

Fellowship Bible Church

Missions Policy Statement

2015

Introduction

Our priorities are:

1. To encourage the body of FBC to become more involved in missions
2. The missionary, rather than the mission board
3. Cross-cultural evangelism and church planting, although other ministries may be considered
4. To consider the needs of those we presently support before allocating funds to new applicants.

Church / Mission Board Relations

Fellowship Bible Church, in establishing missions priorities, puts the missionary first. The church will only support missionaries who are associated with approved mission boards. After due investigation, the missions team will determine whether or not to approve the missions board. Issues include doctrine, goals, finances, and methods of evaluation.

Missions team approval of the mission board does not guarantee support from FBC. The elders will make decisions, based on the missions team recommendations, regarding which missionaries and what projects it will support, based on the criteria in the following pages.

Church / Missionary Relationships

Recognition as an FBC missionary begins with the missionary candidate submitting the "Pre-Interview Questionnaire" to the missions team. After conducting an interview, the missions team will make a recommendation to the elders, who make the final approval for support. Those seeking support must be in agreement with the church's doctrinal statement.

The missions team will occasionally present to the whole church missionary support needs beyond what the missions budget can provide. Church members are encouraged to support individual missionaries above what they are already giving to FBC's general fund.

Missionaries will be encouraged to minister to unreached peoples. Primary areas of interest should be in evangelism and church planting. Other areas of activity will be considered on an individual basis.

Criteria for Selection of Missionaries to Support

The following list describes our criteria for selecting missionaries to support:

1. Clear indication of conversion.
2. Call to missions while a member at FBC. Those whom the Lord calls into missions while full members at FBC are our priority. For such, FBC would be their home and primary sending church.
3. Membership at FBC. Our first priority for support is full members, then associate members, and lastly non-members, as circumstances warrant and resources permit. Those who come to FBC already planning to go into missions, and who make FBC their home church (become full members vs. associate members), would be considered for financial support at an amount lower than those called into missions while full members.

Those who come to FBC already planning to go into missions and who become associate members, i.e. they hold full membership in another church which would become their primary sending church, would be considered for support at a level lower than full members.

NOTE: When the person seeking support is not a member or associate member of FBC, the missions team must receive a written recommendation for this person from a full member. Members and non-members must be in agreement with the FBC Doctrinal Statement.

4. Demonstrated ministry. Priority will be given to those who have engaged in ministry at FBC, based on length of time involved.
5. Knowledge of one's gifts and training, and a clearly articulated vision of how they will be used in missionary ministry.
6. Member of an accepted mission board or a group which has been approved by the missions team and the elders.
7. Heading toward cross-cultural ministry, although other areas may be considered.
8. Heading toward church planting. The missionary candidate's ministry should contribute directly to planting a church or they should be a member of a team or mission organization involved in church planting. We recognize the need for support personnel whose mission or mission agency directly contributes to the planting of churches.
9. Applicants for home based ministries: Criteria 1-6 apply. In addition, they must have been active and involved for one academic year at FBC. Applicants will be considered on a case by case basis.
10. Foreign national church planters with whom we partner may be considered.

Procedure for Approving Missionaries for Support

FBC support of missionaries is more than monthly financial support. It includes prayer, having the opportunity to share one's ministry at FBC services and/or mission

conferences, one-time financial gifts as needs arise and as funds are available, possibly being adopted by a Small Group, etc. Missionaries on furlough are encouraged to connect with as many small groups as reasonably possible – not just their adopted one, if they have one.

Because of our being located close to Columbia International University, we will have more missionary candidates attending our church than we are able to support financially. However we would like to provide support in other ways for all those who go out from among us into missions. All missionaries approved for support, financial and otherwise will go through the following procedures:

1. The missionary candidate submits a pre-interview questionnaire to the missions team. NOTE: When couples apply, both must submit pre-interview questionnaires.
2. Designated members of the missions team interview the missionary candidate. (Couples may be interviewed together).
3. Recommendation by the missions team to approve the candidate for support; approval by the elders.

