES

A. Qualifications

1. All applicants must be in agreement with GSLC's Statement of Faith.
2. They must be going out with a mission agency approved by the team. Tentmakers and nationals may be an exception in special situations.
3. They need to be willing to spend quality and quantity time at GSLC in order to work on a meaningful relationship with us.
4. They must have a proven track record in ministry.
5. They must demonstrate the qualities found in 1 Timothy 3:1-10.
6. Their home church must be in agreement with their decision.

B. Procedures

1. Fill out an application for support. . Requests for church sponsored missions should be given to mission chairman 45 days in advance of funding needs. The mission committee meets generally on the last Tuesday of each month. Applications must be available for review and consideration by the committee's scheduled meeting date. The committee must have time for prayer to seek God's guidance in these matters.
2. Spend time in GSLC developing relationships.
3. Meet with the mission committee approval.

C. Responsibility of GSLC to its Missionaries:

1. Remember the missionary in prayer.
2. Communicate every two months.
3. Promote the work of the missionary within the church.
4. Encourage the missionary.
5. Help in the evaluation of the missionary.
6. Send the money that has been promised in an orderly fashion.
7. Assist in securing housing and furniture while they are on home assignment.
8. Work toward a partnership relationship with the missionary and his or her agency.

D. Responsibility of the Missionary to GSLC:

1. Communicate every two months.
2. Tell the missions team of any significant changes in ministry and/or location in advance.
3. Spend quantity and quality time with the church during home assignments. This is requested so we can deepen our relationship with missionaries by exposing them to our people in a variety of ways, i.e. in home Bible studies, Sunday school classes, in front of the church, etc.
4. Solicit funds only from family members and close friends from within the church. While "close friends" is an elastic description of relationships, our desire is that a missionary not contact individuals from within our church whom he/she barely knows.
5. Provide the team with yearly goals and an appraisal of the last years' activities.
6. Send to the team updated support figures for each year.
7. Work diligently in support team building and maintenance with all supporters.
8. Work toward a close partnership relationship with GSLC.