The following percentages of the missionary's financial needs have been targeted as maximum support for approved missionaries from the FBC missions budget:

1. 50% for full members who are called into missions while members of FBC.
2. 25% for full members who came to FBC already planning to go into missions.
3. 10% for associate members who came to FBC already planning to go into missions.
4. Non-members will be considered for a lesser amount as funds are available.
5. Foreign national church planters will be considered on a case by case basis.

Monthly support for missionaries may begin once the departure date has been set, but no sooner than six months prior to the departure date. This decision would be made in consultation with the mission board, and would depend on when the need begins.

Financial support will be committed for each of the missionary's terms. The amount of support will relate to the total size and the current need of the missionary's family. Re-evaluation will be conducted at each term's end or during the furlough. Under normal circumstances, when support is withdrawn, a minimum of three month's notice will be given to the missionary. Mid-term evaluation may be conducted for the following reasons:

1. Moral problems
2. Recommendation from the mission board
3. Lack of communication with the church.

Missionaries are urged to provide for insurance for themselves and their families and for the educational expenses for their children through their mission board, as part of their

total needed support. The church will consider for support whatever the mission board deems appropriate for the missionary to raise to cover these costs.

It is the church's desire that a retirement fund be an essential part of each missionary's base support. The missionary should consider setting aside the maximum percentage recommended by their mission board for this purpose.

In the case of a sudden change in the missionary's financial support, the church would re-evaluate these needs on an individual basis. The church will consult the mission board before changing the amount of our financial support.

The missionary will be encouraged to budget his own funds between his initial outgoing expenses and monthly support. The church will concentrate on the monthly needs, but may consider a one-time gift for special needs.

Short-Term Missions (STM)

Church members, associate members, and their families will be encouraged to get involved in short-term missions. Those going on a STM are encouraged to raise their financial needs. The church missions budget will endeavor to pay up to 50% of the costs for a member's first trip on an FBC sponsored STM. Individuals are encouraged and welcome to go on an FBC STM more than once, but financial support cannot be guaranteed due to our limited resources and our desire to encourage everyone to go at least once.

Members applying for support for a non-FBC sponsored STM are eligible for financial support, however our first priority is FBC sponsored trips. Requests for support will be considered after the needs of those going on an FBC STM are met. As with the FBC sponsored STM's, support after one's first STM cannot be guaranteed. Such STM's should be associated with known missionaries and mission boards. Candidates could make their own associations, but the missions team or elders may assist them if necessary. All STM's must be approved by the missions team and the elders.

Candidates for short-term missions will be evaluated according to church attendance, parental approval (for single young people), responsibility, and a consistent Christian walk. A formal application may be required.

STM's whose intended purpose is to confirm a prospective missionary's call to a specific country and ministry, must be deemed worthwhile by the missions team and elders before support is approved. Such a missionary candidate should meet the criteria for being supported by FBC. Such STM's might more appropriately be called Vision Trips and FBC will help support missionary candidates for such a trip up to \$250/single, \$400/couple as funds are available.

The Missions Budget and Missionary Support

The church budget, which includes the missions budget, is established by the elders. Recommendations from the mission team regarding the missions budget are to be submitted to the elders annually. The funds normally will be spent each year, and will not accumulate.

If a gift is received by the church and is designated for missions, the full amount will be added to the missions budget.

Any designated support given through the church for a certain missionary or project must go to that individual or project as long as the person or project has been approved for support. Any stipulations which may accompany a gift will be passed on to the missionary. When contributions are tax-deductible FBC has complete discretion and control over the use of donated funds.

Should there be an overall reduction in church income, missionaries would be notified of this reduction. The missions budget would be one of the last items to be cut from the church budget, second only to the church staff salaries. Should a surplus occur, missions needs will be re-evaluated.

Members of the missions team and church members will be encouraged to attend local, regional, and national missions conferences. As requests are made, the missions budget will pay for what the members cannot pay themselves, as funds are available.

No local benevolence funds will be allocated out of the missions budget. These needs will be cared for by the deacons from that portion of the church's budget.